

THE REGIONALIZATION DILEMMA OF TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY IN
THE 1990s: THE SYSTEMIC IMPACT APPROACH IN MIDDLE POWER
THEORY

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THEORY**

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ABSTRACT

THE REGIONALIZATION DILEMMA OF TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY IN THE 1990s: THE SYSTEMIC IMPACT APPROACH IN MIDDLE POWER THEORY

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This dissertation aims to explain the compelling impact of the rising regional issues in the post-1990s on Turkey's middle power status through the lenses of the systemic impact approach in middle power theory and the regionalization concept. The Systemic Impact Approach takes systemic influence as the essential indicator of the middle power status and provides an outcome-oriented perspective on middle powers. This thesis first explains Turkey's rise to middle power status as it adopted its foreign policy to the Cold War dynamics and its role at the system level and underlines the limitations of the regional-global nexus in the Cold War context. In 1990, Turkey joined the Gulf Crisis process with the hope of maximizing its impact on the post-Cold War international system as a staunch ally of the US. However, Turkey faced difficulties in influencing the systemic elements and using diplomatic channels

effectively with accelerating regionalization and diverging interests of various actors in the region. With the end of bipolarity and sharply accelerating regional security network, Turkey encountered a compelling puzzle in the domestic-regional-global nexus. This thesis will analyze this complex security network and examine how it turned into a challenge against Turkey's middle power status in the 1990s by preventing Turkey from influencing the international system it encountered.

Keywords: Middle power theory, systemic impact approach, regionalization, Gulf War, Turkey

ÖZ

TÜRK DIŞ POLİTİKASININ 1990'LARDAKİ BÖLGESELLEŞME İKİLEMİ: ORTA BÜYÜKLÜKTE GÜÇ TEORİSİNDE SİSTEMİK ETKİ BAKIŞ AÇISI

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Bu tez 1990'lardan sonra yükselen bölgesel sorunların Türkiye'nin orta büyüklükte güç statüsü üzerindeki zorlayıcı etkisini, orta büyüklükte güç teorisindeki sistemik etki bakış açısı ve bölgeselleşme kavramı üzerinden açıklamayı hedeflemektedir. Sistemik etki bakış açısı, sistem üzerindeki etkiyi orta büyüklükte güç olmanın temel göstergesi olarak alır ve orta büyüklükte güçlere sonuç odaklı bir yaklaşım sağlar. Bu tez öncelikle Türkiye'nin soğuk savaş dinamiklerine uyum sağlayarak orta büyüklükte güç statüsüne yükselişini ve sistem düzeyindeki rolünü açıklar ve soğuk savaş bağlamında bölgesel-küresel siyaset bağının sınırlılıklarının altını çizer. 1990 yılında Türkiye Amerika'nın sadık müttefiki olarak soğuk savaş sonrası düzende etkisini azami düzeye yükseltme umuduyla Körfez Krizi sürecine dahil olmuştur. Ancak, hızlanan bölgeselleşme ve çeşitli aktörlerin farklılaşan bölgesel çıkarları nedeniyle Türkiye sistemik elementleri etkilemekte ve soğuk savaş sonrasında diplomatik

kanalları etkili şekilde kullanmakta zorlanmıştır. İki kutuplu düzenin sona ermesi ve bölgesel güvenlik ağının keskin bir ivme kazanmasıyla, Türkiye iç-bölgesel-küresel siyaset bağı içerisinde zorlayıcı bir denklemlerle karşılaşmıştır. Bu tez, bu karmaşık güvenlik ağını analiz edecek ve bunun nasıl Türkiye'nin karşılaştığı sisteme etki edebilmesinin önüne geçerek, 1990'larda orta büyüklükte güç statüsünü tehdit eder hale dönüştüğünü inceleyecektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Orta büyüklükte güç teorisi, sistemik etki bakış açısı, bölgeselleşme, Körfez Savaşı, Türkiye

to my family

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|-------|--|
| EC | European Council |
| EU | European Union |
| KDP | Kurdistan Democratic Party |
| KDPI | Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran |
| NATO | North Atlantic Treaty Organization |
| OAPEC | Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries |
| OPEC | Organization of the Petroleum Countries |
| PDK | Partiya Demokrata Kurdistan (Kurdistan Democratic Party) |
| PKK | Partiya Karkarên Kurdistanê (Kurdistan Workers Party) |
| PUK | Patriotic Union of Kurdistan |
| UN | United Nations |
| UNSCR | United Nations Security Council Resolution |
| US | United States |

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This thesis analyzes how the paradox between rising regional issues after the Gulf War and transforming systemic elements started to pose a challenge against Turkey's middle power status. Nevertheless, since middle power is an ambiguous concept, it takes Andrew Carr's systemic impact approach, which provides the most efficient tools to explain Turkey's dilemmas and complexities throughout the 1990s in the regional-global nexus. To describe the accelerating regional security network Turkey encountered after the Gulf War in the post-Cold War context, 'regionalization' will be addressed as a conceptual framework to support the theoretical analysis.

There is an incrementally extending literature on the middle power theory that ramified with the inspiration of different categorizations from past to present. Several studies have defined middle powers as neither great nor small powers but a category in between.¹ In international relations discipline the concept turned into a contradictory and ambiguous term with almost a "definitional 'impasse'"². Deepening the disputes and enlarging the contribution it made to international relations discipline,

¹ Giovanni Botero who divided the world into three groups as grandissime (empires), mezzano (middle power) and piccioli (small power) had used the middle power concept in 16th century.

² Andrew Carr, «Is Australia a middle power? A systemic impact approach.» *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 68, no.1(2014): 82, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10357718.2013.840264>.

the diversification in the classification criteria within each different theoretical perspectives refers different components and focal points as the indicators of becoming a middle power. As each different ramification within the middle power theory manifest different components, the contention persists over the criteria which leads one state included as a middle power in a study to simply be excluded in another. Likewise, a state might be classified as a middle power from the lenses of different theoretical perspectives at the same time but exactly with different references making it a middle power.

Albeit a remarkable number of foreign policy studies categorizing Turkey as a middle power, the concept is not a frequently referenced one in Turkish Foreign Policy literature. Still, the existing literature analyzing empirical cases in Turkish Foreign Policy from the lens of middle power concept provides rich theoretical discussions. In theoretical studies, above-mentioned ramification and Turkey's distinct political history, strategic position, cultural elements, material capabilities, ideational tools, and diplomatic achievements, provide multiplexed combinations of the theory and the case, as each one highlights a different component making Turkey a middle power. Collateral with the diversification at the theoretical level, the disputes remain regarding which referenced components, empirical cases and which historical era enables Turkey to be determined as a middle power. Many studies discuss Turkey's middle power status in different contexts during the Cold War and Post-Cold War era with reference to its rising economic, diplomatic and military capabilities and foreign policy behaviours. While a number of research categorizes Turkey as a small power in the inter-war period due to its domestic economic and military capacity, another study conceptualizes Turkey as a middle power in 1930s too. Grounding Turkey's middle power status on its distinct features of being an empire inheritor and diplomatic

capabilities, Barlas says “In fact, Turkey offers an unusual case of middle powers...”. Focusing on 1930s Turkish Foreign Policy towards the Balkans and Mediterranean, especially with the middle power diplomacy Turkey followed in Balkans, Barlas conceptualizes it as an unusual middle power as it was powerful beyond its material capacity due to its unusual historical background as an Empire inheritor and strong diplomatic capabilities.³ With reference to the statistical information regarding the tangible material capacity values and foreign policy attitudes that developed relied on the capacity, Baba and Önsöy analyze Turkey’s small power status in 1930’s and rising middle power status after the second World War.⁴

Wight’s description of a middle power makes specific references to the realist Cold War dynamics with the emphasis on power politics and military capacity of the states. According to him: “... a middle power is a power with such military strength, resources and strategic position that in peace time the great powers bid for its support, and in wartime, while it has no hope of winning a war against a great power, it can hope to inflict costs on a great power out of proportion to what the great power can hope to gain by attacking it.”⁵ Determining Turkey as a middle power Oran’s middle power definition is quite similar to Wight’s Cold War thematic middle power definition. Baskın Oran defines the middle power or medium power, which he represents as the terms can be used interchangeably, as the states which can resist pressures from major powers, bargain with them and influence their actions if they

³ Dilek Barlas, “Turkish Diplomacy in the Balkans and the Mediterranean. Opportunities and Limits for Middle-power Activism in the 1930s.” *Journal of Contemporary History* 40, no 3. (2005): 442 <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022009405054565>.

⁴ Gürol Baba and Murat Önsöy. “Between Capability and Foreign Policy: Comparing Turkey’s Small Power and Middle Power Status .” *Uluslararası İlişkiler* 13, no 51. (2016): 3-20.

⁵ Martin Wight, *Power Politics* (London: Continuum, 1995), 65.

achieve utilizing the opportunities of the time and they have “marginal impacts” on international system while influencing the regional developments and small powers.⁶ Categorizing Turkey as a middle power, Oran determines the economic strength and military geostrategic power as two essential indicators of becoming a middle power. In the last decades, an increasing number of conceptual studies aims to discuss different categorizations and their suitability on Turkey such as middle power, emerging middle power, rising power or regional power.⁷ Dal argues that in the Post-Cold War era, “middle power concept as both a new self-perception narrative and a power instrument” fit better for Turkey’s political agenda compared to the Cold War years. Referring Turkey’s rising economic influence, access and activities in multiple international development cooperation activities, and its status in MIKTA and G-20 on the one hand and regional security challenges in the Middle East which overshadows Turkey’s use of middle power diplomacy tools on the other, she describes Turkey as an ‘imperfect middle power’ in the ‘regional-global nexus’.⁸ The studies implementing traditional middle power theories such as positional, behavioural and ideational perspectives to the empirical cases of Turkish Foreign Policy, despite referring the same concept, the cases, regions, periods or components they refer greatly vary. For instance, analyzing Turkish foreign policy towards the Mediterranean,

⁶ Baskın Oran, *Türk Dış Politikası: Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar Cilt I (1919-1980)*, 30.

⁷ See, Ziya Öniş and Mustafa Kutlay, “The Dynamics of Emerging Middle Power Influence in Regional and Global Governance: The Paradoxical Case of Turkey” *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 71, no.2 (2017): 164-183 <https://doi.org/10.1080/10357718.2016.1183586>. See also, Emel Parlar Dal, “Profiling Middle Powers in Global Governance and the Turkish Case: An Introduction” in *Middle Powers in Global Governance* (Cham, Palgrave Macmillian, 2018):1-31 https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-72365-5_1. See also, Emel Parlar Dal, “Conceptualising and testing the ‘emerging regional power’ of Turkey in the shifting international order” *Third World Quarterly* 37,no.8 (2016):1425-1453, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2016.1142367>.

⁸ Emel Parlar Dal, “Profiling Middle Powers in Global Governance and the Turkish Case: An Introduction” in *Middle Powers in Global Governance* (Cham, Palgrave Macmillian, 2018):16 https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-72365-5_1.

Barlas focuses on the behavioural perspective of the middle power concept. Highlighting Turkey's middle power characteristics from the behavioural approach such as the use of diplomatic capabilities, her research does not make an overall analysis of Turkish foreign policy but limits to the scope of Turkey's middle power foreign policy behaviours in the inter-war era and towards the Mediterranean area.⁹ Again, drawing an unusual line beyond traditional middle power approaches to determine Turkey, Dal and Kurşun argue that some middle powers like Turkey can make asymmetrical influence overarching their behavioural, ideational, and material capacities.¹⁰ Evaluating Turkish foreign policy from the perspective of an emerging middle power which refers a distinct category being different from the established middle powers, Öniş and Kutlay argues that "...these states generally have historical links to established powers as they socialise in a US-led liberal international order. Turkey, for example, has deep historical and institutional links to the West. Mexico, in the context of the North American Free Trade Agreement, depicts a similar pattern. However, these countries are ambitious and assertive enough to become more vociferous in the emerging regional architecture of world politics."¹¹ Many studies discussing Turkey's middle power status in the literature focus on the last decades and analyze the growing presence of Turkey in economic cooperation and its active foreign policies. As stated above, a vast number of research analyze Turkey's middle power status with reference to regional and international politics. Regarding the case of

⁹ Dilek Barlas, *Türkiye'nin Akdeniz Siyaseti (1923-1939) Orta Büyüklükte Devlet Diplomasisi ve Deniz Gücünün Sınırları* (İstanbul, Koç Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2014).

¹⁰ Emel Parlar Dal and Ali Murat Kurşun "Assessing Turkey's middle power foreign policy in MIKTA" *International Journal* 71, no.4 (2016):609 <https://doi.org/10.1177/0020702016686382>.

¹¹ Ziya Öniş and Mustafa Kutlay, "The Dynamics of Emerging Middle Power Influence in Regional and Global Governance: The Paradoxical Case of Turkey" *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 71, no.2 (2017): 8 <https://doi.org/10.1080/10357718.2016.1183586>.

Turkey, Dal highlights regional challenges preventing Turkey from the full implementation of middle power diplomacy tools despite global achievements¹² and Öniş and Kutlay state that emerging middle powers have both historical links with the established powers and sufficient capability to shape regional politics¹³. On the contrary to wide tendency of conceptualizing Turkey's middle power status in 21st century, this thesis will question Turkey's middle power status in 1990's. This thesis considers the post-Gulf War developments as the initial signs of the challenges that emergence regional level in the post-Cold War context posed on Turkey's middle power status. This is the reason why it analyzes the period from 1990 to 1998. Arguing that systemic impact approach provides efficient tools to understand the regionalization dilemma of Turkey against its middle power status, this thesis will implement Carr's approach to this period.

The next chapter will provide a more detailed analysis of four different approaches in the middle power theory including hierarchical approach, behavioural approach, ideational approach and systemic impact approach. Hierarchical approach in middle power theory positions the states on a power scale in between the great powers and small powers. Scholars classifying middle powers from hierarchical perspective might use different methods and refer different indicators such as GDP, GNP, military capacity, economic indicators, population, geographical area or defense spending values. For instance, Holbraad selects GNP and population as the major indicators of the state capacity to determine middle powers but before ranking the states he separates the subsystems and compares each state's capacity within its own

¹² Dal, "Profiling Middle Powers in Global Governance and the Turkish Case: An Introduction," 15.

¹³ Öniş and Kutlay, "The Dynamics of Emerging Middle Power Influence in Regional and Global Governance: The Paradoxical Case of Turkey," 8.

subsystem.¹⁴ Behavioural approach underlines the limitations of the material capability based categorization of the middle powers. Rather than restricting the definition to the statistical data, this approach highlights repeated actions in foreign policy behaviour attributing various roles to the middle powers in international politics, such as catalyst role in diplomatic initiations, facilitator role in coalitional activities or manager role in institution building.¹⁵ Ideational approach argues that the middle power is an identity. These states claim that they are middle powers and try to follow the foreign policy behaviours in accordance with the expectations from the middle powers.

As a traditional based non-traditional approach¹⁶ in middle power theory, Systemic Impact Approach of Andrew Carr offers an alternative perspective to the above-mentioned approaches. Inspired by Keohane, Carr determines the middle powers as: “states that can protect their core interests and initiate or lead a change in a specific aspect of the existing international order.”¹⁷ Apart from the purpose of indicating material capacities, repeated actions or rhetoric of the middle powers, this approach focuses on “their ability to alter or affect specific elements of the international system in which they find themselves” as the major criteria.¹⁸ Carr provides a comprehensive theoretical approach focuses on the outcomes of the states’ behaviours to influence the international system rather than their intentions.¹⁹ He says

¹⁴ Carsten Holbraad, *Middle Powers in International Politics*. (Hong Kong, The Macmillan Press, 1984).

¹⁵ Andrew F Cooper and Richard A. Higgott, and Kim Richard Nossal. *Relocating Middle Powers*. (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1994):24-25.

¹⁶ Dal, “Profiling Middle Powers in Global Governance and the Turkish Case: An Introduction,” 7

¹⁷ Andrew Carr, “Is Australia a middle power? A systemic impact approach,” 79.

¹⁸ Carr, 79.

¹⁹ Carr, 79.

“A systemic impact approach links the popular appeal of middle powers to what is important (that is, power to effect change), rather than simply what is measurable or ideologically praiseworthy.”²⁰ This influence does not mean that middle powers can act as the system makers, rather it refers to a point distinguishing middle powers from the small powers which cannot react or influence any major challenge imposed by the international system. Middle powers can influence some specific elements on behalf of their interests as stated above and this influence includes causing in-action such as preventing an attack or invasion of a state.

Carr grounds the new definition of middle power on the relational power understanding highlighted by Baldwin as ‘the behaviour of actor A at least partially causes a change in the behaviour of actor B’ rather than relating the power with the properties. Based on relational approach to power Carr takes “influence” as the major indicator of the middle power independent from which resources are used and which channels or behaviours are followed to create the influence. The relational understanding of power also explains: “the difficulty that states face in transferring their power from one issue area to another, or from one resource base to another...”. This perspective helps to understand the middle powers context driven strengths and weaknesses depending on the transforming international system they find themselves. After representing the theoretical discussion he questions the middle power status of Australia based on his middle power definition. He argues that “Australian government’s claim to middle power status is increasingly under threat, given the lack of recent demonstration of capacity to influence specific elements of the international system.” For Carr, extreme level military spending race of the regional powers in

²⁰ Carr, 81.

Asia, threatens Australia's middle power status not because it is directly threatened but because this environment can include it into a regional military conflict or force it for extension of the military spending. Finally, Carr argues that, as a more suited theoretical approach to analyze the middle powers in the current world, systemic impact approach may help the scholars to deal with the "impasse" of defining the middle powers with this outcome-oriented definition.²¹

After the Cold War and the Gulf War, Turkey's traditional attitudes towards the regional politics experienced acute changes, from passive to active, non-interventionist to interventionist, from compatible (with the US and Europe) to the relatively emancipated. During the Cold War, the bipolar shadow dominating regional politics and Turkey's position in the Western wing and NATO membership became pre-dominant factors determining both direction and limitations of Turkish foreign policy in the Middle East. In this period, Turkey maintained its non-interventionist foreign policy towards the region to refrain from the regional political conflicts. Coincided with the early post-Cold War era, the Gulf War process and the aftermath pulled Turkey into the region. Increasing PKK activities in the regional context, possible impacts of the establishment of a de-facto Kurdish state in Northern Iraq and the interaction with the regional states to respond regional security made the regional politics the pre-dominant foreign policy subject throughout the 1990s. Furthermore, the relative disintegration among Turkey and its traditional Western allies with the end of the Cold War and withdrawal of a Soviet threat, enabled the opposing policies in the region as well as criticism against Turkey's regional policies became more apparent. On the other hand, Turkey was not pleased with the many post-war policies

²¹ Carr, 81.

of the US and Europe in the region. So that, policies of Turkey to find a solution for the regional security issues and difficulties to attain international support turned into a complex task for Turkey that will be analyzed.

This thesis will use Andrew Carr's Systemic Impact Approach to explain how rising regional level in the post-Cold War context posed a challenge against Turkey's middle power status with reference to dilemma between regional issues and global politics after the Gulf War. This emerging dilemma became milestone that will remain challenging Turkey's middle power status among the global alliances and regional politics. Carr's proposal to definitional impasse of the middle power is useful for Turkey's case that often has been defined as an unusual middle power with reference to specific element making it strong beyond its "actual" capacity. Systemic Impact Approach provides a useful perspective to examine Turkey's response to shifting security problems and transforming concept of global networks in the context of the post-Cold War with reference to "relational approach to power", "outcome-oriented influence" and the analysis of the interaction between the middle power and the "international system" it encountered.

This thesis aims to evaluate this process from the perspective of a middle power that encounters regional security challenges in context of a transition from the Cold War to the Post-Cold War context. To define the changing political atmosphere surrounding Turkey, it will benefit from regionalization literature as the conceptual framework.

Above-mentioned regional challenges Turkey encountered in 90's will be analyzed by utilizing the regionalization literature with the Systemic Impact Approach in the middle power theory. To provide a conceptually rich and clear analysis, I will

address the concepts of region, regionalism and regionalization and their re-interpreted definitions in the literature. According to Fawcett,

Regionalization draws attention to the region, understood as a group of geographically contiguous or proximate states, regions or territories, as opposed to single states, nonstate actors or the wider international system, as the focus of increased economic, social and political activity. If globalization focuses on activity at the global level, regionalization focuses on regional activity and the region becomes, in itself, a separate unit of analysis.²²

Since this region based concept, requires an intense discussion on how region is defined in the literature, this thesis will discuss a wide range of different definitions of the region. Hettne argues that beyond previous definitions of the concept of region, current studies indicate that the definition of the region varies depending on the issue or question under investigation. Focusing on transforming security challenges that forced Turkey in 90's, Middle East region will be the subject of this thesis based on Hettne's statement. Fawcett describes the security regionalization as "regional responses to conflicts that have themselves often become regionalized-in which inter- and intrastate wars spill over borders, impinge on and draw in neighboring countries and actors, and attract the attention of the international community."²³ Turkey as a securitizing middle power had to regionalize its foreign policy in 90's. The regionalization literature will provide to understand the context of the challenges in the transforming security environment surrounding Turkey after the Cold War and the Gulf War. Being connected with the domestic security issues of Turkey, regional instabilities became much more dominant in Turkish Foreign Policy in this era.

²² Louise Fawcett, "The Regional Dimension of Global Security," in *Global Security and International Political Economy* ed. Pinar Bilgin et al., (Singapore, EOLSS Publishers, 2010), 62.

²³ Louise Fawcett, "Exploring Regional Domains: A Comparative History of Regionalism." *The Royal Institute of International Affairs* (2004): 433-434 <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3569018>.

This chapter provided a brief literature categorizing Turkey as a middle power. It referred conceptual ambiguities and ramification in the middle power theory and multiple perspective that defined Turkey as a middle power. Then it aimed to illustrate that Systemic Impact Approach is a useful lens to question Turkey's middle power status during the regionalization process in 90's aftermath of the Gulf War within the context of global and regional political challenges. Chapter 2 will provide a more detailed analysis of the theoretical discussion on Systemic Impact Approach and regionalization. Chapter 3 will question Turkey's previous regional-global nexus towards the Middle East and its middle power status during the inter-war era, the Cold War era and pre-Gulf War era. In chapter 4, the Gulf War process will be analyzed with reference to Turkey's middle power status. Chapter 5 will discuss transforming global alliances and regional policies of Turkey that threatened its position in the international system and its middle power status. In this part, multiple dilemmas of Turkey between regional-global nexus will be addressed and the thesis will indicate the accelerating regionalization and the withdrawal of the Cold War as the major causes of threat to its middle power status. Finally, chapter 6 will provide conclusions re-stating the linking points between theory and practice.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Regionalization and middle power theory that construct the conceptual and theoretical backbone of this thesis, are complex and ambiguous terms that includes various definitions and uses. To avoid the conceptual blurring and confusion, this chapter will examine the regionalization concept and middle power theory in two divided sections. First, it will discuss the regionalization. This part will attempt to illuminate what this thesis means by region's nature beyond a natural given fact and endeavor to make sure that the concept of regionalization is represented clearly. Understanding politically driven nature of region is essential for this case study focusing on transforming position and weight of the Middle East region in the political agenda of Turkish foreign policy after the Gulf War. In addition, this chapter will include a review illustrating rising regional level of activity including both rising regionalist wave and increasing regionalization process in the global system with the erosion of the Cold War dynamics especially after mid-1980s. In the second part, it will elaborate the middle power theory under 4 sub-sections to review different theoretical perspectives of hierarchical, behavioural, and ideational approaches and

prove why systemic impact approach fits the best for the case of this thesis. Finally, it will demonstrate the connection between the systemic impact approach and regionalization concept, and the case this thesis focuses on.

2.1. Regionalist Perspective in International Relations Discipline

With the accelerating erosion in the bipolar system, after mid-1980s regional politics increasingly became more determinant in the global politics. Then, regional level of analyses ascended in the literature and among the academic circles of political economy, international relations, and area studies. Transforming nature of security with the rising regional conflicts in the post-Cold War context have been subject to the studies of a vast number of scholars. However, the ambiguities and miscellaneous of the concepts regarding the regional politics remain causing confusions. Because of this reason, a clear interpretation of the regionalization concept requires a discussion about region, regionalism and regionalization.

2.1.1. Region:

In its simplest definition according to Cambridge dictionary region means “a particular area or part of the world, or any of the large official areas into which a country is divided.”²⁴ As can be seen in the lexical meaning too, prevalently the concept evokes the construction or division of separate segments within a larger entirety. Either as subnational or supra-national units beyond the territories including more than one nation-state the separate parts of the whole require certain differences making one distinct from the rest. The elements bringing this distinction or the

²⁴ Cambridge Dictionary.

referenced context by using the concept of region, differs in different academic disciplines. In the discipline of international relations, frequently regions refer to ‘supra-national subsystems.’²⁵ However, depending on the diversity of the different approaches in international relations, defining the elements or conditions creating the regions, the inclusion and exclusion of the factors in the description process of a region, and the position of a state towards a region either as included or excluded remain disputable.

At the beginning of the 20th century the concept of region largely took place in the literature as a geographical term. Several geographers brought multiple interdisciplinary descriptions to the concept of region. In 1905 questioning the factors making one region distinct from another in order to describe the divisions of the globe in his article named “The Major Natural Regions: An Essay in Systematic Geography”, Herbertson analyzed the factors determining regions in the world as climate, vegetation, configuration and less importantly population densities depending on the natural resources.²⁶ According to the author the geographical conditions such as the oceans, mountains, and deserts have served as the boundaries among the regions.²⁷ The geographical definitions followed similar factors in defining natural regions as the natural combinations taking place on a given territory.

²⁵ Björn Hettne, “Beyond the ‘new’ regionalism,” *New Political Economy* 10, no.4 (2005): 544, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13563460500344484>.

²⁶ A. J. Herbertson, “The Major Natural Regions: An Essay in Systematic Geography,” *The Geographical Journal* 25, no.3 (1905): 300-310, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1776338>.

²⁷ A. J. Herbertson, 309.

David Wishart argues that the division of the space, likewise the time as regions or periods are not the results of the analysis of given facts but a matter of narrative and argumentation. Criticizing the regionalization attempts of the geographers, Wishart grounds his argument on the thoughts of the authors such as Agnew, Berkhofer, Meining and Murphy whose mutual argument is that the division of the space cannot be considered as a given fact. The concept is a subjective term dependent to the geographer as he is the one selecting the determining elements and it refers to an intellectual concept or a constructed narrative.²⁸

Despite the interaction among the natural structures of the regions and human or state activities, region as a geographical definition and region as a political unit refers to terminologically different descriptions. Beyond the geographical definition there has been attempts to describe regions through common cultural, historical, or ethnic characteristics. In social sciences, depending on the referenced common point distinguishing a place from another, the region might mean different things in different parts of the world. For instance, for Özel, Provence in France in terms of the ethnic, linguistic, and cultural features, cotton belt in North America in terms of the economy or the Middle East in terms of international political relations might be considered as a region.²⁹

Peter Schmitt refers the lack of ‘common parameters’ and ‘method’ to define the concept of region in his article named, “*The Concept of ‘Region’: Theoretical and Methodological Notes on Its Reconstruction*”.³⁰ According to Schmitt, both

²⁸ David Wishart, “Period and region” *Progress in Human Geography* 28, no.3 (2004): 305-319 <https://doi.org/10.1191/0309132504ph488oa>.

²⁹ Mehmet Özel, “Avrupa Birliğinde Bölge, Bölgeselleşme, Bölge Yönetimleri Kavramları Üzerine” *Ankara Üniversitesi SBF Dergisi* 58, no.1 (2003): 98-99 https://doi.org/10.1501/SBFder_0000001612.

³⁰ Peter Schmitt-Egner, “The Concept of ‘Region’: Theoretical and Methodological Notes on its Reconstruction,” *Journal of European Integration* 24, no. 3 (2010):179 <https://doi.org/10.1080/07036330270152196>.

explanations of geographers, and political scientists propose limited definitions for the region. He states that: “Whereas political science is mainly interested in the region as an action unit, regional studies and geography focus on the region as an action space.”³¹ Instead he determines the region as a composition of structure, element, actor and environment.³²

The concept of region in international relations, mostly refers to a space including more than one nation state. One of the most cited scholars in the regional studies, Joseph Nye defined region as ‘a limited number of states linked together by a geographical relationship and by a degree of mutual interdependence’ in 1968.³³

For Hettne, previous different attempts in literature to define region such as; mutual interdependence of the states in a certain geographical area, common ethnic, cultural, historical and social background or more depth analysis such as describing the region through economic, social, political and organizational cohesiveness are outdated as regions are not accepted as natural or given but transform depending on the issue or question for today’s researchers.³⁴ So that the regions can be analyzed as available for transformation, re-construction and re-interpretation depending on the questioned subject.

Hurrell argues that a region is a social construction and a politically contested concept, depending on political actors’ perception.³⁵ At the same time, he emphasizes

³¹ Egner, 181.

³² Egner, 183.

³³ Joseph Nye, *International Regionalism* (Boston: Little Brown & Company, 1968), xii

³⁴ Björn Hettne, “Beyond the ‘new’ regionalism,” 544.

³⁵ Andrew Hurrell, “Explaining the Resurgence of Regionalism in World Politics” *Cambridge University Press* 21, no.4 (1995):334 <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20097421>.

the role of geographical proximity as an important factor to define region and regionalism dynamics since it distinguishes the concept of ‘regionalism’ from different forms of the organizations at the non-global level.³⁶ Indeed, this approach limits the infinite number of constructions could be named as region. Buzan’s and Weaver’s approach is parallel to Hurrell’s description as they refer the geographical proximity within the constructivist evaluation of the regional security. In despite of approving non-territorial subsystems, authors point the significance of territorial continuity and proximity in analyzing the security and threat at the regional level, due to threat’s easier mobility in short distance compared to the long distance.³⁷ So that, a mutual concern is more probable in geographically close areas.³⁸ Still, determining the boundaries of a region in a neighboring territorial area is a complicated task. Indication of the regions is more than dividing the world map. Luciana Alexandra Ghica calls the act of distinguishing an area from rest of the world as ‘regionizing’ and she argues that it is both a mental process and a political act: “Since the differentiation is based on a certain criteria considered as more appropriate than others, this process creates or expresses the existence of a normative hierarchy, which implicitly conveys a relation of power. Therefore, regionizing is not only a mental process but also a political act.”³⁹ When mutual characteristics become more frequent in an area distinguishing it from being a neighboring space, that area is defined as a region in the eye of an observer.⁴⁰

³⁶ Hurrell, 334.

³⁷ Barry Buzan and Ole Waever, *Regions and Powers*, (NewYork, Cambridge University Press, 2003), 12.

³⁸ Buzan and Waever, 12.

³⁹ Luciana Alexandra Ghica, “Beyond Regional Integration? Social Constructivism, Regional Cohesiveness and the Regionalism Puzzle” *Romanian Political Science Review* XIII, no. 4 (2013), 739.

⁴⁰ Ghica, 739-740.

She argues that “...an area acquires regional identity only when it is increasingly recognized as a region” and regional identity as the “normative-representational element of regionality”, produces more regionality and regionizing.⁴¹

Related to the discussion above, Bilgin refers four different representations of the Middle East region classified by Saad Eddin Ibrahim, which are the Arab Regional System, the Euro-Med Region, the Muslim Middle East and the (new) Middle East. Indeed, each one attributes different political agenda, roles, aims and outcomes to the same geographical area. Arab Regional System refers to a rising solidarity based on Arabic identity among the Arab states in the Middle East as a reaction against US security domination in the region.⁴² Euro-Med region signifies the common past of the West and the East around the Mediterranean region and attributes a Western identity to the states in the region.⁴³ For instance, Bilgin emphasizes the reduction of Egypt’s Euro-Med regional identity in the post-WWII era with the rising Arabic nationalist identity with Gamal Abdel Nasser. The increasing or decreasing affiliation of one state towards different regional determinations and interchangeable belongings of the state among different regional identities illustrate that the region is beyond being a natural and a given fact.

Why is this discussion important? Understanding the shifting context and concept of the region that can be constructed beyond being a natural given fact explains fluctuating significance of a particular region in the foreign policy agenda of a state, how a state can attain different regional belongings in time, or how it achieves isolating

⁴¹ Ghica, 740.

⁴² Pinar Bilgin, *Regional Security in the Middle East: A Critical Perspective*. (Oxon: RoutledgeCurzon , 2005), 115.

⁴³ Bilgin, 119.

itself from a region despite remaining territorial integrity. This will help to understand transforming Middle East policy of Turkey in different periods and contribute to the discussion of regionalization of Turkish foreign policy.

2.1.2. Regionalism:

The juncture in the regionalist movements with the erosion of the Cold War is significant for the case of this thesis, as a sign for the emancipation of the regional politics with withdrawal of the shadow of the Cold War from regional level of activities. This juncture allows the regionalist movements after mid-1980 to be named as “new regionalism”.⁴⁴ Fawcett describes regionalism “...-as policy and project- evidently can operate both above and below the level of the state; and sub- or suprastate regional activity can inform state-level activity, and so on.”⁴⁵ Lake and Morgan focuses on the new regionalism and the transforming security relations. Arguing that previous bipolar conflicts “...have exploded in various parts of the world”,⁴⁶ the authors emphasize rising attention on the regional conflict and regional cooperation to resolve the issues, “The world now has changed. The regional level stands more clearly on its own as the focus of conflict and cooperation for states and as the level of analysis for scholars seeking to explore contemporary security affairs.”⁴⁷ This perspective indicating rising importance of regional responses to the regional

⁴⁴ Fredrik Söderbaum and Björn Hettne, “Regional Security in a Global Perspective” in *Africa's New Peace and Security Architecture: Promoting Norms, Institutionalizing Solutions* ed. J. Gomes Porto, (Farnham, Ashgate, 2009), 3. See, Andrew Hurrell, “Explaining the Resurgence of Regionalism in World Politics,” *Review of International Studies* 21, no.4 (1995):331, <http://www.jstor.com/stable/20097421>.

⁴⁵ Louise Fawcett, “Exploring Regional Domains: A Comparative History of Regionalism,” 433.

⁴⁶ David A. Lake and Patrick M. Morgan, *Regional Orders: Building Security in a New World*. (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997), 4.

⁴⁷ Lake and Morgan, 4.

conflict is significant to understand transforming security cooperation dynamics in the context of the post-Cold War.

2.1.3. Regionalization:

Regionalization and regionalism are ambiguous terms that might be used interchangeably in the literature.⁴⁸ However, albeit being a cornerstone of the regional activity, the concept of regionalism discussed above does not involve the whole regional activity. Fawcett determines the major distinction among the concepts. Defending that regionalism is a policy or project, and regionalization includes both project and process, Fawcett argues that the concept of regionalization involves the total activities taking place at the regional level.⁴⁹

Regionalization draws attention to the region, understood as a group of geographically contiguous or proximate states, regions or territories, as opposed to single states, nonstate actors or the wider international system, as the focus of increased economic, social and political activity. If globalization focuses on activity at the global level, regionalization focuses on regional activity and the region becomes, in itself, a separate unit of analysis.⁵⁰

Fawcett argues the regionalization that she determines as the regional activity either intentional or spontaneous, may form and shape the regions that may cause creation of different regional actors, organizations and groups.⁵¹ Just as the global activity, be it global

⁴⁸ Louise Fawcett, "Exploring Regional Domains: A Comparative History of Regionalism," 433.

⁴⁹ Fawcett, 433.

⁵⁰ Louise Fawcett, "The Regional Dimension of Global Security," 62.

⁵¹ Louise Fawcett, "Exploring Regional Domains: A Comparative History of Regionalism," 433.

economic or security networks, be it rising social interaction creating globalization process, the total regional activity, the increasing regional networks, an occurring mutual threat for different regional actors, rising economic interests contribute the formation of the regions and trigger the rise of the network among different regional actors. Describing the regionalization in different fields, Fawcett states that, regionalization of the trade includes the trade alliances, formal institutions, and blocs taking place at the regional level while regional security refers to the: “regional responses to conflicts that have themselves often become regionalized-in which inter- and intrastate wars spill over borders, impinge on and draw in neighboring countries and actors, and attract the attention of the international community.”⁵²

The development process of the increasing regionalization has been an ambiguous field among the academic circles. The rising globalization and end of the bipolar order are stated as the factors behind the rising regionalization especially in the economic and security areas. From the economic perspective, the regionalization is mostly affiliated with the rising globalization in the world economy. However, from the interactive relation among two concepts, globalization, and regionalization remains open to dispute. The specific regional context, and scholars’ different perspectives on the historical process complicates the analysis on regionalization. From an economic perspective, Samir Amin evaluates the regionalization process in the Third World including Arab World, Africa, East Asia, and Latin America as a struggle against the “capitalist globalization process”.⁵³ Another view focusing on the economic dimension emphasizes that regionalization might function as a complementary factor of the globalization.⁵⁴ Another perspective argues the regionalization of the economic

⁵² Fawcett, 433-434.

⁵³ Samir Amin, “Regionalization in Response to Polarizing Globalization” in *Globalism and the New Regionalism* ed Björn Hettne, Andras Inotai and Osvaldo Sunkel, (Helsinki: Finland, 1999), 54.

activities cannot compete with the international markets in some cases and inevitably becomes a subsystem benefiting them first rather than the region.⁵⁵ If we admit the regionalization as a process including the project, the rising interdependency among the regional actors due to the mutual concerns in the region, inevitably impels the actors to reply this order.

The transition from the Cold War security system to Post-Cold War security system became another determinant process in increasing regionalization in the world system. In the Post-Cold War era, terrorism, weapon of mass destruction, uncertainties, power vacuum in the former Soviet regions and rising regional conflicts started to be named as the new threats. In explaining the new world security system Buzan and Weaver prioritizes the regionalist perspective among three groups: neo-realist perspective-interpreting the order from power polarity perspective, globalist perspective-focusing on transnational entities and, redefining and transcending the territorial sovereignty, and regionalist perspective.⁵⁶ According to this perspective, despite the importance of the regional level of security during the Cold War, the developments at the regional level were still firmly attached to the global bipolar dynamics but in the post-Cold War era the regional level of analysis became increasingly important.⁵⁷ For Buzan and Weaver: “The relative autonomy of regional security constitutes a pattern of international security relations radically different from the rigid structure of superpower bipolarity that defined the Cold War.”⁵⁸ However, neither the relative emancipation of the regional security nor less willingness of the former super-powers or the great powers to

⁵⁴ Jean-Louis Mucchielli, Peter J. Buckley, and Victor V. Cordell, *Globalization and Regionalization: Strategies, Policies, and Economic Environments* (Binghamton: International Business Press, 1998), xiv.

⁵⁵ Alex E. Fernandez Jilberto and Andre Mommen. *Regionalization and Globalization in the Modern World Economy: Perspectives on the Third World and Transitional Economies* (London: Routledge, 1998), 8.

⁵⁶ Barry Buzan and Ole Waever, *Regions and Powers*. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 6.

⁵⁷ Buzan and Waever, 10-11.

⁵⁸ Buzan and Waever, 3.

intervene in regional politics except their own regional environment⁵⁹ does not exclude the possibility of the interaction among the regional and global levels of security or intervention of a global organization such as the UN to intervene in the regional conflicts.⁶⁰ Emphasizing the post-Cold War nature of conflict was reduced to the intra state level instead of the inter-state level increasing activism of the “trans-national groups” and regional sources of conflicts, Fawcett argues that the regional conflicts can be resolved with the regional security mechanisms bringing more effective solutions to the “needs and interests” of the regional actors.⁶¹

In the post-Cold War era, the accelerating regionalization had economic and security reasons. Beyond the global ties and organizations, regions had mutual concerns, mutual security threats, and sharing interests within their specific environment. In many different regions in the post-Cold War era, the regional actors aimed to solve their problems through regional interaction including both conflict and cooperation.

2.2. Middle Power Theory:

Albeit increasing use of the middle power concept in the academic literature and political arena, the lack of consensus on its definition remains. Different theoretical perspectives such as hierarchical, behavioural and ideational approaches on middle power concept highlight different characteristics. These three approaches focus on limited indicators of being a middle power such as the position in the system, specific behaviours, or construction of the middle power identity respectively. On the

⁵⁹ Buzan and Waever, 6.

⁶⁰ Louise Fawcett, “The Regional Dimension of Global Security,” 63.

⁶¹ Fawcett, 63.

contrary, the Systemic Impact Approach provides an outcome-oriented definition of middle powers which takes the impact of these states on international system as the major sign of being a middle power without a specific focus on state capacity, type of action or a discourse.

2.2.1. The Hierarchical Approach

This traditional approach in the middle power theory aims to position the middle power states in an international hierarchic order somewhere in the middle between the big and the small.⁶²

Bernard Wood another often quoted middle power theoretician, prioritizes the Gross National Product of the states as the major indicators rather than one by one analyzing the population, wealth, military power etc. since as a simple and accessible indicator GNP provides close results to the multiple indicators.⁶³

Criticizing the role-based categorizations of the Middle Power states for being unsuitable, restricting, having ambiguous role definitions and previous relative power perspectives for lack of political detachment and the limited scope of the power assessments even if they refer to the right point, Holbraad provides a hierarchical analysis of middle powers. Indicating the deficiency of the direct global comparisons he suggests initially to compare the indicators within the geographical groups then to compare them and questions the possibility of creating standards at the systemic level.⁶⁴ The author specifies the regions as Africa, Europe, Asia, North and Central

⁶² Cooper, Higgott, and Nossal. *Relocating Middle Powers*, 17.

⁶³ Bernard Wood, *Middle Powers in the International System: A preliminary Assessment of Potential*. (Ottawa: UNU-Wider Working Papers, 1987), 5.

⁶⁴ Holbraad, *Middle Powers in International Politics*, 81.

America, South America, Oceania and Indonesia in which many states are sorted based on their GNP and population indicators. Following the comparison of the states in different regions within their groups, he categorizes eighteen states, (four states from Asia, six states from Europe and two states from each one of the rest of the groups), as middle powers. According to the classification of Holbraad examining Turkey within Europe, Turkey is not classified as a middle power.⁶⁵

2.2.2. The Behavioural Approach

Rather than ranking the actors, this approach aims to define the middle powers through their diplomatic behaviours in the international politics. Robert Cox states that: “Middle power is likely to be in the middle rank of material capabilities, but it also stands in the middle in situations of conflict.”⁶⁶ According to him “...middle power is a role in search of an actor.”⁶⁷

Within the behavioural model, the concept of “role” has been interpreted variously. Efstathopoulos says that the behavioural model in middle power theory focuses on the ‘*diplomatic preferences*’ followed by the state rather than the state’s sphere of influence.⁶⁸ He argues that it is needed to add the categories of ‘*ideational influence*’ and ‘*entrepreneurial effectiveness*’ as the key criteria to describe the middle power.⁶⁹ He defines six different criterions from behavioural perspective to

⁶⁵ Holbraad, 90.

⁶⁶Robert Cox, “Middlepowermanship, Japan, and Future World Order” *International Journal* 44, no.4, 827 <https://doi.org/10.2307/40202638>.

⁶⁷ Cox, 827.

⁶⁸ Charalampos Efstathopoulos, “Middle Powers and the Behavioural Model” *Global Society* 32, no.1 (2017): 47, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13600826.2017.1351422>.

⁶⁹ Efstathopoulos, 48.

characterize middle powers, which are good international citizenship, selective engagement, coalition building with like-minded states, crisis management diplomacy, multilateral influence and leadership.⁷⁰

The authors of the book named “Relocating Middle Powers: Australia and Canada in a Changing World Order” Cooper, Higgott and Nossal refer to the behavioural model with an emphasis on the repeating type of behaviours rather than following moral foreign policy expectations in international politics.⁷¹ The authors state the roles describing middle power as catalyst role, with reference to the entrepreneurial middle powers initiating diplomatic efforts, facilitator role, in collaborative and coalitional activities and manager role, referring to the institution building.⁷² The authors also emphasize the type of behaviours expected to be repeated by the middle powers do not remain the same independently from the global changes but appear with distinct characteristic in different periods.⁷³

2.2.3. The Identity Approach

The point distinguishing the identity perspective from the behavioural approach is that, the identity perspective takes the motivation of the middle powers defining its foreign policy action as the identity it constructed, rather than taking the foreign policy outcomes within the behavioural framework as the indicators of being a middle power. Neack explains this motivation as:

The self-declared middle powers already possessed a sense of moral superiority and certitude that required a unique foreign policy

⁷⁰ Efsthopoulos, 68.

⁷¹ Cooper, Higgott, and Nossal, *Relocating Middle Powers*, 19.

⁷² Cooper, Higgott, and Nossal, 24-25.

⁷³ Cooper, Higgott and Nossal, 19.

stance. Going hand in hand with this do-gooder impulse was the equally strong impulse to demonstrate to the world that middle powers were like great powers, but were not great powers.⁷⁴

Based on the quotation above, from the identity perspective the middle power status is first a claim, then the actions taken to meet the expectations of that claim. However, this approach is criticized for making large inferences by focusing on a narrow group of middle powers. With reference to Andrew Cooper's classification of Australia, Norway, Sweden and Canada as 'self identified middle powers', David Cooper argues these middle powers can only be considered as a subgroup within the category that is unrepresentative of the middle powers.⁷⁵

2.2.4. Andrew Carr's Systemic Impact Approach

Carr offers an alternative approach to the traditional perspectives to define the middle powers based on the quantitative data and measurable indicators or the behavioural views affiliating the middle powers with repeated actions. He argues the aforesaid pieces of works, despite a wide range of contributions to the academic literature, remains incapable of a comprehensive analysis explaining the middle powers. He approaches the issue from a different standpoint. Re-considering the concept of power concerning Baldwin's power definition as 'the behaviour of actor A at least partially causes a change in the behaviour of actor B' the author impresses on the relational aspect of power among different actors, 'persons, states, groups, etc.' rather than the level of property the states own. Predicated on the contextually driven

⁷⁴ Laura Neack., *The New Foreign Policy: Power Seeking in a Globalized Era*, 2nd ed., (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2008) ,163.

⁷⁵ David Cooper, "Challenging Contemporary Notions of Middle Power Influence: Implications of the Proliferation Security Initiative for "Middle Power Theory"" *Foreign Policy Analysis* 7, no.3 (2011), 322 <https://www.jstor.org/stable/24909800>.

power concept, Carr argues the role of the middle powers changes depending on the international system.

Rather than seeking to define these states through their average position on a list, or their multilateral behaviour or rhetoric, a systemic impact approach defines middle powers through their ability to alter or affect specific elements of the international system in which they find themselves. This approach defines middle powers through the outcome, rather than the intention, of their actions. This includes both their military capacity for self-defence, as well as their diplomatic capacity for effecting specific international changes.⁷⁶

Carr's alternative definition referring to the changing international system the state encounters and the central focus being on the outcomes rather than the intentions or identifications of the states requires the indication of the change in international politics and the reaction the middle power takes regarding the political environment or developments. Arguing he built his argument on Keohane's systemic approach, Carr updates the middle power definition as

Reviewing the original text written in 1969, *Lilliputians' Dilemmas: Small States in International Politics* the Keohane defined the powers in accordance with their systemic impact level as follows; system determining (great powers), system influencing (secondary powers), system-affecting (middle powers), system ineffectual (small powers).⁷⁷ However, since the author aims to explain behaviours of the states to influence the system, he states the need to include the psychological dimension referring to the position the state that the leaders perceive.⁷⁸ "... a middle power is a state whose leaders consider that it cannot act alone effectively but may be able to have a systemic impact in a small group or through an international institution..."⁷⁹ It would not be wrong to

⁷⁶ Andrew Carr, "Is Australia a middle power? A systemic impact approach," 79.

⁷⁷ Robert O Keohane, "Lilliputians' Dilemmas: Small States in International Politics" *International Organization* 23, no.2 (1969): 295-296 <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2706027>.

⁷⁸ Keohane, "Lilliputians' Dilemmas: Small States in International Politics," 296.

⁷⁹ Keohane, 296.

claim that the idea of Keohane remains valid, to explain several cases of the middle powers increasing their influence on the system through the coalitions. However, considering that this work is written in the Cold War environment, the “bandwagoning” tendency in middle power state leaders’ can be transformed or extended in the context of the post-Cold War. Carr updates the middle power definition as “states that can protect their core interests and initiate or lead a change in a specific aspect of the existing international order.” Carr does not specify a road map for the middle powers to make systemic change and does not include the leaders’ perspectives as Keohane did. Since the states influence the international system through the issues dominating their foreign policy agenda, either as a security threat or a new opportunity for emerging interests, the changing system from the determined state's perspective is valid to apply this approach. So that this thesis agrees on the Carr’s perspective and his update on Keohane’s approach to explain middle powers in the changing international system. Finally, Carr says that, using the systemic impact approach, the academics may canalize to the “empirical debates” in understanding the middle power’s role.

2.3. Theoretical and Conceptual Framework and the Case:

There are several points making Systemic approach more applicable to the case of this thesis. First, contrary to behavioural, hierarchical, and identity approaches, Systemic Impact Approach provides an outcome-oriented definition of middle power with a major focus on “influence”. This approach provides comprehensive and consistent tools to question Turkey’s middle power status. Rather than indicating the factors required to become a middle power and then highlighting

the unusual characteristics of Turkey that makes it a middle power despite lack of them, this approach considers Turkey as a middle power as long as its characteristic cause an 'influence' on the international system. Secondly, this approach provides efficient tools to explain how Turkey shifted to middle power status in the Cold War context and the challenges it encountered as a middle power after the Cold War and the Gulf War to influence the systemic elements in the post-1990s. The acceleration of regionalization after the Gulf War surrounding Turkey and withdrawal of the Cold War oriented cooperation of Turkey and its western allies posed new challenges to Turkey to influence the international system. Furthermore, relational aspect of power indicated by Carr explains why Turkey could not directly transfer its power and middle power status to solve issues of the emerging international environment.

This thesis utilizes the conceptual framework of regionalization to describe transforming international environment Turkey encountered throughout 1990s. Questioning Turkey's middle power status in this era, it indicates that rising regional issues and transforming international system started to pose challenges to this status from systemic impact approach. The regionalization in the post-Cold War context is characterized with the emancipation of regional politics from dualistic shadow of the Cold War in the literature. Collateral with the literature despite exceptional cases, Turkey's regional policies during the Cold War were determined by its NATO membership and pro-Western status against Soviet threat. This emancipation triggered clashing interests of Turkey and its Western allies on the regional politics. On the other hand, regionalization is characterized with the rising non-state actors, regional conflicts and the increasing significance of regional responses to it in the post-Cold War context, which exactly comprehends and explain Turkey's experience after the Gulf War. Besides all these, the shifting definition of "region" based on issue or

question under investigation explains the role and weight of the region in Turkish political agenda in different eras.

CHAPTER 3

TURKEY'S MIDDLE POWER STATUS AND MIDDLE EAST FOREIGN POLICY IN THE REGIONAL-GLOBAL NEXUS BEFORE THE 1990s

This chapter endeavors to indicate Turkey's middle power status and analyze the nature of the nexus between Turkey's regional politics and international system before the Gulf War by focusing on three different periods, the early republican era, the Cold War era before the 1980s and pre-Gulf War era during the 1980s. This discussion enables to compare the regional-global nexus and Turkey's middle power status before and after 1990s and indicate some reasons why regional politics did not pose a challenge against Turkey's middle power status during the Cold War. In the early republican era, Turkey followed small power diplomacy with a non-interventionist foreign policy to protect its achievements after National Independence War against the high tension among the great powers in the international system. In this period, the Middle East region was under the influence of colonial powers for a long time. During and after this period, Turkey abstained from becoming a part of regional political conflicts. In addition, Turkey's Western identity-building process and its demand to prove that it does not have any further claim over the lost Ottoman lands shaped its foreign policy behaviour apart from regional politics despite the territorial continuity. In this era, Turkey remained as a small power under threat of

invasion. Then, using Carr's middle power definition, this chapter explains Turkey's experience as a middle power in the Cold War era. Turkey's rising ability to create in-action regarding the threat of invasion by Soviet Union, the role of its strategic location in the bipolar system and, increasing tangible and intangible capabilities increasing its influence on the systemic elements enabled it to attain middle power status. The political and material support of the West provided Turkey with relative assurance against global threats while improving its state capacity. Turkey's relations with the region were highly under the shadow of the bipolar dynamics in this era. Therefore, Cold War period did not create an intense dilemma between regional and global politics that could threat Turkey's middle power status as it did after the Cold War. Depending on the intensity of Soviet threat or conflicts between Turkey and the US, Turkey's cooperation with the West encountered some fluctuations but still, despite exceptional cases, its regional affairs remained under the influence of bipolar limitations. In the pre-Gulf War era, throughout the 1980s, rising regional instability and security concerns to Turkey and the Western wing created new cooperation areas reinforcing Turkey's middle power status. However, at the same time accelerating regionalization process which ramified with the rising domestic-regional network in this era were going to cause much more intense issues to Turkey's middle power status after the Cold War, as the shadow of the bipolar politics withdrew from the region. This chapter will include a discussion about the pre-war regional dynamics re-locating the threat in the eye of the West to the south of Turkey and the developments increasing Turkey's dependency on the region. The regional context of the Kurdish Question and the impact of the Iranian revolution on rising political Islam in the region will be discussed as the primary security concerns of Turkey in this context. In the 1990s, with the end of the Cold War, this regionalization process

will be much more apparent and determinant in Turkish foreign policy and start to challenge its middle power status.

3.1. Turkey's Lack of Systemic Impact and Non-interventionist Foreign Policy towards the Middle East in the Inter-War Era

Examining the period from Carr's middle power perspective, this thesis does not consider Turkey as a middle power during the inter-war era. In this era, Turkey followed a small power diplomacy without the ability to make a systemic influence. From Turkey's perspective, the dominance of colonial powers in the region, its internal issues and Western identity construction process, and lack of capacity to influence the colonial powers at the regional and systemic level directed Turkey to non-intervene the conflicts and protect its achievements. In the pre-Cold War period, Turkey conducted a non-interventionist political agenda towards the Middle East region due to certain concerns at the domestic, regional and systemic level. After the withdrawal of the Ottoman Empire, Turkey refrained from having any further claim on the lost territories and aimed to protect itself from the regional political conflicts.

Numerous scholars explain the severance of relations with the Middle East region through the identity perspective which address the rising westernization policies and the process of establishing a secular, nationalist and republican⁸⁰ modern state. Indeed, establishment of western identity in this era was preparing Turkey for a staunch alignment with the west during the Cold War, which will help it to gain its middle power status. Turkey used ideational elements and secular state structure established in the early republican era, as efficient tools making it a trustworthy ally

⁸⁰ Yücel Bozdağoğlu, *Turkish Foreign Policy and Turkish Identity: A Constructivist Approach* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 46.

in the eye of the West. In the early republican era, Turkey followed a pro-Western political agenda in domestic and foreign policy by distinguishing itself from the regional actors.⁸¹

In the early republican era, Turkey had to face with major difficulties in terms of the material capacity, political issues and nation building process. So that, it consumed most of its resources to solve its domestic problems that will keep it vulnerable in foreign policy to follow an active role at the regional or global level. İsmet İnönü refers to this period in his memoirs with these words: “After the establishment of the republic, internal issues took most of our time...still we had to deal with some very significant issues in the foreign policy as well. The Mosul issue was the most important one.”⁸²

In the first two decades of the republican era, Turkey struggled with two territorial uncertainties in its southern borders connecting it to the region. Mosul in Iraqi border and Hatay in Syrian border have remained as indefinite territorial subjects of Turkey after Lausanne. Both cases provide examples how colonial powers dominated the regional politics and Turkey abstained from the possibility of conflict with the colonial powers. The insist of the Britain on Mosul more than any other claim⁸³ and Turkey’s resistance inevitably resulted in a controversial political process.

⁸¹ Furthermore, from Turkey’s perspective, Arab revolts in the last period of the Ottoman Empire, was a betrayal against Turkish nation that will be imprinted on memories for ages. These words of Celal Bayar corroborate the mentioned opinion: “were not disposed to re-establish a close relationship with a nation (the Arabs), which had stabbed the Turkish nation in the back.” See, Yücel Bozdaloğlu, *Turkish Foreign Policy and Turkish Identity: A Constructivist Approach* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 46.

On the other hand, the conservative Arabs, perceived secularism and Turkification as an alienation from Islam which became a reason for antipathy against Turks. See, Mahmut Bali Aykan, “The Palestinian Question in Turkish Foreign Policy from the 1950s to the 1990s,” *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 25, no.1, (1993): 91 cited in Yücel Bozdaloğlu, *Turkish Foreign Policy and Turkish Identity: A Constructivist Approach* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 113.

⁸² İnönü, İsmet. *Cumhuriyetin İlk Yılları I. Yenigün Haber Ajansı Basın ve Yayıncılık A.Ş.*, 1988, 121.

⁸³ Sevtap Demirci, “Turco-British Diplomatic Manoeuvres on the Mosul Question in the Lausanne Conference, 1922–1923” *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 37, no.1 (2010):59 <https://doi.org/10.1080/13530191003661138>.

Until the time Mosul was given to Britain in 1926 with the Treaty of Ankara, under the name of Iraqi mandate, Turkey made several diplomatic attempts, during bilateral conferences and later in League of Nations,⁸⁴ for Mosul but they resulted in failure. İsmet İnönü states that “After peace settlement, while we were struggling with our internal problems, our main priority was to maintain the peace...if we objected the Brussels Line accepted by the League of Nations, peace would be broken and incalculable disorders would arise.”⁸⁵ Likewise, France’s mandate on Hatay influenced Hatay’s accession process. The borders determined by National Pact included Hatay territories, but the conditions of the time forced to terminate the war with France, at the cost of giving up the claims on Hatay.⁸⁶ During Hatay’s accession process Turkey followed a careful policy. It abstained from conflict with France and supported the independence of Syria⁸⁷ but insisted on Hatay through diplomatic channels.

In this era, Turkey did not have a middle power status yet, due to its domestic problems and lack of capacity to influence the systemic elements. Turkey followed a non-interventionist foreign policy in the Middle East during this period. In addition, during its border issues, Turkey encountered a region dominated by colonial powers restricting its policies.

⁸⁴ Nevin Coşar and Sevtap Demirci, “The Mosul Question and the Turkish Republic: Before and After the Frontier Treaty, 1926”, *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 42, no.1, 126 <https://doi.org/10.1080/00263200500399611>.

⁸⁵ İsmet İnönü, *Cumhuriyetin İlk Yılları I*. (İstanbul:Yenigün Haber Ajansı Basın ve Yayıncılık A.Ş., 1988),122

⁸⁶ Figen Atabey, “The Accession Period of Hatay to Motherland” *Avrasya Uluslararası Araştırmalar Dergisi* 7, no.4 (2015), 193

⁸⁷ Atabey, 193

3.2. Turkey's Shift to Middle Power Status and Regional Politics Under the Influence of the Cold War Dynamics

Adopting the Cold War dynamics especially with the rising significance of its strategic location, Turkey started to influence systemic elements. The bipolar tension in the global political order among communist Soviet and democratic West had become the dominant paradigm from 1945 to 1990. Westad describes the Cold War nature as: “The Cold War was a clash of ideas and culture as much as a military and strategic conflict” and emphasizes the universal nature of the Cold War by distinguishing it from the nationalist motivations of conflict in Europe.⁸⁸ Anti-collectivism, market values and individual liberty as the essential factors of the US side and collectivism, state planning and social justice concepts of the Soviet and the intellectuals of each side's elites claimed the world is changing on behalf of their ideological essentials.⁸⁹ Originally staged in the “old continent” Europe, Cold War dynamics swiftly spread over different territories, through Greek civil war, and Soviet threat on Turkey and Iran, in the Mediterranean and Middle East Region in the early years.⁹⁰ Geographically seen as the dividing territories among the east and the west, from the US perspective Soviet influence on the northern tier countries, Iran, Turkey and Greece was a threat of Soviet expansion to the Near East that should be

⁸⁸ Odd Arne Westad, “The Cold War and the international history of the twentieth century.” in *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, ed., Odd Arne Westad and Melvyn P. Leffler (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2010), 13.

⁸⁹ Westad, 13.

⁹⁰ Massimiliano Trentin and Matteo Gerlini, *The Middle East and The Cold War: Between Security and Development*. (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2012), 1.

precluded.⁹¹ Based on these concerns, the US engaged in the Near Eastern politics with the Truman doctrine providing aid to Turkey and Greece.⁹²

Having global aspirations, influence on regional clients meant consolidation of power for both sides. Soviet desiring to expand to Balkan region and control the straits, and US and Europe perceiving these aspirations as clear threat had to struggle in different areas of the world as one area has strong connection to another. For Trentin and Gerlini, the main issues of Middle East region being in the decolonization process were the political independence requiring centralization of the state system and strong institutions and the economic development affiliated with the industrialization, to which each blocs offered different solutions competing each other.⁹³ Attributing the previous theoretical chapter at this point I would like to draw attention to the regions in the Cold War era and how they were influenced by the Cold War dynamics. Through the territorial role of the northern tier countries, the Soviet influence on the state system of the certain regional Arab states was aimed to be prohibited by the West. So that the regional roles of these countries were not independent from the bipolar tension and the countries had expectations. Many small states benefited from the Cold War through economic aids or security requirements.

Turkey had made non-alignment proclamation during the WWII and aimed maintaining non-interventionist and pacifist foreign policy to avoid engaging further conflict or war.⁹⁴ Immediately after the end of the war, Soviet Union asked for revision

⁹¹ Bruce Robellet Kuniholm, *The Origins of the Cold War in the Near East*, (Chichester: Princeton University Press, 1994), 212.

⁹² Kuniholm, 213.

⁹³Massimiliano Trentin and Matteo Gerlini, *The Middle East and The Cold War:Between Security and Development*. (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2012), 2.

⁹⁴ In 1939 Turkey signed Tripartite Treaty with France and Britain to assure its security to Greek and Rumania and the treaty specifically remarked that Turkey was not going to be forced to any situation leading conflict with the Soviet Union and contribute the cooperation in the act of aggression in the Mediterranean. See, Anthony R. De

of the Montreux Convention to reduce Turkish influence on the straits aiming to eliminate Turkey's control over Soviet shipping to flow through the straits and desired bases for Dardanelles and made territorial claims on Kars and Ardahan. These aspirations, and the insistence of the Soviet on the straits became an increasing security threat for Turkey, which will later gain the US support against this threat.⁹⁵

Mutual interests among the US and Turkey against Soviet threat provided a basis for alliance.⁹⁶ From the US perspective, Turkey's geographical position could be a barrier among expansionist Soviet ideology and Eastern Europe, and a base for security in the Mediterranean and the Middle East. On the other hand, the US was a great power expected to generate solutions for Turkey's security concerns and economic crisis. Turkey's military capacity was insufficient to protect its territorial integrity against a potential Soviet attack and the economic conditions were depressing. The aids to be provided by the US, agriculture regulations and assurance against Soviet attack were compatible with Turkey's needs. Carr indicates that to protect their interests middle power states must have a reasonable capacity including the context of military conflict and they should be able to influence a specific element of the global politics by "formalised structures, such as international treaties and

Luca, "Soviet-American Politics and the Turkish Straits," *Academy of Political Science* 92,no.3 (1977): 503-504, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2148505>.

However, referring the collapse of France and Soviet threat Turkey cancelled the agreement and closed the straits during the war to all war shipping including the British ones. See, Anthony R. De Luca, "Soviet-American Politics and the Turkish Straits," *Academy of Political Science* 92,no.3 (1977): 505, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2148505>

This avoidance became in favor of Turkey on several counts but brought the threat of becoming isolated from the emerging post-war dynamics, alliances, and cooperation. WWII neutral policy of Turkey was harshly criticized especially by Britain, but mutual benefits brought both states on the same bloc again despite decreasing British power in the post war era.

⁹⁵ Leffler argues the motivation behind US support to Turkey on strait crisis was the foresight that Soviet bases in the Dardanelles might bring further claims in the Mediterranean and in the Near East such as new bases in the Aegean and eastern Mediterranean that might threaten British communication networks and petroleum supplies destroying US ally in Europe and making the region completely open to Soviet expansion. See, Melvyn P. Leffler, "Strategy, Diplomacy, and the Cold War: The United States, Turkey, and NATO, 1945-1952." *The Journal of American History* 71, no.4 (1985): 811 <https://doi.org/10.2307/1888505>.

institutions, and informal means, such as norms or balances of power.”⁹⁷ The process stated above exactly explains Turkey’s increasing adaptation to the international system and how its capitalization on the Cold War dynamic provided a middle power status to it both in terms of the military and economic aid and NATO membership.

The Truman Doctrine was a touchstone in formalization of the collaboration. Economic aids of the US reached an excessive enlargement with Turkey’s NATO membership in the military field. Furthermore, with the common values and ideals⁹⁸ among the two states the cooperation acquired an ideational dimension as well with Turkey’s long-term attempts for Westernization and democracy. Evaluating the Cold War Turkish-American relations through geopolitical discourse, Atmaca argues that the concepts of ‘containment’ and ‘domino effect’ illustrate the major motivations of the relations from the US perspective. ⁹⁹ For her, the US perceived Turkey as geopolitically needed ally and the discourse constructed was illustrating different geographical imaginations and metaphors in Cold War nature: “During the Cold War years, Turkey has been named as a precious ally, a barrier against the Soviet threat, protector of the NATO’s southern wing, buffer and military base in the Middle East and Eastern Mediterranean.”¹⁰⁰ Within this context, Turkey reached an opportunity to play a role in the international bipolar security system through its strategic location. This enabled Turkey to influence systemic elements it encountered and increase its tangible and intangible capabilities. Any other traditional theoretical perspectives but

⁹⁷ Andrew Carr, “Is Australia a middle power? A systemic impact approach,” 80.

⁹⁸ O. Faruk Loğoğlu, “The State of US-Turkey Relations:A Turkish Perspective” *Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College*, (2008):30 <https://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep12097.5>.

⁹⁹ Ayşe Ömür Atmaca, “Yeni Dünyada Eski Oyun:Eleştirel Perspektiften Türk-Amerikan İlişkileri” *Ortadoğu Etütleri* 3, no. 1 (2011): 161.

¹⁰⁰ Atmaca, 165.

systemic impact approach explains how Turkey shifted to middle power status through the rising significance of its strategic location allowing it to influence the international security dynamics and increasing capabilities to influence the international system. Carr's outcome oriented middle power definition which focuses on the influence no matter how it is attained comprehends the unusual case of Turkey in the Cold War context.

Re-calling the regionalization literature stating that the regional politics was shadowed by the bipolar dynamics throughout the Cold War, these dynamics have largely determined the direction and limits of Turkey's Middle East policy as a staunch ally of the West. As stated above due to its strategic location and neighborhood to the Middle East region, Turkey was expected to play a regional role on behalf of Western security interests and US aspirations. In return, Yılmaz argues, from Turkish perspective, NATO membership have institutionalized Western dynamics of the state paradigm, culmination of security concerns, and Turkish American alliance¹⁰¹

To be more specific, Turkey's relations with the Middle East substantially followed a collateral line with the US interests in the region. Menderes period is often referenced as an active period in terms of the relations with the Middle East and it sets a useful example for the above-mentioned context of the US-Turkey alignment in the Middle East. In the 1950s Turkey's endeavored to consolidate its alliance with the Western bloc through the regional activism and signed pacts with the regional actors. Involving in the Western bloc in Balkan Pact signed by Turkey, Greece and Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in 1953, Turkey aimed to block Soviet activism in

¹⁰¹ Şuhnaz Yılmaz, "Turkey's quest for NATO membership: the institutionlization of the Turkish-American Alliance," *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies* 12, no.4 (2012): 482, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14683857.2012.741844>.

Balkans, and with the Bagdad Pact signed in 1955 this policy had been perpetuated. This activism in the 1950s was still security dominated and the context of the alignment relied on the Turkey's pro-Western stance in the Cold War.

After Turkey's membership in NATO, in 1953 Soviet Union sent a note to Turkey declaring renunciation from its demands on the eastern territories of Turkey and the possibility of a revision regarding Soviet policy on the straits with the consideration of Turkey's desires.¹⁰² British officials perceived the note for normalization as an attempt to separate Turkey from the Western wing and damage Turkey's activities in the Middle East and in Balkans¹⁰³ According to Oran: " Turkey was preoccupied with strengthening its position in NATO and transforming its strategic position to economic assistance not with the re-vision of its relations with the neighbors." and remaining suspicious on Soviet's statement on the straits, in 50s Turkey did not go for a policy change in terms of the Western alignment.¹⁰⁴ Depending on the above-mentioned quote, since Turkey's policy to maintain its position in the Western bloc was prior to the revision of the relations with the neighboring states, it would not be wrong to claim that Turkey would ignore the regional policies that could contradict the Western bloc or degrading its position in NATO at that time.

From Turkey's perspective, Bagdad Pact and Syrian Crisis illustrate how regional cooperation and conflict between the regional actors were dominated by Cold War dynamics during 1950's. Given the concerns of the regional actors regarding the alignment with the US, the US needed a local proxy to conduct the process and Turkey

¹⁰² Baskın Oran, *Türk Dış Politikası: Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar Cilt I (1919-1980)*, 511-512.

¹⁰³ Oran, 512.

¹⁰⁴ Oran, 513.

as a NATO member was the strongest option.¹⁰⁵ Menderes government was intending to change the early republican era regional politics during its period, so it was willing for such a role providing this chance and consolidating its position as a significant ally of the US in the region. Following reciprocal visits among Turkey and Bagdad for cooperation, first a declaration on 12th January 1955, then Pact of Mutual Cooperation on 24th February 1955 were signed that later be enlarged with the contribution of Britain (April 4), Pakistan (September 23) and Iran (November 3).¹⁰⁶ The economic development and protection from the communist aggression were emphasized with the pact.¹⁰⁷ Despite being under the Cold War dynamics, 50s became a prominent period in terms of increasing foreign policy activism in the region.¹⁰⁸ The regionalist attempt in this process was both security based along with the economic concerns and

¹⁰⁵ Initially, as a Northern Tier part of the containment policy Turkey, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iraq and Iran were aimed to be in the alignment but at the end the pact was established among Pakistan, Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Britain. Before the signature of the agreement, due to its interests on the oil, cotton, Canal zone and Persian Gulf for Britain Egypt was the key state in the Middle East Defense but the activities to control the region through Egypt, such as deploying thousands of soldiers to Suez among a hostile population, still perhaps being ineffective in the case of an "atomic air war" and decreasing possibility of a "land campaign" in the Middle East resulted with the withdrawal of Britain from Canal zone and this decision taken in July 1954, passed the key role in regional defense to Turkey. See, Esmond Wright, "Defence and the Bagdad Pact" *The Political Quarterly* 28,no.2 (1957): 163 <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-923X.1957.tb01862.x> In this process the initiations of Eisenhower to withdraw Britain from Suez, were significant. See, Ayesha Jalal, "Towards the Baghdad Pact: South Asia and Middle East Defence in the Cold War, 1947-1955" *The International History Review* 11,no.3 (1989): 431-432, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40106042>.

¹⁰⁶ Selma Göktürk Çetinkaya, "Relations of Turkey with Middle east and the West During the Formation Process of Baghdad Pact," *International Journal of Historical Researches* 1, no.Special Issue on the Middle East (2016):10.

¹⁰⁷ The issues and projects addressed in the pact meeting in Ankara illustrates the context of the cooperation closer. During the session held in Ankara joined by Menderes, delegates by Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, United Kingdom and an observer delegation by the US, the regional parties need for economic assistance and protection by the Soviet threat were addressed, and assuring the counter attack for protection by the US against any aggression by communist state to the regional actors, Dulles mentioned the construction of the communication systems from Turkey to Pakistan, highways, airports for military purposes, and facilities in the Persian Gulf, Mediterranean and in Arabian sea, the phone and radiotelephone systems for the capital cities of the parties. See, "Baghdad Pact," *International Organization* 12, no. 2 (1958):230 <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2704944>.

¹⁰⁸ However, the developing relations among stated regional actors during the meetings were mostly restricted to the pact states. Since Turkey aimed to conduct the rapprochement process with the Arab states as a staunch Western ally, some of the Arab states especially Egypt, inclined to stay out since their concerns included to gain independence and solving Palestine issue. See, Ara Sanjian, "The Formulation of the Baghdad Pact," *Middle Eastern Studies* 33, no.2 (1997): 230 <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4283868>. Rising Arab nationalism and sovereignty desires of the Arab's having post-colonial background did not comply with pro-Western political agenda of Turkey and communist powers did not miss the chance to support the opposite formations. So that it was structurally next to impossible to include all the Arab states in the pact.

formalized with the of non-regional actors which provides a case illustrating how regional cooperation was under the bi-polar shadow during the Cold War era. Despite its failure, the regional politics remained under the influence of bipolar dynamics.¹⁰⁹

Syrian Crisis as another momentous issue erupted in the second half of the 50s provides a strongly analyzable case with regards to the bipolar world order dominated regional level of activity. Syria and Turkey had dramatically different threat perceptions constructed upon different historical backgrounds and had different political agendas directing them to get their positions in different blocs. Once Syria rejected to join Western bloc, any further collaboration with Russians or rising communism in Syria meant the containment policy which Turkey became an important part of, could reverse. Syrian Soviet coalition was able to restrict Turkey both from the North and the South.¹¹⁰ The rise of the crisis had domestic, regional and global dynamics that cannot be analyzed independently from the bipolar order.

Rising Soviet influence in Syria and Syrian regional policies posed threat to some pro-Western regional actors including Turkey, Iraq and Jordan.¹¹¹ The leaders

¹⁰⁹ Bagdad Pact could not fulfill the expectations as it collapsed aftermath of the Iraqi coup in 1959 with withdrawal of Bagdad. Bagdad Pact was a consequence of the alternative project to Middle East Defense Organization, which is the Northern Tier. Established upon geographical foundations strategic position of Turkey between the East and the West aimed to be transformed into a political agenda. Compared to the early Republican era, the increasing interaction with some regional actors made the pact period distinctive but it was in line with Turkey's threat perception and its alignment with the US in the Cold War context.

¹¹⁰ The leftist orientation accelerated in Syria as of 1954 giving rise to anti-Westernism and inactivating Western powers' aspirations which had more chance during the rule of Faris Al Khuri. See, David W Lesch, *Syria and the United States: Eisenhower's Cold War in the Middle East*, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1992), 61 The leftist groups found an opportunity in the political arena after Sabri al-Asali's reformation of the cabinet and pursuant thereto, the following Syrian foreign policy direction was in the same line with the leftist form of policy since it severed the relations with the UK and France-with Suez invasion and strengthened Soviet ties and relations with the Eastern Europe and Egypt. See, Timothy Andrews Sayle and Susan Colbourn, "'An Unfortunate Lack of Ideas': NATO's 'Out-of-Area' Debate and the Syrian Crisis of 1957," *The International History Review* 42, no.2 (2019):338 <https://doi.org/10.1080/07075332.2018.1561492> Despite the endeavors of the US towards Syria, the increasing leftism, anti-westernism and cooperation with Egypt kept Syria closer to the Eastern bloc.

¹¹¹ In April 1957, the crisis which emerged between King Hussein and Prime Minister Suleiman Nabulsi in Jordan due to the disagreements regarding the communist activities in the country turned into an armed conflict. Syrian support to the opposition against anti-communist leader King Hussein paved the way for a crisis between Syria and Jordan. As the King Hussein blamed Syria for directing the pro-Communist subversion in Jordan, the opinion regarded Syria as a Soviet puppet in the eye of the US and Britain strengthened. See, Philip Anderson, "'Summer Madness': The Crisis in Syria, August-October 1957," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 22,no.1/2

of Turkey, Jordan, Iraq and the American diplomat Henderson came together in İstanbul to hold a number of meetings on developments in Syria. With reference to the rising communist threat in the East, Turkey emphasized Syrian threat in bipolar world order context to gain US support assuring her south against the Syria and the aid Turkey needed. On the other hand, for Syria Turkey and Israel were the representatives of Western interests in the region. In the following days, the crisis deepened. In October, Syria informed the UN General Assembly about the deployed troops in Turkey's south as a threat. Rejecting the allegations of offensive actions, Turkey emphasized that the measures taken had a defensive nature to due to the rising Soviet influence in Syria.¹¹² Also, the US secretary of state Dulles announced the possibility of an attack by Syria and Russia against Turkey and indicated that US will immediately respond to defend Turkey.¹¹³

In 50s Turkish regional policies were prominently pro-Western. In Algiers War, Turkey maintained its pro-Western policies in the United Nations. During the Suez crisis, Turkey followed a collateral foreign policy with the US, and despite Turkey's opposition to the invasion, it maintained its relations with Britain and Israel.¹¹⁴ Syrian crisis, the coup in Iraq, allowing the use of İncirlik for the US

(1995):24 <https://www.jstor.org/stable/195962>. The agreements for economic and technical collaboration signed by Syria and Russia in 1957 after Syrian defense minister Khalid al-Azm's visit to Moscow, highly discomposd the Western wing. These agreements were perceived as the peak point formalizing the alliance and promising for future collaboration among Russia and Syria. Three US officials were accused by planning to overthrow the Syrian government were deported from the country and Eisenhower rejecting the claims responded by declaring Syrian embassy as "personae non gratae" in the US. See, Timothy Andrews Sayle and Susan Colbourn, "An Unfortunate Lack of Ideas': NATO's 'Out-of-Area' Debate and the Syrian Crisis of 1957," *The International History Review* 42,no.2 (2019):339 <https://doi.org/10.1080/07075332.2018.1561492> Colonel Afif-al Bizri known as communist sympathizer in the West brought the office of commander in chief. See, David W Lesch, *Syria and the United States: Eisenhower's Cold War in the Middle East*, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1992), 106.

¹¹² "Cevabi notamızı dün Suriye'ye tevdi ettik", Cumhuriyet, October 17, 1957.

¹¹³ "Cevabi notamızı dün Suriye'ye tevdi ettik", Cumhuriyet, October 17, 1957.

¹¹⁴ Reem Abou-El-Fadl, "Turkey's Cold War Alliance: Nation-building and the Utility of the 1957 Syrian Crisis," in *Turkey-Syria Relations: Between Enmity and Amity* ed. Özlem Tür and Raymond Hinnebusch, (Oxon: Routledge, 2013), 45

operations in Lebanon and British forces sent to Jordan were some of the most specific cases emphasized Turkey's pro-Western regional policies in the context of bipolarity.

3.3. Détente and Multi-Dimensional Foreign Policy Attempts

In 60s and 70s, even if the intensity of Western influence on Turkey's regional policies did not remain the same, Cold War dynamics were still valid. In 60s, a more complex and multidimensional international system overshadowed by the Cold War dynamics emerged due to the rising interdependence in international relations and contribution of the secondary states.¹¹⁵ A declining direct aggression, disintegrations in the blocs and superpowers' competition to approach with the states in the opposite blocs became the characteristics of détente period in 60's and 70's. However, détente did not mean an emancipation for regional politics as bipolar dynamics were still valid.

After the second half of the 60s, Turkey took the advantage of competition between two superpowers and the emerging room for maneuver. Following the Cyprus issue Turkey re-considered the Western domination in its foreign policy. Opposing Turkey's Cyprus policy, the US stated its reluctance to defend Turkey in the case of a Soviet attack due to Turkey's invasion of Cyprus, in Johnson Letter. After the disputes with its Western allies regarding Cyprus, since the second half of the 60s a considerable reproachment emerged in the relations with Soviet Union including reciprocal visits and cooperation. In addition, Turkey aimed to change the Western centered one-dimensional foreign policy by improving relations with the Arab states and the third world countries. However, from the perspective of regional politics neither the détente period nor Turkey's relatively good relations with Arabs by

¹¹⁵ Mustafa Aydın, "Determinants of Turkish foreign policy: changing patterns and conjunctures during the Cold War" *Middle Eastern Studies* 36,no.1 (2000): 115, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00263200008701300>

opposing Western powers' policies in some cases, did not prove disappearance of the Cold War dynamics in regional politics. Arab- Israel wars in 1967 and 1973¹¹⁶ and the post-war developments, oil crisis in 1973, and Turkey's attempts for multidimensional foreign policy were still in interaction with the Cold War system.

In the context of bipolar world order, the Cold War diplomacy and capitalization on the system, enabled Turkey to improve its tangible and intangible capacity. In this period, rising significance of Turkey's strategic position enabled it to take place in the Western security wing. Turkey contributed to create an in-action regarding a worldwide Soviet expansionism including a specific prevention of a Soviet attack against Turkish territories. At this point it is significant to re-indicate that, Carr takes both causing an action and in-action (the ability to discourage the attacks) as the indicator of influence which middle powers are expected to have on specific element of the international system.¹¹⁷ In this period the US and Turkey had mutual purposes in most of the cases. Furthermore, it was expected to contribute prevention of Soviet expansionism by conducting regionalist projects under the influence of the West. Both in term of conflict and cooperation in this era regional level of politics was overshadowed by the bipolar dynamics. Although Turkey mostly followed a Western oriented regional and global politics, depending on the fluctuations in the intensity of the bipolar balance Turkey aimed to follow a multi-dimensional policy. Depending on its major interests and the intensity of the conflict among two blocs Turkey aimed to follow a multidimensional foreign policy including closer relations with Russia and with the regional actors to remain influencing the international system. However,

¹¹⁶ Coral Bell, "A Case Study in Crisis Management During Detente," *International Affairs* 50,no.4 (1974): 532-533, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2615921>.

¹¹⁷ Andrew Carr, "Is Australia a middle power? A systemic impact approach," 79-80.

Turkey's NATO membership and ideological oppositions to Western wing in the region restricted these attempts. In addition, by the 80s Turkey benefited from new cooperation areas with the US in the region after rising Soviet threat.

3.4. Pre-War Regional Dynamics: Relocation of the Threat and Acceleration of Regionalization

Re-location of the global threat in the eye of the Western wing, with the rising oil security concerns in the Middle East, re-emerging Soviet threat after invasion of Afghanistan, and Iranian Revolution created new cooperation areas between Turkey and the US, while re-emphasizing Turkey's strategic location and position as a significant ally in Western security on behalf of its middle power status. However, accelerating regionalization of the Middle East in this era, rising regional security network, deepening regional liaisons of Turkey's domestic threat perceptions referring Kurdish question and political Islam, and the enlarging role of non-state actors in the regional politics prepared were going to threaten Turkey's middle power status with the end of the Cold War.

3.4.1. Repercussions of the Oil Crisis in the Regional-Global Nexus

Oil crisis played a major role in shifting security concerns of the West in the Middle East. In this context, Turkey's neighborhood to the re-located threat emphasizing its strategic location one more time created new regional cooperation areas between the US and Turkey in the Middle East. As the oil crises erupted in the 1970s, the rising oil prices and embargo processes made the political developments in the oil-producing zones more critical. Having economic and political dimensions, the fluctuation in the oil prices and shortages caused by cut-backs put even the great

economies in jeopardy. The depth of the 1973 crisis is affiliated with a diversified number of dynamics at the regional and global levels. The decision of oil producers in OPEC to increase prices independently from the political context, the long-term Arab-Israeli conflict, the instrumentalization of the oil for embargo through the decision of OPEC members, and the inefficacy of the US to respond these due to domestic vulnerabilities during the presidency of Richard Nixon, were the primary dynamics.¹¹⁸

Israel defeated the Arab armies with almost irremediable damages and in 1973 the military field conflict ended up with an economic war. Aftermath of the Yom Kippur War in October 1973, the OPEC states imposed an oil embargo with regular deduction of the production and implementation of domestically low price control that was enhancing the American nation's energy problem.¹¹⁹ The gap between the US's oil demand and supply by the 1960s sharply increased, and in 1972, the US could only produce 10 million barrels per day, two-thirds of the 15 million barrels daily consumption.¹²⁰ In the US the foreign energy dependency was referenced as the critical causation for economic imbalance, economic recession in the case of a cut-back the decreasing living standards, reduction of the national power, risks on the American sovereignty and independence, and rising foreign policy issues, by the US officials, politicians, and media.¹²¹ Oil was significant in containment of the Soviet and integration of different countries in Western alliance from the US perspective.¹²² Later the embargo was extended to Netherland, South Africa, Portugal and

¹¹⁸ Fiona Venn, *The Oil Crisis* (London: Pearson Education, 2002), 7-8.

¹¹⁹ Michael Camp, *Energy and Environmental Politics in Appalachia after the 1973 Oil Embargo* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2019), 4.

¹²⁰ Camp, 11.

¹²¹ Sebastian Herbstreuth, *Oil and American Identity: A Culture of Dependency and US Foreign Policy* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2016), 78.

¹²² David S Painter, "Oil and Geopolitics: The Oil Crises of the 1970s and the Cold War" *Historical Social Research* 39, no.4 (2014):188, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/24145533>.

Rhodesia.¹²³ Noticing that international pressure plays a more forcible role than military power on behalf of the Arabs' objectives, the Arab states decided to take a different tack that will be successful, as the US joined peace processes as a mediator in the region ending up with the bilateral agreements among Syria-Israel and Egypt Israel.¹²⁴ As stated by Charles Issawi, the oil crisis in 1973 illustrated how the unity of economically, socially, militarily weak small states in OPEC achieved to impose their will and influence the rest of the world from the industrialized to the non-industrialized states.¹²⁵ The explanation of President Ford, one of the top government officials illustrate the impact of the oil embargo on US saying that another embargo could result in a collapse.¹²⁶

From the US energy security perspective, in 1979, two more breaking points appeared in the region, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan threatening the Persian Gulf and the Islamic Revolution in Iran announcing the end of twin pillar policy.¹²⁷ The Iranian oil cut-off after the Islamic Revolution doubled the oil price compared to one year before increasing the crude oil per barrel price being 12.9 dollars in December 1978 to 26.2 dollars by December 1979.¹²⁸ So that, Iran's policy played a major role in the second oil crisis. The invasion of Afghanistan risked the stability in the region

¹²³ Sebastian Herbreuth, *Oil and American Identity: A Culture of Dependency and US Foreign Policy* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2016), 190.

¹²⁴ Fiona Venn, *The Oil Crisis*, 84.

¹²⁵ Charles Issawi, "The 1973 Oil Crisis and After" *Journal of Post-Keynesian Economics* 1, no.2, 1978: 3, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4537467>.

¹²⁶ Sebastian Herbreuth, *Oil and American Identity: A Culture of Dependency and US Foreign Policy*, 76.

¹²⁷ Alan P. Dobson and Steve Marsh, *US Foreign Policy since 1945* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 122-123.

¹²⁸ Alberto Clo, *Oil Economics and Policy* (New York: Springer, 2000), 117.

that the US took the military intervention into agenda against Soviet influence on the Persian Gulf.¹²⁹

The dependency of American economics on oil as one of the primary energy resources in the industrial and daily American lives turned the foreign oil dependency into a national security issue that brought some transformations to the nature of the traditional Cold War threat. These concerns directed the US presidents despite the differences at the discourse level to stabilize the relations with the Arabs as seen in Kissenger's diplomatic attempts in 1973-74 and Carter's in 1979 for Arab-Israeli peace.¹³⁰

In this era, from the US perspective Turkey's regional security role was re-defined beyond the European security with SSCB's invasion of Afghanistan and oil security in the 80s. DECA agreement signed in March 29 1980 determined the official expectations from the cooperation as stated in the report released by the US General Accounting Office in 1982 as "United States is committed to use its "best efforts" to provide economic and defense support and strengthen Turkish defense industrial capabilities. In return, the United States has access to an airbase, intelligence installations, a long-range navigation station, elements of a defense communication system, and other support and logistics facilities."¹³¹ The US in 1980s aimed to balance the weak military capacities of the Gulf States through Turkey. The ideological impact of the revolution throughout the region perceived as a threat by the Arabs and Turkey's moderate Islam policies played an integrative role among Turkey and the Gulf states.

¹²⁹ Alan P. Dobson and Steve Marsh, *US Foreign Policy since 1945*, 122.

¹³⁰ Dobson and Marsh, 123.

¹³¹ Comptroller General of the United States, *The Defense and Economic Cooperation Agreement -- US Interests and Turkish Needs*, 1982.

The rapprochement and compromises among the US and Turkey regarding the regional politics and oil security had impelled the anti-state leftist groups to incrementally have a pro-Soviet discourse.

3.4.2. Iranian Revolution

In the context of rising Western security concerns in the region, Iranian revolution created new cooperation areas between the US and Turkey, while accelerating Turkey's dependency to the region. The overthrow of Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi via a civil resistance with the solidarity of various political units opened doors for radical transformations at the domestic, regional, and international politics. The solidarity in the street against Pahlavi Dynasty before Shah toppled down did not remain the same among the political groups once Ruhollah Khomeini came to power. Achieving dominance within the new state system in a short span of time the Islamists became the major determinant group in an absolute manner especially with the elimination of the last rival communist Tudeh Party in 1983.¹³² The regime change and strengthening religious groups in Iran after the Islamic Revolution, sharply transformed the Foreign Policy compared to the Pahlavi era. From Iranian perspective the Islamic revolution should not had been restricted with the Iranian national state borders but had to be implemented in the other Islamic nations too as a fundamental necessity.¹³³ This leader role Iran desired to play by exhorting the revolution to the surrounding Muslim populated countries was perceived as a threat by the regional actors. The Islamic regime was announcing its political stance regarding the Cold War

¹³² Ludwig Paul, "'Iranian Nation' and Iranian-Islamic Revolutionary Ideology" *Die Welt des Islams* 39, no.2 (1999): 184, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1571138>.

¹³³ Süleyman Elik, *Iran-Turkey Relations 1979-2011* (Oxon: Routledge, 2012), 36.

rivalry as “Neither the West nor the East -but Islam” and calling Muslims to unify.¹³⁴ Previous close relations among the Shah and the US in the region as well as at domestic level, had reversed with the opposing religious Anti-American groups seizing power. The US lost a staunch ally in the Gulf. Iranian oil cut-off and rising oil prices caused another energy crisis in 1979. Taking the US embassy staff hostages in Tehran and demanding repatriation of Shah from the US to be on trial in Iran was the symbolic event of the bitter relations in the new era.

12 September 1980 military coup in Turkey coinciding with Iran’s early revolutionary era, was targeted by the Iranian regime. The religious cadre having a similar experience in the US-backed coup conducted with the Operation Ajax suppressing nationalists and religious groups in Iran perceived the military coup made with the US support in Turkey, and anti Islamist fundamentalist and pro-Soviet Leftist policies as American imperialism in Turkey, Iran perceived the eliminated religious groups as needing the help of the Islamic regime.¹³⁵ Iranian regime export desire and the interaction it aimed to construct in the region were imposing threat against domestic affairs of the regional actors and US interests in the Gulf. With the oil crisis underlining the transformation of the prior threat in the region rather than the Soviet expansionism, the US started search for a solution in the region. In the mid-80s it costed US\$30 million to the US to reach regional anti-Khomeini groups.¹³⁶ Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Egypt, and Turkey started to be considered as the strategic points to stabilize the region increasing

¹³⁴ Hafizullah Emadi, “Exporting Iran's Revolution: The Radicalization of the Shiite Movement in Afghanistan” *Middle Eastern Studies* 31,no.1 (1995), 2, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4283695>.

¹³⁵ Süleyman Elik, *Iran-Turkey Relations 1979-2011*, 37.

¹³⁶ Elik, 37.

significance of Turkey in the region and moderate Islam policy of Özal and military government policies in 80s were in accordance with the US security considerations in the region.¹³⁷ Although the ideological impact of the Islamic Revolution became a threat against the regional actors' domestic affairs and critical tone by Iran against NATO member Turkey, the Iran Iraq war compelled Iran to remain the relations neutral with Turkey due to the economic relations and politically stabilize the rivalry dynamics in the region due to the rising cost of the war and internal challenges.¹³⁸ Still, the regime change, the revolutionary discourse aiming beyond the borders and the rise of Islamic fundamentalism in the region influence the relations among the rest of the Gulf states and their alignment with the US and Turkey.

3.4.3. Iran-Iraq War:

Long term territorial dispute over Shatt-al Arab, Iranian interference of Iraqi domestic ethnic and sectarian dynamics, provocation of Kurdish groups against Saddam Hussain, and Hussain's aspirations to re-gain the territories given to Iran with 1975 Algiers Agreement, to prevent the Iranian ideological, ethnic, and sectarian activities within Iraqi territories, and interference of Iraq in Iran's domestic affairs to destabilize Iran irreversibly increased the tension among two countries.¹³⁹ An eight years long war had erupted with the Iraq's invasion of Iran that caused, approximately one million dead and tens of thousands of war captured prisoners by Iran and Iraq.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁷ Baskın Oran, *Türk Dış Politikası: Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar Cilt I (1919-1980)*, 124-125.

¹³⁸ Süleyman Elik, *Iran-Turkey Relations 1979-2011*, 37.

¹³⁹ Phebe Marr, *The Modern History of Iraq* (Boulder: Westview Press, 2012), 180-181.

¹⁴⁰ Mehran Kamrava, *The Modern Middle East* (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 2005), 169-170.

More than becoming a conflict among two neighboring countries, Iran-Iraq war had considerable repercussions in the “Middle East and beyond”.¹⁴¹ Before mentioning regional and global implications of the war, it is significant to state the regional leadership motivation of the war. Kamrava states Nasser’s impact on Saddam during his education in Egypt and his desire to become the “...new guardian of the Arab cause and the Nasser of his day.”¹⁴² The revolution export threat and hot conflict during the war between Iraq and Iran, worried the other Arab states since the Iranian influence in the region was perceived as the Persian threat against Arabs. This threat perception and increasing military attacks of Iran impelled the Arab states to support Saddam fighting against Iran. Thus, the leadership aspiration of Saddam representing the Arabs interests during the Iran-Iraq War was also supported by the Gulf states which had military vulnerabilities.¹⁴³

Taking courage from the reversing relations between Iran and its previous Western allies, Iran’s isolation from the international arena, and post-revolutionary internal disorder in Iran Iraq hoped to end the war swiftly on its behalf. However, Iran was much stronger than expected. Furthermore, the war eliminated the rival groups against Islamic regime and strengthened Khomeini at the domestic level.¹⁴⁴ On the other hand, Kurdish separatist groups cooperating with Iran was forcing Bagdad for a settlement.¹⁴⁵ Since 1982, Iran achieved forcing Iraqi military powers back and

¹⁴¹ Adam Tarock, *The Superpowers' Involvement in the Iran-Iraq War* (Commack: Nova Science Publishers, 1998), 2.

¹⁴² Mehran Kamrava, *The Modern Middle East*, 172-173.

¹⁴³ Gerd Nonneman, "The Gulf States and the Iran–Iraq War: Pattern Shifts and Continuities" in *Iran, Iraq and the Legacies of War* ed. G. Potter Lawrence and Garry G. Sick, (New York: Palgrave Macmillian, 2004), 167.

¹⁴⁴ Kaveh Ehsani, “War and Resentment: Critical Reflections on the Legacies of the Iran-Iraq War” *Middle East Critique* 26, no.1 (2016): 6, <https://doi.org/10.1080/19436149.2016.1245530>.

¹⁴⁵ Lawrence G. Potter and Garry G. Sick, *Iran Iraq and the Legacies of War* (New York: Palgrave Macmillian, 2004), 80-81.

gradually started reversing the war on the ground while losing it in the diplomatic and economic areas.¹⁴⁶

Eight years long war influencing the regional relations, turned into an international war. Marr states that, it was the “tanker war” part internationalizing the conflict in 1985 and 1986 after Iraqi attack on Iranian tankers and Iranian respond with the attacks on the tankers of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and the Gulf States.¹⁴⁷ Initially aiming to protect Kuwait’s tankers, the US gradually involved in the war resulting in direct conflict with Iran after Iranian missile attack on the US ships.¹⁴⁸

The war re-formed the political economic and security structure in the Gulf and in the Middle East region. Iran and Iraq lost millions of people and were economically devastated. During the war the solidarity among the Gulf States against the opposition had triggered the establishment of Gulf Cooperation Council.¹⁴⁹ Likewise, countries in the region economically involved in the war, or directly damaged due to the reciprocal tanker attacks had great losses. Foreign debt of Iraq to the regional countries and excessive military capacity of Saddam Hussain turned into a regional threat even for the previous supporters of Saddam. Ethnic and sectarian dynamics of the war deepened ethno-sectarian based conflicts in the region.

The involvement of the Iraqi Kurds as an armed group supported by Iran and anti-Iraq regional powers, such as Syria was a critical dimension of the Iran-Iraq War in terms of the regional security. The power vacuum in northern Iraq due to the intense

¹⁴⁶David Segal, “The Iran-Iraq War: A Military Analysis” *Foreign Affairs* 66,no.5 (1988): 946, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20043572>.

¹⁴⁷ Phebe Marr, *The Modern History of Iraq*, 187.

¹⁴⁸ Marr, 188.

¹⁴⁹ Gerd Nonneman, “The Gulf States and the Iran–Iraq War: Pattern Shifts and Continuities,” 167-168.

conflict in the southern fronts¹⁵⁰ deepened the Kurdish question in the region as a major security threat for some countries. Iranian Revolution followed by civil conflict, the military coup influence on increasing militarization of the Kurdish groups and Iran Iraq War involving the Kurdish proxies had transformed the Kurdish issue in the region in 80s.¹⁵¹ Thus, in 80s the Kurdish question incrementally turned into a multidimensional, regional and an essential issue. KDP, PUK and different Kurdish armed groups gained control over new territories during the war in Iraq.¹⁵² Against the logistic and material support of Iran and Syria to Iraqi armed Kurdish groups, a rapprochement and cooperation process started between Turkey and Iraq in the fields of military (the countries signed 1983 ‘Border Security and Cooperation Treaty’ allowing hot pursuit), oil (Kerkuk-Yumurtalik Pipeline capacity was increased), foreign trade (made Iraq the second largest country in Turkey’s foreign trade rates) in the initial years of the war.¹⁵³

Conducting a guerilla war against PKK and deeply damaged by the logistic regional supports to the separatist armed groups, Turkey experienced a new phase in Kurdish question with the end of the war. During the Anfal campaign operations conducted against Iraqi Kurds 1.5 million residents were displaced, 3.000 villages were destructed and approximately 180.000 people lost their lives¹⁵⁴ Turkey and Iran encountered hundreds of thousands of migrants escaping from the brutal attacks of the regime in their borders.

¹⁵⁰ Baskın Oran, *Türk Dış Politikası : Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar Cilt II*. (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2010), 131.

¹⁵¹ Martin Van Bruinessen, *The Kurds in Movement: Migrations, mobilisations, communications and the globalisation of the Kurdish question* (Tokyo: Islamic Area Studies Project, 1999).

¹⁵² Baskın Oran, *Türk Dış Politikası : Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar Cilt II*, 131.

¹⁵³ Oran, 131-133.

¹⁵⁴ Kerim Yıldız, *The Kurds in Iraq: The Past present and Future* (London: Pluto Press, 2004), 25.

3.4.4. Regional Context of the Kurdish Question:

Kurds have been densely populated in Iran, Syria, Iraq, and Turkey in the Middle East. They share a sense of identity that was deepened by the nationalist movements since the 19th -20th centuries.¹⁵⁵ However, the time emerging Kurdish nationalism as an ethno-nationalistic ideology, remains as a disputable subject. Albeit the transborder liaisons and this shared sense of identity among the Kurds, they have a complicated structure far from homogeneity that one cannot evaluate them all under the same roof. Following the Arab rebellions and disintegration of the Ottoman Empire, the idea of an independent Kurdish state was articulated by some Kurdish nationalist groups but remained restricted and became unsuccessful. With the establishment of regional Arab states, particularly Iraq and Syria, Kurds started living in these countries as separated by the borders.

Kurdistan province had been significant for the eastern security of the Ottoman Empire both in terms of internal and external threats since their integration. Heper refers to the critical role of the Kurds' shifting position to maintain their semi-independence in the 16th century as an influential dynamic during the Ottoman-Safavid conflicts.¹⁵⁶ Discovering the regional power of the Kurdish tribes since 16th century, Ottomans aimed to integrate the Kurdish political units and reformed the Kurdish groups as less threatening unified structures.¹⁵⁷ Since then, Kurdish groups led by the tribal chieftains lived under the autonomy of the Ottoman Sultans for centuries.

¹⁵⁵ Robert Olson, "The Kurdish Question in the Aftermath of the Gulf War: Geopolitical and Geostrategic Changes in the Middle East," *Third World Quarterly* 13, no.3 (1992), 475, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3992197>.

¹⁵⁶ Metin Heper, *The State and Kurds in Turkey: The Question of Assimilation*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 36-37.

¹⁵⁷ Hakan Özoğlu, *Kurdish Notables and the Ottoman State: Evolving Identities, Competing Loyalties, and Shifting Boundaries* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004), 53.

In the 19th and 20th centuries the Kurdish revolts in the Ottomans were mostly against the modernization and centralization policies.¹⁵⁸ The reforms implemented were threatening the local Kurdish administrations' autonomy in the region. Likewise, at the beginning of 20th century in Iran, the power struggle among the anjumans, the protectors of the constitution, and local Kurdish aghas emerged as the major source of the Kurdish disorder that was masked by the religious conflict.¹⁵⁹ Modernization reforms in both states, were threatening the previous system providing larger local administrative power to the tribal leaders.

The regional power vacuum after the WWI provided Kurds the possibility of independence.¹⁶⁰ Disintegration of the Ottoman Empire, that had determined the social political and the religious order in the region for the last 400 years opened door for a huge uncertainty in the Arab provinces.¹⁶¹ Ottoman lands were divided and created different states including Turkey, Syria and Iraq.¹⁶² The uncertainty and disorder remained in the newly established Turkish Republic and in the Arab territories. Division of the Ottoman territories caused the division of the Kurdish population to remain in the territories of different states. As can be inferred from this, regional dimension of the Kurdish question has geographical and historical grounds. During the Kurdish rebellions against Turkey in the Early Republican era, Sheikh Said, Dersim and Mt. Ararat, Reza Khan was struggling against Kurds in Iran and British in

¹⁵⁸ Hakan M. Yavuz, "Five stages of the construction of Kurdish nationalism in Turkey" *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 7, no.3 (2007):5, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13537110108428635>.

¹⁵⁹ David McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds* (New York: I.B.Tauris & Co Ltd, 2007), 102.

¹⁶⁰ Kerim Yıldız and Tanyel B. Taysı, *The Kurds in Iran: The Past Present and Future*, 10.

¹⁶¹ William L Cleveland, *Modern Ortadoğu Tarihi*, trans. Mehmet Harmancı (İstanbul:Agora Kitaplığı, 2008), 187.

¹⁶² Cleveland, 193.

northern Iraq.¹⁶³ Stating the disagreement on the Sheikh Said rebellion's motivation either as religious or nationalist, Olson argues the nationalistic grounds were more significant in this era.¹⁶⁴ These revolts emerging after the WWI against the domestic authorities in different regional states were harshly suppressed but having historical ideological roots, Kurdish nationalist activities transformed into an issue that will last for decades.

Despite the transborder attempts of the Kurdish groups to act as unified armed organizations against the regional states, they could not set a fully successful example. In 1944, Komala representatives in Iran, Kurds of Iraq and Turkey came together in Mount Dalanpur to illustrate the solidarity through share of the resources and mutual support.¹⁶⁵ Then, Soviet and Britain occupation of Iran provided a "vacuum" leading the first autonomous Kurdish government by Iranian Kurds, Mahabad Republic.¹⁶⁶ However, with the withdrawal of the Soviet Union the Mahabad Republic had collapsed. In 60s Iranian Kurds had an attempt to unite with the Iraqi Kurds, that had much stronger capacity in their fight against Tehran but the cooperation failed as Barzani helped Iran against the Iranian Kurdish groups.¹⁶⁷ The ethno-nationalistic emphasis of Turkey's nation building process and non-interventionist foreign policy towards the Middle East, aimed to cut the interaction among the Turkey's Kurds and

¹⁶³ Robert Olson, «The Kurdish Rebellions of Sheikh Said (1925), Mt. Ararat (1930), and Dersim (1937-8): Their Impact on the Development of the Turkish Air Force and on Kurdish and Turkish Nationalism.» *Die Welt des Islams* 40, no.1 (2000):67, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1571104>.

¹⁶⁴ Olson, 70-71.

¹⁶⁵ David McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds*, 237.

¹⁶⁶ McDowall, 231.

¹⁶⁷ Micheal M Gunter, "Iran's Forgotten Kurds" *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies* 40, no.2 (2020): 60 <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.33428/jsoutasiamiddeas.43.2.0054>.

the Middle Eastern Kurds, since Turkey considered the regional dimension of the Kurdish issue as a source of threat since the early republican era.

Emerging in different regional nation states Kurdish movements, albeit the trans-national attempts, mostly remained as the separate bodies highly influenced by the internal dynamics rather than acting as a trans-national unified structure. Gunter argues that Iran-Iraq war made the Kurds more important international actors compared to the past as each country aimed Kurdish groups against the rival state.¹⁶⁸

3.4.4.1. Iran:

In the pre-revolutionary period, the Islamic revolution was supported by the Kurdish groups that had issues with the Shah's Kurdish policies except the group integrated in the monarchical system of the Shah.¹⁶⁹ Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iran (KDPI) and the Marxist Komala were two major Kurdish groups when Islamic Revolutionary leader, Ayatollah Khomeini came to power.¹⁷⁰ KDPI, transformed from the Komalay JK,¹⁷¹ was the constitutor of the Mahabad Republic in 1946.¹⁷² After the collapse of the Mahabad Republic the organization mostly remained underground and in 1969 Komala as another Kurdish nationalist group was established.¹⁷³ KDPI and the groups under the leadership of Sheikh Ezzeddin Hussein desired Kurdish autonomy from the republican state that was contravening with the central Islamic

¹⁶⁸ Micheal M Gunter, "Iran's Forgotten Kurds," 60-61.

¹⁶⁹ Nader Entessar, "The Kurds in Post-Revolutionary Iran and Iraq" *Third World Quarterly* 6, no.4 (1984): 923, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3991802>.

¹⁷⁰ Micheal M Gunter, "Iran's Forgotten Kurds," 61.

¹⁷¹ Vali Abbas, *Kurds and the State in Iran: The Making of Kurdish Identity* (London: I.B.Tauris, 2011), 25-26.

¹⁷² Abbas, 49.

¹⁷³ Gresh, Geoffrey F. «Iranian Kurds in an Age of Globalisation.» *Iran & the Caucasus* 13, no.1 2009, 190, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/25597402>.

authority claims of Ayatollah Khomeini.¹⁷⁴ Khomeini had declared war against these Kurdish groups¹⁷⁵ which were his former supporters. The president Bazargan during the conflicts stated that Kurds desire an independent state rather than an autonomy despite the opposite explanations of the Kurdish side¹⁷⁶ articulating the concerns of the republic. The groups of Komala, KDPI, Mujahedin-e Khalq, and Fadayan-e Khalq fought against the Islamic government but they were defeated state army and had internal conflict among themselves.¹⁷⁷ After the failure of the armed rebellion of Kurdish groups in 1983, armed remnants remained sheltering in the north of Iraq.¹⁷⁸ Both ethnic and religious, due to the Sunni Kurdish population, cross-border dimension of the Kurdish population in Iran was posing a threat to the state authority. During the Iran-Iraq War, KDPI proposed to fight against Saddam Hussain's forces in recognition of Kurdish autonomy but rejecting KDPI's suggestion, Islamic Republic waged war both against the Iranian Kurds that were used as a barrier against Iraqi attacks, and against the Iraqi army.¹⁷⁹ During the Islamic Republic's operations against the Kurdish groups, Barzani cooperated with Iran against the Iranian Kurds and Partiotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) took side with the KDPI.¹⁸⁰ Kamali states that all the main Kurdish organizations in Iran were dependent on the Bagdad in terms of the logistic and financial support.¹⁸¹ The internal fragmentations triggered armed

¹⁷⁴ Nader Entessar, "The Kurds in Post-Revolutionary Iran and Iraq," 924.

¹⁷⁵ Micheal M Gunter, "Iran's Forgotten Kurds," 61.

¹⁷⁶ David McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds*, 269.

¹⁷⁷ Nader Entessar, "The Kurds in Post-Revolutionary Iran and Iraq" 928-932.

¹⁷⁸ Micheal M Gunter, "Iran's Forgotten Kurds," 61.

¹⁷⁹ Farideh Koochi Kamali, *The Political Development of the Kurds in Iran: Pastoral Nationalism* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 190.

¹⁸⁰ Kamali, 190-191.

¹⁸¹ Kamali, 191.

conflicts among the Iranian Kurds and the case was not different for the Iraqi Kurds too. However, mutual support of Iraq and Iran to the rivalry state's opposition Kurdish groups and cooperation of the Kurdish groups with the rival states to during the Iran Iraq war deepened the regional dimension of the Kurdish question within the shifting alliances.

3.4.4.2. Iraq:

Iraqi Kurds had a fragmented political nature with tribal rivalries and different political parties such as Party of United Kurdistan (PUK), Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP), Socialist Party for Kurdish People (SPKP), Kurdistan Socialist Party (KSP), Workers Party (WP) and Kurdistan Peoples Democratic Party in which KDP led by Barzani and PUK led by Talabani distinguishing from the other had become two strongest rivals.¹⁸² Since 1970, the bargaining process with Saddam Hussain promising Kurdish ceasefire in exchange for a Kurdish autonomy, remained inconclusive.¹⁸³ During the Iran Iraq war Barzani cooperated with the Iranian armed forces while Talabani was supporting the KDPI. In 1988 the Halapja massacre during the al-Anfal operations, turned the Kurdish issue into a humanitarian crisis in the region. Following the incident 70.000 Kurds were forced by the Iraqi forces to the Turkey's and Iranian borders.¹⁸⁴ Initially refusing the refugees because of the security concerns, Turkey changed its decision after international and domestic pressure and admitted the Kurds without providing them refugee status.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸² Ronald J. Brown, *Humanitarian Operations in Northern Iraq, 1991 with Marines in Operation Provide Comfort*. (Washington, D.C.: Paperback, 1995), 81.

¹⁸³ Brown, 81.

¹⁸⁴ Suna Gülfer İhlamur Öner, "Turkey's Refugee Regime Stretched to the Limit? The Case of Iraqi and Syrian Refugee Flows" *Perceptions* 18, no.3 2013: 195.

3.4.4.3. Turkey:

Following the secularization and leftist orientation of the Kurdish nationalism in Turkey since 60s, Kurdish ethnic groups took part in the 70s during the leftist activities against the central authority in Ankara.¹⁸⁶ Rising in the 1978 the Marxist oriented organization PKK became one of the major security issues of Turkey. Since its foundation, PKK followed an active cross border strategy. Beyond the ethnic liaisons, the Marxist-orientation provided regional networks enabling PKK to establish training camps strengthening the guerilla war technics of the organization. PKK's liaisons with the Palestinian Marxist groups activities in northern Lebanon Bekaa valey and the relations with Syrian intelligence service, increasing the mobility of the organization among Syria, Turkey and Lebanon ¹⁸⁷ are some cases illustrating the regional dimension of the organization since its establishment. In 1980 Turkish government picked up 1790 PKK connected suspects leading the organization to train beyond the Syrian border for further attacks that will take place in 1984 until which it remained relatively stagnant.¹⁸⁸ Iraqi wing of the PKK's regional activities has been vitally important for Turkey. After the penetration of the PKK in northern Iraq by 1982, Turkey and Iraq signed a border security treaty enabling each country to conduct cross border operations until 10 km beyond each other's borders that will lead a

¹⁸⁵ Baskın Oran, *Türk Dış Politikası: Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar*, Cilt II 1980-2001, (İstanbul: İletişim Yayıncılık, 2001), 138. cited in Suna Gülfer İhlamur Öner, "Turkey's Refugee Regime Stretched to the Limit? The Case of Iraqi and Syrian Refugee Flows" *Perceptions: Journal of International Affairs* 18, no.3 2013: 195.

¹⁸⁶ Hakan M. Yavuz, "Five stages of the construction of Kurdish nationalism in Turkey," 9-10.

¹⁸⁷ Mehmet Orhan, "Transborder violence: the PKK in Turkey, Syria and Iraq," *Dynamics of Asymmetric Conflict* 7,no.1 (2014):31, <https://doi.org/10.1080/17467586.2014.909946>.

¹⁸⁸ David McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds*, 422.

counter alliance among PDK and PKK.¹⁸⁹ However, the rising conflict among PKK and PDK leded dissolvment of the protocol among two groups in 1987 and dissociation with Barzani, PKK started to take side with Jalal Talabani in the region.¹⁹⁰

3.4.4.4. Syria

Compared to Iraq, Turkey and Iran, Syria had a much smaller Kurdish population. However, since 70s Syrian government actively used the Kurdish card to influence the regional politics through the affiliations with Turkey's and Iraq's Kurds. In 1980 PKK was allowed by Syria to establish its camps and offices within the boundaries of Syria, and Bekaa Valley in Lebanon, since the regime aimed to gain power against Turkey.¹⁹¹ With the Iran-Iraq War eruption, Syria took sides with Iran against Iraq, two different Baath regimes had a long-term rivalry competition desiring Arab leadership in the region.¹⁹²

All the things considered, understanding pre-war regional dynamics created new cooperation areas between Turkey and the US in the Cold War context, while experiencing an accelerating regionalization with the increasing security networks in terms of the regional-domestic liaisons with the rising influence of non-state actors. The regionalization process remained under the Cold War shadow, constructed the background of Turkey's experience between regional and global political paradox in

¹⁸⁹ Süha Bölükbaşı, Ankara, Damascus, Baghdad, and the regionalization of Turkey's Kurdish Secessionism." *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies* 14, no. 4 (1991): 24 cited in Mehmet Orhan, "Transborder violence: the PKK in Turkey, Syria and Iraq," *Dynamics of Asymmetric Conflict* 7,no.1 (2014):36, <https://doi.org/10.1080/17467586.2014.909946>.

¹⁹⁰ Süha Bölükbaşı, Ankara, Damascus, Baghdad, and the regionalization of Turkey's Kurdish Secessionism." *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies* 14, no. 4 (1991): 32 cited in Mehmet Orhan, "Transborder violence: the PKK in Turkey, Syria and Iraq," *Dynamics of Asymmetric Conflict* 7,no.1 (2014):36, <https://doi.org/10.1080/17467586.2014.909946>.

¹⁹¹ Kerim Yıldız, *The Kurds in Syria: The Forgotten People* (London: Pluto Press, 2005), 58.

¹⁹² Yıldız, 59.

1990s, once the US withdrew as a staunch Cold War ally of Turkey. This two-dimensional transformation in the pre-war period, remained without Cold War context and a much sharper regionalization after the Gulf War.

To conclude, this chapter discussed Turkey's regional policies and middle power status before 1990s by referring three different periods including the inter-war era, Cold War until 1980's and pre-Gulf War era. In the inter-war period Turkey followed a small power diplomacy because of the economic and political struggles at the domestic level. It followed a non-interventionist foreign policy towards the Middle East to abstain from regional conflicts. With the rising significance of its strategic location, Turkey attained middle power status in the context of the Cold War. In line with the regionalization literature stating that during the Cold War era regional politics were under the influence of the bipolar dynamics, Turkey's relations with the Middle East were intensely shadowed by the Cold War system. So that, in this period regional-global nexus did not turn into a threat challenging Turkey's middle power status as it did after the Cold War. Thirdly, this chapter examined the pre-Gulf War era in the context of rising regionalization and emergence of new cooperation areas between Turkey and the West. Pre-Gulf War regional political developments emerged in the Middle East and world politics prepared the background of the complex environment Turkey encountered aftermath of the Gulf War. Throughout 1980's new cooperation areas had emerged in the Middle East in terms of US-Turkey alignment due to the energy security, re-emerging Soviet threat and Islamic revolution in Iran in the context of the Cold War, which contributed Turkey's middle power status. On the other hand, accelerating regionalization increased Turkey's regional dependency especially regarding ethno-religious security subject throughout 1980's including rising PKK issue in the regional context and political Islam after the Islamic revolution, started

making Turkey extremely vulnerable in terms of domestic-regional nexus increasing the significance of the regional security in the eye of Turkey. The accelerating regionalization in this period was significant in terms of preparing the background of the issues Turkey will encounter after 1990.

CHAPTER 4

THE GULF WAR

The purpose of this chapter is to analyze the Gulf War and Turkey's motivation to join in the context of Turkey's middle powers status. Coincided with the end of the early post-Cold War, the motivation of Turkey to join the Gulf War was to maintain its significance in the global politics providing it room for influencing the system. Receiving the post-Cold War environment with anxieties as it threatened the importance of Turkey's strategic location, the pro-intervention wing perceived the Gulf War as re-emergence of mutual threat with the US, which was the winner of the bipolar competition and the actor expected to establish a new formation of the global politics. Turkey aimed to re-emphasize its strategic position and aimed to play a pro-US role in the region to maintain its significance in the emerging international system. Furthermore, Turkey hoped that this regional mission, could contribute its membership in EC, which offers a huge diplomatic strength and ability for Turkey's role in the international system.

4.1. The Road to War

Iraq invaded its southern neighbor Kuwait on August 2, 1990, with almost 100,000 Iraqi soldiers and 700 tanks rolled across the border.¹⁹³ Despite UNSC resolutions calling Iraq to end the occupation and recede from Kuwait, the invasion remained. The long-term territorial dispute, the oil quota conflict in OPEC, Iraqi accusation of Kuwait for exploiting the shared Rumailah oil field, which became dramatically significant due to the Iraqi financial conditions after the long-term Iran-Iraq war, were the most stated factors behind the invasion.¹⁹⁴

Iraq's territorial claims on Kuwait were based on historical arguments. During the re-structuring process after disintegration of the Ottoman Empire, the imperial design of Britain constructing Iraq as a mandate by separating Kuwait became a reference point for Iraq's claim on Kuwait.

During the unceasing Iran-Iraq War both sides had burdensome cost. Despite relatively better economic conditions of Iraq compared to Iran at the end of the war,¹⁹⁵ the country was heavily indebted due to the increasing armament spending and damages of the long-term wars on states' economies. After Iran-Iraq war the foreign debt of Iraq reached \$80 billion.¹⁹⁶ During and after the war, Kuwait provided around 25 billion dollars financial support to Iraq as cash and sold 6.7 billion dollars of oil, and Iraq received 25.7 billion dollars from Saudi Arabia and 5-6 billion dollars support from UAE, Iraq had a chance to recover a considerable amount of its war

¹⁹³ "1990: Iraq Invades Kuwait", BBC:On This Day, August 2, 1990.

¹⁹⁴ Hamdi A Hassan, *The Iraqi Invasion of Kuwait: Religion, Identity and Otherness in the Analysis of War and Conflict* (London: Pluto Press, 1999), 5.

¹⁹⁵ Special National Intelligence Estimate, Implications of Various Outcomes of the Iran-Iraq War, 2007. See also, Ted Galen Carpenter, Malou Innocent. "The Iraq War and Iranian Power." *Survival* 4, no. 49 (2007-2008):68-69, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00396330701733845>.

¹⁹⁶ Iraq and Kuwait: The Joys of Brotherhood, *Economist*, July 17, 1990.

expenditures.¹⁹⁷ However, neither such a huge financial support nor rich oil reserves of Iraq could not prevent the financial crisis. Decreasing oil prices for per barrel from 20 dollars to 14 dollars, disappointed Iraq in terms of the financial expectations of the year via oil which covered 98 percent of total Iraqi export.¹⁹⁸ Iraq accused Kuwait of over oil production and decreasing the barrel prices. Taking the issue from security perspective, the Arab solidarity and brotherhood emphasis on Iraqi foreign policy towards the regional Arab states, led Iraq gain the trust of them in the regional politics against a potential Iranian threat. The dominant perception was that the Iran-Iraq war was not an Iraqi issue but of Arabs' issue initiated by Iraq due to the mutual threat perception against Iran. Iraq's claim that it waged war on behalf of all Arabs and the solidarity among Arabs unified around the race-based arguments inevitably contributed to the Arab states' decision to assist Iraq in the war. After the end of the war declining Iranian threat in the region as a fundamental Islamist and aggressively perceived regional actor, the solidarity and conjunction among the Iraq and the neighbor Arab states such as Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, gradually diminished, so that Iraq could not obtain more financial support from its regional allies.¹⁹⁹ Being grateful to Iraq for the long term shouldering the responsibility against Iran²⁰⁰ after the war Iraq as a superpower with a huge military capacity in the Persian Gulf, had turned into a security threat even for the rest of regional powers even for Arabs that previously supported Iraq in the war.²⁰¹ However, according to Gause, despite providing sensible

¹⁹⁷ Hamdi A Hassan, *The Iraqi Invasion of Kuwait: Religion, Identity and Otherness in the Analysis of War and Conflict*, 109.

¹⁹⁸ Shak Bernard Hanish, "The 1990 Gulf Crisis: Political Realism Applied," *Journal of International Relations and Foreign Policy* (American Research Institute for Policy Development) 1, no. 1 (2013): 4.

¹⁹⁹ Alastair Finlan, *The Gulf War 1991* (Oxford: Routledge, 2003), 15.

²⁰⁰ Gause F. Gregory, "Iraq's Decisions to Go to War, 1980 and 1990," *Middle East Journal* 56, no.1(2002):50, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4329720>.

factors behind the attack, offensive realist explanations fail to explain the specific timing of the Kuwait attack.²⁰² According to Saddam and his circle, the economic crisis was not a natural result of certain economy policies or the circumstances stemmed from the oil production in the global oil market but a hostile intentional compass planned by internal, regional and international actors against Iraq and Baath regime.²⁰³

Following the initial attacks Iraq invaded Kuwait. Kuwait's emir and administration moved to Saudi Arabia. Claiming Kuwait its 19th province Iraq rejected withdrawing its troops from Kuwait for months. From the perspective of offensive realism, this invasion is most frequently associated with the economic arguments with reference to the high level of welfare of Kuwait based on rich resources as a much smaller state with a much weaker army compared to Iraqi military.²⁰⁴ Kuwait's insufficient army containing 16.000 men, 40 centurions, 70 British Mk I tanks, 6 Yugoslav M-84s and 165 chieftains²⁰⁵ obviously was not capable of fighting against the Iraqi military. However, an impending US action was not taken to the consideration by Iraq. US intervention was unexpected, and Kuwait did not have an alternative protector to oppose Iraq in the region when immobilized situation of Iran after the war is considered.²⁰⁶ Miscalculations of Iraq failing to notice US factor and coalition forces including Arab states changed the course of the war.

²⁰¹ Lessons Learned: Iran-Iraq War:Headquarters United States Marine Corps 1990, V.

²⁰² Gause F. Gregory, "Iraq's Decisions to Go to War, 1980 and 1990," 53.

²⁰³ Gregory, 53.

²⁰⁴ Hamdi A Hassan, *The Iraqi Invasion of Kuwait: Religion, Identity and Otherness in the Analysis of War and Conflict*, 6.

²⁰⁵ Antony Tucker Jones, *The Gulf War: Operation Desert Storm 1990-1991*. (Barnsley: Pen & Sword Military, 2014), 13.

²⁰⁶ Gause F. Gregory, "Iraq's Decisions to Go to War, 1980 and 1990," 50.

4.2. Saddam Hussein: A Regional Leader or a Threat?

The Gulf War breaking out after the Iran Iraq War, the transformations in the regional, global politics and different priorities of Arab groups in various cases have created an unstable perspective by Arabs towards Saddam Hussein in that period. The relations between Iraq and anti-Islamic regime countries that provided support to Iraq against Iran such as Kuwait, UAE, and Saudi Arabia had weakened compared to the war era.²⁰⁷ However, stating that Saddam's actual miscalculation was not the reaction of the US in the Gulf War, but of the Arab World, Telhami argues in the context of Post-Cold War and increasing threat of the US hegemony, due to Saddam's anti-US and Israel discourse in the region he had massive popularity among the Arabs especially as a protector against Israel in the pre-Gulf War era.²⁰⁸ After the invasion of Kuwait, the Arabs directly under the threat of Israel and Zionist lobby in Washington did not follow a hostile attitude against Iraq but the oil rich Gulf states perceived Iraqi aggression as a direct threat, while countries such as Syria and Egypt had fears regarding the regional domination of Iraq.²⁰⁹ Albeit common threat's withdrawal after Iran Iraq war, Iraq's call for Arabs to unify and resist against Western hegemony in the region was also a positive attempt for the Arab world but invasion of Kuwait reversed the approaches regarding Saddam Hussein. Iraq's military capacity which had strengthened during the war, collapsed economy and aggressive policy regarding its regional neighbor caused it to be perceived as a regional threat. Following

²⁰⁷ Alastair Finlan, *The Gulf War 1991*, 15.

²⁰⁸ Shibley Telhami, "Arab Public Opinion and the Gulf War," *Political Science Quarterly* 108, no.3 (1993): 442-443, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2151698>.

²⁰⁹ Telhami, 448-449.

the invasion Saudi Arabia and the other Gulf states asked for the help of the US.²¹⁰ Saddam Hussein used the Israeli card against the coalition forces during the Gulf War and the regime forces lobbed 40 Scud missiles on Israel expecting a response that could cause the withdrawal of some Arab states from the coalition forces, but the US stopped Israel.²¹¹ So that, the Muslim Arab states remained fighting within the coalition forces against Saddam Hussein. Anti-Saddam stance in the region was significant as it encouraged Turkey to cooperate with the US against Iraqi aggression and then to have a say in the post-war regional developments.

4.3. International Dimension of the Crisis and the UN Sanctions

On August 2, 1990, UN Resolution 660 condemned Iraq's Kuwait invasion and demanded Iraq to withdraw its forces.²¹² On August 6 the security council reaffirmed resolution 660 and called all the member and non-member states to cease any industrial, commercial, financial, and economic activities in Iraq and Kuwait.²¹³ Since the resolution a severe economic embargo process, canceling out almost all the financial and trade activities with Iraq, except trade for humanitarian purposes, started against the Baathist regime.

²¹⁰ Walid Khalidi, "The Gulf Crisis: Origins and Consequences," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 20, no.2 (1991):14, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2537195>.

²¹¹ Rodney P. Carlisle, *Iraq War (America at War)*, (New York: Facts on File, 2007), 35-36.

²¹² United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Res 660 (2 August 1990), UN Doc S/RES/660, <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/660>.

²¹³ United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Res 661 (6 August 1990), UN Doc S/RES/661, <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/661>.

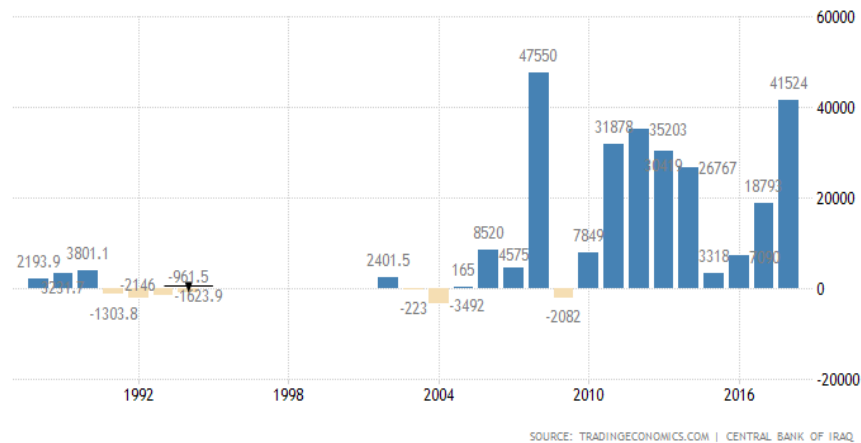


Figure 1: The Impact of the Economic Sanctions on Iraq’s Trade Balance²¹⁴

According to the OPEC data, the values of export values which were at 12,284 (m \$) and 10,314 (m \$) in 1989 and 1990 respectively, plummeted to 377(m \$) in 1991, 518 (m \$) in 1992 and 457 (m \$) in 1993 levelled off until 1997, at 4,602(m\$) with the sanctions.²¹⁵ It was inevitable that the collective action decision taken by UN to dissuade Iraq from the invasion, had different consequences on different states imposing sanctions depending on their previous trade volume with Iraq. After the increasing oil transportation capacity of the pipeline and foreign trade volume, Iraq became the second largest foreign trade partner of Turkey, which will result in a devastating economic loss.

The invasion strongly dominated the agenda of the United Nations Security Council. Resolutions 651, 660, 661, 662, 664, 665,666, 667, 669, 670,674, 677,678 passed to decisively call Iraq to end the continuing occupation. However, Iraq passed to decisively call Iraq to end the continuing occupation. However, Iraq maintained the invasion and claimed Kuwait Iraq’s 19th province. As the issue directly concerned several regional and international actors, the attacks turned into a global issue requiring an urgent solution. Approving the use of “all necessary means” to

²¹⁴ Trading Economics, Iraq Balance of Trade, <https://tradingeconomics.com/iraq/balance-of-trade>.

²¹⁵ OPEC, Annual Statistical Bulletin, Vienna: Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries; 2007.

restore peace and security, on November 29, resolution 678 provided legal base to foreign intervention against Iraq and asked all the states for support.²¹⁶ This international dimension was providing an opportunity for Turkey to emphasize its role in international security.

The embargo process failed to withdraw Iraqi military from Kuwait and the coalition forces decided to make a military intervention. Politically and militarily having the largest share of the operations, the US led the process with the contribution of more than 500.000 personnel including 260.000 troops as ground forces under General H. Norman Schwarzkopf.²¹⁷ With 35,000 personnel from Britain, 14,000 from France, 10-15,000 from Kuwait and 47.000 troops from Egypt, 122,500 men from Saudi Arabia (67,500 from Saudi Arabian Armed Forces and 55,000 from Saudi Arabian National Guard), these countries made the largest support for the intervention.²¹⁸ The Global and regional support for the intervention, and the legal base provided by the security council aimed to isolate Iraq. The most significant change in the Security Council, was the cooperation of USSR which did not veto the intervention decision.

4.4. Gulf Crisis and Turkey's Middle Power Status

The non-interventionist attitude Turkey maintained during the Iran-Iraq War did not remain in the same line when Iraq invaded Kuwait. The successive Iraqi attacks and declaration determining Kuwait as the 19th province of Iraq had substantial

²¹⁶ United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Res 678 (29 November 1990), UN Doc S/RES/678, <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/678>.

²¹⁷ Antony Tucker Jones, *The Gulf War: Operation Desert Storm 1990-1991*, 10.

²¹⁸ Jones, 10-11.

repercussions strong enough to cause radical changes in the region's distribution of power. The invasion was perceived as severe aggression and international law violation at the regional and global levels. The Iraqi advanced military capacity, aggressive foreign policy behaviours regarding the neighboring countries, and the opportunity to gain extensive oil resources after Kuwait's invasion started posing an increasing security threat for the regional security and for the non-involved regional actors including Turkey. Following the invasion, Turkey implemented economic sanctions on Iraq in accordance with the UN call. There was no doubt on the war's potential profound impact on Turkey as the neighboring country of Iraq and a traditional staunch ally of the US, once the possibility of intervening Iraq by US-led coalition powers came to the agenda. In addition, its NATO membership, and responsibilities to UN were significant in its role in the crisis. On the other hand, strong bilateral relations developed with Iraq in the economic, political and military fields especially in the 80s and the total cost of the conflict with a neighboring country deepened the dimension of the huge risk to be shouldered by Turkey. The dilemma among following a neutral and non-interventionist foreign policy towards an inter-Arab conflict and contributing to the UN embargo and then US-led coalition forces triggered multifarious internal discussions among Turkish politicians, bureaucrats and military officials. The political calculations within the loss-benefit equation framework varied from each fragmentation's perspective in the decision-making mechanisms.

The end of the Cold War was threatening Turkey's middle power status with the declining significance of its role in international security. Hunter describes the 1987-1990 era for Turkey as the period of anxiety since Turkey received the transforming global atmosphere with the expectations and anxiety due to the

weakening strategic importance of Turkey in Western security.²¹⁹ Long term staunch alignment of the US and Turkey in the context of NATO membership and the process of the full membership in EU increasingly seemed to be under an increasing threat with the end of the Cold War.²²⁰ Turkey had capitalized on the Cold War system economically, politically and militarily in return of contributing Western security despite the exceptional disagreements and this adaptation became the backbone of its middle power status. However, with the end of the Cold War Edward Derwinski's statement on the US decision to end the military assistance for Turkey, Greece and Portugal was worrying, "We provide military assistance to countries only when there is a common military purpose."²²¹

In the previous sections, the Gulf region's rising importance for the US was examined within the context of the threat's re-location.²²² In the period when the perception of common threat had disappeared and Turkish-American relations are being re-questioned, the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait was the first indication of a process towards a new common threat perception. The Gulf Crisis was seen as the cost of expectations from the post-Cold War to adopt and influence the international politics from Turkey's perspective. However, regionalization of the security issues dominating

²¹⁹ Shireen Hunter, "Bridge or frontier? Turkey's Post-Cold War geopolitical posture," *The International Spectator* 34, no.1 1999, <https://doi.org/10.1080/03932729908456847>.

²²⁰ Ziya Öniş, "Turkey in the Post-Cold War Era: In Search of Identity" *The Middle East Journal* 49, no.1 1995, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4328771>.

²²¹ Aylin Güney, "An Anatomy of the Transformation of the US–Turkish Alliance: From "Cold War" to "War on Iraq"," *Turkish Studies* 6,no.3 (2005):345, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14683840500235449>.

²²² Regarding the stability of the region, the US had deep concerns once Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait and it condemned the invasion soon after the attacks. Since the first meeting where President Bush and his advisors joined, from the US government perspective, the possibility of Saddam's intention to influence the oil market beyond the invasion of Kuwait, the threat against Saudi borders and possibility of Iraqi domination on the 40 percent of the oil resources after the invasion were considered and determined as unacceptable. See, Alex Roberto Hybel, and Justin Matthew Kaufman. *The Bush Administrations and Saddam Hussein: Deciding on Conflict* (New York: Pakgrave Macmillian, 2006), 64.

Turkish foreign policy agenda in the post-Gulf War environment and the economic opportunities of Turkey with Iraq, were going to reverse the interests and priorities of the US and Turkey in the region.

Özal's active policy proposal during the crisis had a domination over decision making mechanisms. However, for Aykan, the unilateral "one-man" and "personal control" claims still lack to explain the entire process when some proposals of Özal such as dispatchment of the troops and ships failed to be implemented due to the oppositions were considered.²²³ The foreign policy framework Özal proposed against Iraq's Kuwait invasion had some regional and global dynamics within itself. Özal aimed to transform the crisis into an opportunity within the above-mentioned global political atmosphere aftermath of the termination of the Cold War. In a period, Turkey's role in the global politics and the nature of US Turkey relations were re-questioned, the invasion was an opportunity to re-emphasize Turkey's strategic importance. This perspective proves Turkey's aspirations to adopt emerging global politics as a middle power. As the US declared Turkey's southern neighbor as a threat to the global peace, Turkish cooperation with its strategic location and economic partnership with Iraq turned into an essential wing of the process conducted against Iraq. Turkey had an opportunity to influence a specific element of the international peace, to withdraw Iraq from Kuwait, to prevent further Iraqi aggression and instability in the Middle East which seemed to contribute its middle power status. In addition, Turkey's bilateral security cooperation with Iraq during the "hot pursuit" operations against PKK was interrupted during Saddam's Anfal operations. Opening the borders to Kurds who witnessed Saddam's brutality and escaped, Özal isolated Saddam

²²³ Mahmut Bali Aykan, "Turkey's Policy in Northern Iraq, 1991-95," *Middle Eastern Studies* 32,no.4 (1996):344-345, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4283832>.

Hussein, and Iraq withdrew from the security cooperation.²²⁴ During his visit to Iraq in 1990, two months before Kuwait's invasion, prime minister Yıldırım Akbulut encountered a threatening attitude by Saddam Hussein referring the water issue as a reason for conflict and Akbulut had re-emphasized strong military capacity of Turkey as a regional actor.²²⁵ An act of aggression by Iraq in the region, was a serious threat for Turkey's security and interests in the region. Aiming to get the US's support in this process, Özal wanted both strengthen the ties with the West and have a say in the further regional developments related to crisis. Özal's foreign policy agenda during the Gulf War was, active, pro-US and pro-multilateral coalition.

On the opposing side, public, foreign ministry, parliament, and military defended to remain non-interventionist foreign policy to abstain from the heavy costs and ramifications of the conflict.²²⁶ Re-calling context driven perspective of the regions beyond natural given facts, in this period Özal conducted a speech act to change the position of the Middle East in Turkish Foreign Policy. Özal's following quote summarizes the nature of two opposite views:

...Turkey should leave its former passive and hesitant policies and engage in an active foreign policy. The reason I made this call is because we are a powerful country in the region. Let me also point out that there are conservatives who prefer that no change should be made to these passive policies. The reason these circles accuse us of dragging the country into an adventure is because I generally prefer to pursue a more dynamic policy for our country.²²⁷

²²⁴ Mehmet Akif Kumral, *Rethinking Turkey-Iraq Relations: The Dilemma of Partial Cooperation* (New York: Palgrave Macmillian, 2016), 12.

²²⁵ Kumral, 128.

²²⁶ Cameron S. Brown, "Turkey in the Gulf Wars of 1991 and 2003," *Turkish Studies* 8, no.1 (2003): 87, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14683840601162054>.

²²⁷ William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774* (Oxon: Routledge, 2013), 691.

The discussions the conceptual and theoretical framework of this thesis provided, referring systemic impact and regions beyond given geographical concepts, helps to understand the internal discussions since one side emphasize the international role through the regional influence the other side defended the non-interventionist foreign policy towards the Middle East. One of the dominant perspectives insisted on non-intervening inter-Arab conflict to minimize the cost collateral with the traditional Middle Eastern foreign policy and defended to remain indifferent to the US's demands that could include Turkey to war. The crisis and the war became subject to criticism of the opposition parties of Social Democratic Populist Party and True Path party in the parliament in terms of the content and the method. During the bargaining processes and bilateral reciprocal visits among Turkey and the US, Demirel argued the only actual interlocutor of the US secretary of state Baker was Özal, and the meetings with minister of foreign affairs Ali Bozer and prime minister Yıldırım Akbulut were non-functional. ²²⁸ Likewise, Erdal İnönü, the leader of Social Democratic Populist party accused the ministers and the prime minister for not objecting the removal of their authorities on this subject and his words were protested by the Motherland Party's deputies. ²²⁹ On January 17, he said "As the Republic of Turkey, we have a traditional, sound and correct policy towards all Arab countries. We should not take sides in disputes between Arab countries." and he defended neutral foreign policy to have a say in the peace building process in the Middle East region where Turkey will remain in, when the war ended. ²³⁰

²²⁸ TBMM Tutanak Dergisi, Session 18, 454.

²²⁹ TBMM Tutanak Dergisi, Session 18, 441.

²³⁰ TBMM Tutanak Dergisi, Session 18, 299.

Consistent with the reaction of the UN, Turkey condemned the invasion even if it seemed milder compared to the UN's.²³¹ The statement made by the Minister of Trade and Industry determined the invasion as "a threat to the maintenance of friendship in the region"²³² Turkish minister of foreign affairs indicated that during Taha Yasin Ramadhan's visit to Turkey on August 5, Turkey gave sincere suggestions and explained her perspective to the issue in a friendly way, but Iraq seem intent on reversing its decision.²³³

The UNSC resolution 661 decision equally calling the member and non-member states on August 6 to cut the economic relations off did not mean equal loss for all the states. The occupation of Kuwait provided Iraq with 4 million barrels daily production and the domination of the 10 percent of the world oil.²³⁴ Because of this reason trade and oil embargo was seen as a useful tool to withdraw Iraqi troops from Kuwait. Beside the current direct income Turkey gained through Kirkuk-Yumurtalik oil pipeline and the enlarged trade volume in 80s, the future economic predictions and expectations would be threatened too in the case that Turkey admits contributing the decision. Turkey's income through the pipelines, including free transit fees and port handling charges were 350 million dollars for each year and her import share was 1.7 billion dollars in total trade volume of 2.1 billion with Iraq.²³⁵ The estimated loss of Turkey included \$750 million for receivables, \$600 million for Turkish exports, \$500

²³¹ Mustafa Aydın, *Turkish Foreign Policy: During the Gulf War* (Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 1998), 17.

²³² BBC, Summary of World Broadcasts, ME, August 3, 1990 cited in Mustafa Aydın, *Turkish Foreign Policy: During the Gulf War* (Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 1998), 17.

²³³ TBMM Tutanak Dergisi, Session 18, 431.

²³⁴ Cameron S. Brown, "Turkey in the Gulf Wars of 1991 and 2003," 86.

²³⁵ Mustafa Aydın, *Turkish Foreign Policy: During the Gulf War*, 18.

million for contracting services, an expected \$300 million lost in tourism, rising oil bills that will cost \$800 million.²³⁶ On August 7 Turkey closed the pipelines. Özal expected compensating the loss of the embargo decision through the cooperation with the US, which was the victor of 45 years long Cold War rivalry and different international actors that isolated Iraq. The mutual statement made by two great powers of the Cold War against Iraq by James Baker, the foreign minister of the US and Eduard Shevardnadze, the foreign minister of the USSR, describing the invasion as “blatant transgression of basic norms of civilized conduct”²³⁷ was symbolic to illustrate not the extensive strong coalition in international area against Iraq. Also, resolution 661 was a legitimate call for all states. For Iraq passing almost 80 percent of the trade from Turkey²³⁸, Turkey was an exit door. As stated by Hale “Without Turkish cooperation, any effective embargo would have been quite impossible” but it was obvious long before that the need for a military intervention would arise since the embargo would be insufficient.²³⁹ In the NATO summit organized on August 10 in Brussels, the possibility of military intervention against Iraq was taken to consideration with the proposal of the US and Britain and NATO declared security assurance for Turkey in the case of an attack.²⁴⁰ On August 12, a bill including the declaration of the war, during the 126th session was voted in the parliament. Yıldırım Akbulut presented the bill which included “war declaration, use of armed forces,

²³⁶ Aydın,18.

²³⁷ David M. Malone, *The International Struggle Over Iraq: Politics in the UN Security Council 1980–2005*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 62.

²³⁸ Meltem Müftüleri-Bac, “Turkey and the United States: The Impact of the War in Iraq,” *International Journal* 61,no.1 (2005/2006): 63, <https://doi.org/10.2307/40204129>.

²³⁹ William Hale, Turkey, the Middle East and the Gulf Crisis, *International Affairs* 68, no. 4(1992): 684, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2622709>.

²⁴⁰ Cumhuriyet, August 12, 1990 cited in Ertan Efeğil, “Foreign Policy-making in Turkey: A Legal Perspective,” *Turkish Studies* 2, no.1 (2001): 154, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14683849.2001.11009178>.

sending Turkish armed forces to foreign countries or the presence of foreign armed forces in Turkey” to the parliament.²⁴¹ The bill was voted in a closed session. However, the bill that passed in this session included some additions determining the conditions that the government can have these abilities. According to the regulated bill, the government could do these “only for the purpose of responding immediately in the case of an offense against our country”²⁴², which meant it did not provide an improvement for the government authority. Following SCR 665 passed on August 25 Özal proposed to send a warship but after TGNA approved the proposal and Constitutional Court canceled the opposition of Social Democrat Party to cancel the resolution, Özal changed his mind and decided that sending troops was sufficient²⁴³ Dominating the foreign policy decision making process Özal did not prefer to consult his military and diplomatic advisors who propose to follow a more neutral foreign policy towards the crisis and this attitude was going to cause significant resignments.²⁴⁴ Despite the resistance of the opposition blaming government for making a fait accompli, the bill which was allowing to send Turkish troops abroad allow the foreign troops presence in Turkey was approved on September 5 with 246 votes against 138 rejection votes.²⁴⁵ Yıldırım Akbulut’s cooperation with Özal and strong position of Motherland Party in the parliament enabled Özal to gain legal support and remain dominant in the decision making process. One of the strategic

²⁴¹ TBMM Tutanak Dergisi, Session 18, 476.

²⁴² TBMM Tutanak Dergisi, Session 18, 478.

²⁴³ Ertan Efeğil, “Foreign Policy-making in Turkey: A Legal Perspective,” *Turkish Studies* 2, no.1 (2001): 154, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14683849.2001.11009178>.

²⁴⁴ Malik Mufti, “Daring and Caution in Turkish Foreign Policy,” *Middle East Journal* 52, no.1 (1998): 44, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4329152>.

²⁴⁵ TBMM Tutanak Dergisi, Session 18, 98-115.

resignments during the Gulf Crisis was the resignation of Ali Bozer who was the minister of foreign affairs until October 12. Bozer took this decision after the meeting among Özal and Bush in which Bozer's colleague Baker joined while Bozer was not invited, but it was claimed that this is not the only reason behind his resignation.²⁴⁶ Bozer stated the general environment that makes it impossible for him to carry out his duties as a minister of foreign affairs.²⁴⁷ On December 3, Chief of the General Staff Necip Torumtay resigned by stating that: "I resign since I do not see it possible to continue to serve based on the principles I believe in and my state understanding"²⁴⁸. The growing contradiction emerged due to Özal's demand to send troops abroad and the use of İncirlik base by foreign soldiers, and the military's opposition on this subject became the primary reason for Torumtay's resignation. For the first time in military-government conflict, a chief of general staff resigned in Turkish political history and the resignation was seen as democratic by the politicians²⁴⁹ since he resigned instead of initiating a military takeover. However, neither the political nor the military resignments reversed Özal's foreign policy decisions.

On January 17, the bill allowing to send Turkish Armed Forces to foreign countries, and presence and use of foreign armed forces in Turkey was presented to TGNA. The prime minister Yıldırım Akbulut said "Iraq acted unfairly and violated international law. Iraq is aggressive. Iraq made it a tradition to attack neighboring countries...I reiterate Iraq has been a threat risk in the region...In order to stop the

²⁴⁶ "Dışişleri Bakanı Ali Bozer istifa etti,"Cumhuriyet, October 11, 1990.

²⁴⁷ "Dışişleri Bakanı Ali Bozer istifa etti,"Cumhuriyet, October 11, 1990.

²⁴⁸ "Torumtay istifa etti," Cumhuriyet, December 4, 1990.

²⁴⁹ Ali L. Karaosmanoğlu, "The Evolution of the National Security Culture and the Military in Turkey," *Journal of International Affairs* 54,no.1, (2000):211, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/24357696>.

actions of our neighbor who is illegal, unfair and aggressive, provided that peaceful ways are tried at first, we are not guilty for resorting the last alternative”²⁵⁰ Akbulut relied his arguments on the international law and UNSC resolutions. The opposition objected the bill. Referring the 3th article of SCR 678 which requests “all states to provide appropriate support”²⁵¹ Erdal İnönü argued the council did not specify the support as a requirement but as an appropriate support and the economic embargo, deploying troops to Iraqi border and the diplomatic efforts of Turkey were sufficient to meet the appropriate support and accused the government for opening the second front contrary to its statement.²⁵² Also Demirel claimed that when there is not a dispute in bilateral relations of Iraq and Turkey, they should not go to war as a consequence of an international problem.²⁵³ Despite the disputes the bill passed.

4.5. Operation Desert Storm:

Due to Iraq's rejection to implement resolution 678, in which the security council warned Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait on or before January 15, the United Nations put its decisions into effect. Saddam's isolation in the political and economic spheres remained in the field, and the coalition operated a military intervention held by 34 various nations. The air attacks phase of the operations started on January 17. Launched by Norman Schwarzkopf Iraqi forces with Russian built tanks, troops and heavy armor, the military operations destroyed 1100 artillery pieces, 850 armed personnel carriers and 1300 tanks.²⁵⁴ The operations included Iraqi commands, camps,

²⁵⁰ TBMM Tutanak Dergisi, Session 18, 327.

²⁵¹ United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Res 678 (29 November 1990), UN Doc S/RES/678, <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/678>.

²⁵² TBMM Tutanak Dergisi, Session 18, 297, 298, 299.

²⁵³ TBMM Tutanak Dergisi, Session 18, 308.

²⁵⁴ Rodney P. Carlisle, *Iraq War (America at War)*, 34.

buildings, control centers of Iraq, fighter aircraft, air defense and the Scud missile sites.²⁵⁵ However, since the air campaign failed to withdraw Saddam Hussein, the ground war started on February 24.²⁵⁶ After the absolute defeat of the coalition forces in Iraq during the ground war, which is also known as the 100 hours war, on February 28 Bush declared ceasefire and Saddam Hussain had to accept the resolutions and withdraw from Kuwait. On April 3, with the SCR 687 the war officially ended and the resolution announced that the council welcomes the sovereignty, independence and territorial unity of Kuwait.²⁵⁷

Once Turkey allowed the use of the military base in Incirlik for the air campaign during Operation Desert Storm, the second front was opened. So, Turkey implemented three foreign policy strategies, until the declaration of ceasefire, including the closure of the pipelines, deploying troops to the Iraqi border, reducing Iraqi troops' density in the south, and allowing military bases for the air campaign. The rapid and absolute defeat of the coalition forces was good news for Turkey due to a few reasons. Even though Saddam Hussein was not overthrown, the Iraqi military forces were extensively damaged that Iraqi government was not able to pose a threat against Turkey. Furthermore, the operation was completed without a counterattack by Iraq to Turkish territories. By February 27, with the ceasefire, the expectations of Turkey to re-emphasize her strategic importance seemed to be fulfilled. Contributing the implementation of the UN resolutions politically, economically and militarily by allowing the use of her territories, Turkey proved her commitment to international law

²⁵⁵ Carlisle, 34-35.

²⁵⁶ Richard Lock Pullan, *US Intervention Policy and Army Innovation* (Oxon: Routledge , 2006), 128.

²⁵⁷ United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Res 687 (29 November 1990), UN Doc S/RES/687, <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/687>.

at the global level. Cooperating with the Western powers, against Turkey's border neighbor determined as a threat to the global peace and security, the diminishing strategic importance of Turkey increased following the re-emergence of mutual military purpose with Europe and the US. Turkey had rising expectations from EC depending on this cooperation. Emancipated by its neighbor border state's military threat and backed by the multinational coalition and the US, Turkey was hopeful about the outcomes of the war until rising migration issue and non-state actors reversed the regional security expectations soon after the ceasefire.

Analyzing the Gulf crisis from the perspective of Turkey's middle power status, this chapter discussed the process in the context of the post-Cold War and Turkey's relation with the emerging system. Since Turkey perceived the post-Cold War environment with anxieties, a new threat re-determined with the Gulf Crisis concerning many international actors became a new cooperation area between Turkey and the Western actors. Turkey wanted to remain its staunch alignment with the US which was expected to form emerging international system as the winner of the Cold War. So that, it could have an influence at the systemic level, which could contribute its middle power status. However, after the Gulf War regionalization threatening Turkey in the domestic-regional nexus accelerated and withdrawal of the Cold War oriented alignment between Turkey and the West had transformed. In the post-Gulf War era, Turkey could not reach its goals and the surrounding environment became increasingly complex to influence that will turn into a challenge against Turkey's middle power status after the war.

CHAPTER 5

TURKEY'S MIDDLE POWER STATUS AND REGIONALIZATION DILEMMA DURING THE 1990S IN THE REGIONAL-GLOBAL NEXUS

This chapter endeavors to discuss the foreign policy challenges Turkey encountered as a middle power in the post-Gulf War period to influence the systemic elements on behalf of its interests within domestic-regional-international nexus. Andrew Carr determines the ability to influence the international system as the major indicator of being a middle power. However, after the Gulf War, regional security issues and their implications on the relations with the international actors posed new complexities and dilemmas to Turkey to influence the regional and international politics. Regionalization of security and rising ideological and ethnic political threats at the domestic level which had regional affiliations turned into Turkey's primary security concern. Demanding to remain the significance of its strategic location in the 'new world order', Turkey contributed the Gulf War to reassure its commitment to the Western security and the United Nations. Turkey expected its support to the Gulf War to contribute conducting staunch alignment with the US and admission to the EC which both promises a wider range of influence on the international system. However, with the regionalization of the security process following the withdrawal of the Soviet threat, referring proximity of the threat and intensifying common elements, regional

political dependency sharply accelerated. At the international level, the shift from the Cold War to the Post-Cold War made the discordance between Turkey and its Western allies more apparent without a common threat. In this context, Turkey's response to regional issues clashing with the demands of its traditional Western allies, played a regressive role in Turkey's relations with the EU, while becoming subject of criticisms by the US from time to time. In addition, from Turkey's perspective the US and EU policies and proposals in Northern Iraq which could rise Kurdish nationalism or even pave the way for an independent Kurdish state, were obstacles in the US-Turkey relations as well as the relations with the EU.

To analyze Turkey's regionalizing foreign policy in 1990s, this thesis uses the regionalization concept and Andrew Carr's Systemic Impact Approach in middle power theory. As discussed in the second chapter, for Hettne current researchers define region as a term which changes and re-determined depending on the issue or question of the researcher, beyond organizational, social or political cohesiveness.²⁵⁸ Evaluating the security issues Turkey encountered as the main issue under the investigation, this thesis focuses on the Middle East as the region. This chapter aims to analyze regionalization of Turkish foreign policy by using Fawcett's regionalization definition.

Despite the conditions increasing Turkey's systemic influence capabilities as a middle power during the Cold War including diplomatic ties, strategic location, growing economy and military, and its position at the Western security wing to avoid Soviet threat, Turkey had difficulties to protect and transfer this cumulative power against the regional threats after the Cold War. This case sets an example to relative understanding of power, which Carr refers. post-Gulf War process was a turning point

²⁵⁸ Björn Hettne, "Beyond the 'new' regionalism," 544.

Turkey experienced in terms of the dilemma between fighting against rising regional security issues and international traditional alignments with unrepresented challenges.

5.1. Post-Gulf War Developments

Weakening central authority in Northern Iraq after the war, triggered two multi-dimensional security problems for Turkey. Migration and terrorism, inter-related with the power vacuum emerged in Iraq that pulled Turkey into the region by distinguishing and re-defining her primary regional concerns, goals and interests. Initially predicting that the power vacuum in northern Iraq which allows the expansion and settlement of the PKK is a temporary situation, Turkey did not foresee the establishment of a Kurdish state in the northern Iraq. However, the power vacuum emerged during the migration flows remained after the Provide Comfort operations too since the conflict among state and Kurdish groups or inter Kurdish groups remained.

5.1.1. Operation Provide Comfort-I

The war's damage on the Iraqi state and the military was a welcome development not only for some states in the region but also for some domestic groups and non-state actors within Iraq. Iraqi Shiites in the south and Kurds in the north rebelled against Saddam Hussein. Once the non-interventionist attitude of the US regarding the internal issues of Iraq became clear during Saddam's operations against the Shiites' uprisings, the Iraqi forces entered Erbil, Kirkuk, Zakho, and Duhok to suppress the Kurdish uprisings, which caused refugee flows of the escaping Kurds in the borders of Turkey and Iran.²⁵⁹ The Kurdish refugee experience after the Al-Anfal operations in 1988 and the economic, social and political issues emerged while hosting them, led Turkey to refrain shouldering the crisis alone this time. Turkey informed the UN about 220,000 civilians on her Iraqi border, forced to escape by helicopter and artillery attacks into Turkish Iraqi borders on April 2, 1991, and with a rapid increase, the number of displaced civilians left Iraq and sought asylum in Turkish and Iranian borders reached 1.5 million.²⁶⁰ On April 5, taking note of the letters from Turkey, France, and Iran, UNSCR 688 announced the grave concern regarding the civilians' repression, refugee flows, and cross-border incursions threaten international peace and security in the region.²⁶¹ The estimated number of the refugees aimed moving into Turkish borders was around 500.000. By April 8, already 250.000 refugees had crossed the borders and Turkey's daily spending for refugees reached \$1.5 million.²⁶²

²⁵⁹ Faruk Sönmezoğlu, *Son Onyıllarda Türk Dış Politikası 1991-2015*, (İstanbul: Der Kitabevi Yayınevi ve Dağıtım Paz. Ltd. Sti., 2016), 150.

²⁶⁰ Marc Weller, *Iraq and the Use of Force in International Law*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 68.

²⁶¹ United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Res 688 (5 April 1991), UN Doc S/RES/688, <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/688>.

²⁶² Mahmut Bali Aykan, "Turkey's Policy in Northern Iraq, 1991-95," 345.

The crisis was unsustainable. Supported by France Britain and Turkey, the establishment of safe havens in Iraq where enables Kurds return their home came to the agenda as a solution offer. However, achieving this objective relied on the contribution of the US air forces and soon afterwards President Bush was convinced. On April 10, two days after Baker's visit to refugee camps the US informed Iraqi officials about forbiddance of military air activity in the north of the 36th parallel and on April 16 Bush declared the establishment of the safe zones in northern Iraq and protection of the refugees by military forces when necessary.²⁶³ Aiming to deliver humanitarian aid and create a secure zone in northern Iraq for Kurdish refugees whose number was estimated to be 1.5 million, Combined Task Force consisted of US, Turkey, France, UK, Canada, Belgium, Italy, Australia, Germany, Luxemburg, Spain and Holland conducted Operation Provide Comfort-I started towards the end of April and lasted until the middle of June. During the operations Turkey provided logistical support through Incirlik air base, Batman, Diyarbakır, Adana, Antalya and Silopi.²⁶⁴The CTF achieved ensuring a secure atmosphere in the northern Iraq for Kurds to return. The entire refugee population escaped from Iraqi forces, returned northern Iraq by the end of the operations.

5.1.2. Operation Provide Comfort-II

As the operations were completed the Combined Task Force started leaving the operation zone but a ground force consisting of 6 nations remained in southeastern Turkey until the end of September²⁶⁵ to protect and sustain the achievements of re-

²⁶³ James O.Tubbs, *Beyond Gunboat Diplomacy* (Maxwell Airforce Base, Ala.: Air University Press, 1997), 16-17.

²⁶⁴ Daniel L. Haulman, "Crisis in Iraq: Operation Provide Comfort," in *Short of War: Major U.S.A.F. Contingency Operations* ed. A Timothy, (Maxwell AFB, Ala.: Air University Press, 2012), 179.

²⁶⁵ Haulman, 182-183.

settlement process. Iraqi forces could re-attack Kurdish civilians and cause new refugee flows. Due to the remaining security concerns, for Özal the US had to maintain protecting the safe haven.²⁶⁶ The multinational air forces established in July 1991, named as Poised Hammer, including Turkish, British, American and French air staff and air forces remained in İncirlik, Pirinçlik and Zaho (Iraq)²⁶⁷ after the withdrawal of the ground forces. This protection stage constituted Operation Provide Comfort-II.

Kurdish question following the Gulf War had multi-dimensional consequences which created new security concerns for Turkey. First, weakening central authority in northern Iraq provided a huge opportunity for PKK to increase its attack on Turkey, second, the migration issue deepened the socio-economic problems in southeastern Turkey serving the PKK's purpose in the region, third, the establishment of the Kurdish state increased the nationalist aspirations of Turkey's Kurds and finally internationalization of the Kurdish issue in the region after the Gulf War and rising awareness of PKK regarding the international actors' role in the establishment of the de-facto Kurdish state impelling Turkey for regional solutions against PKK's search for international support.

5.2. Turkey-Iraqi Kurds: Influencing the Power Vacuum

Aftermath of the war Turkey assumed the role of protector of the Iraqi Kurds by placing the Poised Hammer to the south. Once weakening central authority and an alternative political structuring in Northern Iraq emerged, Turkey endeavored to control the area rather than excluding or ignoring it. So that, Turkey aimed to conduct

²⁶⁶ Baskın Oran, "Uluslararası ve İç Hukukta Çekiç Güç'ün Yasal Dayanakları Sorunu" *Ankara Üniversitesi Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi Dergisi* 50, no 3 (1995):259, https://doi.org/10.1501/SBFder_0000001867.

²⁶⁷ Oran, 258.

close relations with the local actors to have a saying in the future political developments in the area. The reconciliation that emerged among Turkey and Iraqi Kurds relied on the actors' mutual interests and reciprocal needs. Enlarging PKK activities in Northern Iraq, the possibility of a regional Kurdish separatist cooperation PKK joined and increasing networks would enlarge the dimension of domestic separatist activities Turkey struggled with. Rather than allowing a coalition among Iraqi Kurds and the PKK by pushing them to unite, Turkey pursued disengagement policies and control over the uncertainty across the border. Turkey had concerns regarding the cross-border fight against terrorism that were conducted in cooperation with Iraqi government before the Gulf War. Aftermath of the war the authority of cooperation shifted Iraqi Kurds which assisted Turkey's military operations. However, beyond establishing bilateral relations and cooperation with the regional actors, this time Turkey's allies were non-state local actors necessarily highlighting the domestic political network and liaisons due to rising number and formation of efficient actors. As the number of local actors increased while their formations got much smaller that the borders' protectivity had diminished, Turkey's policies towards the region evolved to contain the threat by weaving networks as alternative blockers inside and cross the state borders.

In Gunter's statements explaining Turkey's efforts to establish close relations with the Iraqi Kurds, Turkey's demand to influence the regional developments is highlighted. He argues that Turkey's policies of protecting and promoting the Iraqi Kurds relied on Turkey's demand to influence them from establishing a Kurdish state that could have a domino effect towards Turkey's territories, a hostile state that could

have territorial claims over Turkish territories and support PKK activities.²⁶⁸ Influencing the Kurds on its behalf could contribute Turkey to solve her own Kurdish issue while protecting them provides both averting further refugee flows and respect by the West that became significant for Turkey in terms of the European Council.²⁶⁹ Özal's words to be conveyed to Iraqi Kurds illustrate that he referred ideational, historical and religious elements to strengthen the ties and explains the context of the cooperation for both sides "On the contrary to Iranian Kurds, you Iraqi Kurds are historically a part of us...Our history, religion, and sect are mutual to a great extent. Do not trust Iran...Turkey is A Western country, a country that exists and represented in Western institutions. Turkey is in the Council of Europe, she has application to the European Union, she is member of NATO and OECD...We will defend you best at international arena. However, in return, you will not back up our terrorism issue PKK, and even surrounding it is possible."²⁷⁰ The president had offered the Kurds to provide international connections in return for the prevention of the PKK to gain momentum. When a spokesman of KDP Hoshyar Zevari's words "Turkey is our lifeline to the West and the whole world in our fight against Saddam Hussayn."²⁷¹ are considered Turkey's cards became more clear. The motivations of Turkey to cooperate with the local actors and influence the regional dimension of the terrorism issue were discussed above.

On March 10-11, Jalal Talabani and Muhsin Dizayi attended a meeting with senior diplomats from Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Cenk Duatepe and Tugay Özçeri which became the first interaction among Turkey and the Iraqi Kurds.²⁷² On June 14,

²⁶⁸ Michael M. Gunter, "A de facto Kurdish State in Northern Iraq" *Third World Quarterly* 14,no.2 (1993):302, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3992569>.

²⁶⁹ Gunter, 303.

²⁷⁰ Mehmet Ali Birand and Soner Yalçın, *The Özal Bir Davanın Öyküsü* (İstanbul: Doğan Kitap, 2012), 461.

²⁷¹ Michael M. Gunter, "A de facto Kurdish State in Northern Iraq," 303.

Özal met with Talabani and this meeting was the highest level of meeting ever hold in the Turkish Republican history with a Kurdish leader.²⁷³ The meeting had become the subject of harsh criticisms in Turkey. Demanding Turkey's crucial role in protection of the safe havens, maintenance of the Poised Hammer and prevention of the unfriendly policies that may be followed by Turkey, Talabani and Barzani increasingly took anti-PKK stance to attain Turkish support. In a short time, the relations got so staunch that Barzani and Talabani were given Turkish passports for overseas departure.

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²⁷² Mehmet Ali Birand and Soner Yalçın, *The Özal Bir Davanın Öyküsü*, 463.

²⁷³ "Talabani 'resmileşiyor'" Cumhuriyet, 14 June, 1991.

In 1992, Kurdish groups decided to hold elections and have a separate parliament. As Turkish authorities were suspicious that the US, Japan, Russia and Europe could support an independent Kurdish state and had concerns regarding the developments which impelled Turkey “to become further involved in the political, military and economic affairs of Iraqi Kurdistan and in the state of Iraq itself.”²⁷⁴

Initially Turkey opposed the elections due to above mentioned concerns regarding the establishment of an independent Kurdish state and the possibility of a rising Kurdish nationalism in Turkey. Turkey, Syria and Iran announced that they do not want an independent Kurdish state in the region during the tripartite meetings in Ankara. However, since Turkey could not prevent the upcoming developments, it remained to try to influence the developments on its behalf. In autumn 1992, Turkey’s operations in Northern Iraq against the PKK camps were supported by the Iraqi Kurds.²⁷⁵ From the perspective of Iraqi Kurds, PKK activities became an increasing mutual threat to fight against and as discussed above politically and economically Turkey’s support was essential for the area. When Northern Iraq was exposed to UN sanctions and internal sanctions by Bagdad, Ankara launched \$13.5 million and introduced another \$12.0 million package in March 1995 and allowed for food and oil trade which reached \$200 million.²⁷⁶ In 1994, the internal dissociation emerged among KDP and PUK forces turned into an armed conflict that caused new spaces for the use of PKK. The dispute among the KDP and PUK was a demanded development for Ankara which had concerns about an independent Kurdish state. However, the lack of authority and

²⁷⁴ Robert Olson, “The Kurdish Question in the Aftermath of the Gulf War: Geopolitical and Geostrategic Changes in the Middle East,” 498.

²⁷⁵ Kemal Kirişci, *The Kurdish Question and Turkey* (Oxon: RoulledgeCurzon, 1997), 163.

²⁷⁶ Kirişci, 163.

remaining instability in the region turned the case into a dilemma as PKK had more chance to settle in the North. The negotiations and agreement of the Kurds with Bagdad was a supported policy agenda for Turkey as it could be a useful solution to overcome this dilemma. Different international actors had initiations to end the armed conflict among the Kurds and invited them for peace in the region. After the meeting of Barzani and Talabani in Irbil on June 5, they met one more time in Silopi at the invitation of Turkey and again in Irbil but the process failed to normalize the process.²⁷⁷ In July 1994, Paris-based Kurdish Institute and French government organized a meeting which observers from the US and British embassies joined, and a peace plan was determined under the Paris Agreement which emphasized the authority of KRG in the region. However, as Turkey rejected the establishment of an independent Kurdish state, it closed the borders, refused providing transit visas to Barzani and Talabani to go and sign the agreement in Paris, on 21 August 1994 it organized a tripartite meeting with Iran and Syria, encouraged Iraqi Kurds for reproachment with Baghdad, and finally Turkey approached with Iraq to in terms of lifting of the UN sanctions and reopening of the Kirkuk-Yumurtalik pipeline.²⁷⁸ Turkey aimed to attain the stability in the region while rejecting the establishment of an independent Kurdish state. However, this concern was not shared by Europe or the US. Turkey had to find alternative allies in the region depending on the transforming political conjunction which posed new challenges to Turkish foreign policy. On 20 March 1995, Turkey started an extensive military operation against the PKK camps in Northern Iraq. Talabani adopted an anti-Turkey stance in this period. On the other

²⁷⁷ Michael M. Gunter, "The KDP-PUK Conflict in Northern Iraq," *Middle East Journal* 50,no.2 (1996):233, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4328927>.

²⁷⁸ Gunter, 234-235,

hand although Barzani supported the operations Turkey had concerns due to Barzani's declaration of the ceasefire with the PKK and his sympathy for it.²⁷⁹ On 23-24 March 1995 the US initiated a conference in Washington DC and a meeting in Drogheda in August and despite the failure of the process a relative stability among PUK and KDP occurred as well as stability in the region which was positive for Turkey from the perspective of PKK camps in the region.²⁸⁰ However, the proposals suggested by the US contained a complete rejection of the possibility of rapprochement between any Kurdish party and Baghdad while such a rapprochement seemed like the only way to solve Turkey's dilemma of political stability in the region without an independent Kurdish state. Also, for Turkey economic dimension of the war cost became a survival issue that Turkey demanded lifting of the sanctions on Iraq and opening the pipeline. In 1996 Baghdad contributed to the internal dispute among the Kurds on Barzani's side against the PUK. Since the US aimed to withdraw Saddam from the Northern Iraq, it initiated Ankara process to reconcile KDP and PUK and convince Turkey to recognize the authority in Northern Iraq. The process was conducted with the contribution of the US, Britain and Turkey. The process aimed consolidating on four major subjects "1) the formation of an internal coalition governor in Erbil; 2) Normalization of the Erbil city; 3) transferring of all Iraqi Kurdistan border's revenue to a central bank, and; 4) setting of a date for regional elections"²⁸¹ During the Ankara process, the US and Turkey contradicted about the future developments in Iraq. Turkey welcomed the rapprochement among Baghdad and KDP. It demanded to pull the central

²⁷⁹ Mahmut Bali Aykan, "Turkey's Policy in Northern Iraq, 1991-95," 360.

²⁸⁰ Michael M. Gunter, "The KDP-PUK Conflict in Northern Iraq," 238.

²⁸¹ Karwan Salih Waisy, "The Roots of the Iraqi Kurdish Internal Rivalries, Conflicts and Peace Process 1964-2000", *American International Journal of Research in Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences*, (1996):226.

Iraqi authority to Northern Iraq which could provide at least a relative stability in the region without causing establishment of an independent Kurdish state. An opposite scenario proposed by the US was excluding Saddam Hussein from the region and planning reconciliation of the Kurdish parties to govern the region. With the pressure of the US Turkey recognized the authority in the region and Barzani and Talabani were convinced to fight against the PKK.²⁸² However, Ankara process could not achieve to provide peace and stability in the region. After the failure of Paris Agreement, Ireland Agreement and Ankara process, in 1998 in Washington Barzani and Talabani agreed for peace. However, Turkey was not invited to the process of the Washington Agreement. So that, the conclusive step was taken without Turkey's direct influence.

5.3. Tripartite Meetings: Syria, Iran and Turkey

As discussed in the second chapter, Fawcett argues that the regional conflicts can be resolved with the regional security mechanisms bringing more effective solutions to the “needs and interests” of the regional actors.²⁸³ According to her: “Regional responses to conflicts that have themselves often become regionalized-in which inter- and intrastate wars spill over borders, impinge on and draw in neighboring countries and actors, and attract the attention of the international community.” In line with this perspective, the war in Iraq spilled over the borders through refugee issues, and multi-dimensional threat emerged in Northern Iraq to the neighboring countries. So that, a few regionalist response initiations were taken by Turkey, Iran, and Syria. However, as stated before the relative perspective of power Carr included in his study, explains why states have difficulties to response different issue areas

²⁸² Baskın Oran, *Türk Dış Politikası: Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar Cilt II* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2010), 563.

²⁸³ Louise Fawcett, “The Regional Dimension of Global Security,” 63.

and transfer their power from one issue area to another. Turkey had difficulties with transferring its diplomatic ties and material resources and establishing regionalist diplomatic ties to influence a different type of threat namely, PKK with the end of the Cold War.

Regional context of the Kurdish question relying on the trans-border demographic and political elements made regional solutions necessary before and after the Gulf War. In the pre-war period as discussed in the fourth chapter, Turkey, Syria, Iran and Iraq cooperated with each other against Kurdish separatist activities while in some cases, Kurdish card became an efficient tool in the region as a pressure element on foreign policies of another country. Struggling with the PKK issue, Turkey was forced by the regional support and networks of the organization at the state and non-state level. Saddam Hussein regime was supporting PKK activities both in Iraq and in Turkey.²⁸⁴ In 1991, leadership of the PKK was residing in Damascus and PKK camps were in Lebanon with the support of Syria while in October 1991 a suspicion arose regarding Iran about supplying weapons to PKK.²⁸⁵ Aftermath of the Gulf War, emergence of a de-facto Kurdish state in Northern Iraq jeopardized these countries with a rising threat of an independent Kurdish state in the region. An independent Kurdish state could have multidimensional consequences such as domino effect while increasing Kurdish nationalism in a cross-border context. Increasing regionalization of the Kurdish issue alarmed the states to take measures and have a saying in the future of the region on behalf of their interests as each one had a challenging political history on the subject. The disagreements and different perspectives of the US and Turkey

²⁸⁴ Robert Olson, "The Kurdish Question in the Aftermath of the Gulf War: Geopolitical and Geostrategic Changes in the Middle East," 497.

²⁸⁵ Olson, 497.

impelled the country to strengthen the alternatives in alignment against the Kurdish issue which dominated Turkey's national security agenda as the major subject in the 1990's. In 1992 Turkey, Syria and Iran hold a tripartite meeting in Ankara and announced their opposition to an independent Kurdish state in the region. Ankara demanded these meetings to be regular as an example of regional cooperation enabling regional states to discuss regional challenges in the changing political atmosphere in the Post-Cold War era.²⁸⁶ Weakening central authority and sharp fragmentations in Iraq had already caused essential regional difficulties in economic, political and military fields. A further division of Iraq could result in irreversible political instability and pose survival threat when their domestic instabilities are combined with the regional security vulnerabilities. As illustrated in the fourth chapter, Turkey aimed to re-emphasize its strategic importance which supported even enabled its middle power status within the Cold War dynamics. Perceiving the Gulf War as an impetus to remain staunch cooperation with the US and Europe in the Post-Cold War context, Turkey encountered a two-dimensional disappointment. In addition to the lack of sufficient support to compensate war damage and remaining unpromising situation in the European Council regarding Turkey's position, Turkey had to survive against regional security challenges without Western support. Turkey's initiations of tripartite meetings and cooperation with the local actors are needed to be examined in this context. Since the regional actors are directly influenced by the developments within a regional security network, they developed mutual concerns. Re-calling Buzan and Weaver, easier mobilization of the threat in short distance concerned the actors the threat could

²⁸⁶ Mahmut Bali Aykan, "Turkey's Policy in Northern Iraq, 1991-95," 357.

reach concerned the states in the region far more than the global actors. However, Turkey had difficulties with sustaining successful diplomatic ties in the region.

After the Gulf War around ten national security consultations were engaged by Syria, Iran, Turkey and Iraq in between 1992 and 1994.²⁸⁷ The mutual threat perception of these regional actors in the region enabled security cooperation. In 1993, after signing a security protocol Syria announced that it would not be throughfare for any activities that are against Turkey's interests and started to ban the PKK in the country.²⁸⁸ In 1994, as Turkey was not invited to the Paris conference it aimed to illustrate its disapproval regarding the developments through the second tripartite meeting, again with Syria and Iran. By improving relations with the regional countries, Turkey aimed to create a maneuvering area for security purposes. However, providing the balance between international politics and regional security challenges was a difficult task to achieve as they dramatically clashed after the Gulf War. So that, this dilemma made it difficult for Turkey to influence the international system it encountered and practice its middle power status.

In 1990's Kurdish and Water issues became increasingly associative subjects. Turkey needed Syria to stop supporting PKK and demanded further cooperation on the terrorism subject. As Syria always perceived the water issue as a "manifestation of Turkish dominance", it had supported PKK as a counter pressure card against Turkey's water card.²⁸⁹ After the rapprochement and mutual security protocol signed between

²⁸⁷ Robert Olson, "The Kurdish Question Four Years On: The Policies of Turkey, Syria, Iran and Iraq," *Middle East Policy* 3, no.3 (1994):136, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-4967.1994.tb00128.x>.

²⁸⁸ Olson, "The Kurdish Question Four Years On: The Policies of Turkey, Syria, Iran and Iraq," 136.

²⁸⁹ Samir Al-Taqi and Raymond Hinnebusch, "As Seen From Damascus: the Transformation in Syrian Turkish Relations," in *Turkey-Syria Relations: Between Enmity and Amity*, ed. Özlem Tür and Raymond Hinnebusch (Oxon: Routledge, 2016), 98.

signed in 1992, water issue remained increasing the tension among Syria and Turkey from time to time. Still, as mentioned above Turkey and Syria conducted security consultations. However, especially by 1995 Turkey explained its unconvinced opinion regarding the implementation of the decisions against the PKK activities in Syria. It claimed that PKK which conducted attacks against Turkey remains using Syrian territories due to lack of precautions expected to be taken by the Syrian government. In 1996 Turkey asked Syria to end supporting PKK by sending a memorandum and as Damascus did not respond Turkey froze the relations with Syria.²⁹⁰ Just after the memorandum sent to Syria and Turkey referred UN Charter 51 the use of force for self-defense, it signed “Military Training and Cooperation Agreement” with Israel in February 1996.²⁹¹ Turkey which could not get the support it aimed from the international environment and surrounded by the regional threats tried establishing close relations with Israel as an alternative regional actor. In addition, the military pact signed by Syria and Greece which were defined as “the primary sources of external threat” by Turkish strategic planners, and landing rights Greece attained in Syrian territories for its war planes became a drastic threat factor against Turkey.²⁹² So that, the rapprochement process reversed.

Turkey also encountered significant issues to remain its cooperation with Iran on Kurdish issue. The reasons such as Turkey’s incursions during its operations against PKK camps, Tehran’s remaining support for PKK from Turkish perspective and the competition between Turkey and Iran over KRI increased the tension between the

²⁹⁰ Meliha Benli Altunışık and Özlem Tür, “From Distant Neighbors to Partners? Changing Syrian–Turkish Relations,” *Security Dialogue* 37,no.2 (2006) 236-237, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0967010606066172>.

²⁹¹ Mahmut Bali Aykan, “The Turkish-Syrian Crisis of October 1998: A Turkish View” *Middle East Policy* 6, no.4 (1999):176, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-4967.1999.tb00361.x>.

²⁹² Malik Mufti, “Daring and Caution in Turkish Foreign Policy,” 34-35.

countries that finally impelled the cooperation to fail.²⁹³ As mentioned before Turkey had established staunch alignment with KDP against PKK activities in the North, while PUK increased its support to PKK against this alignment. After the emergence of the conflict between the Kurdish groups in Northern Iraq, Iran supported PUK and enlarged its support against rising Turkish influence and anti-Iran Kurdish wing in Iraq, including conducting mutual attacks against KDPI with PUK in August 1996.²⁹⁴ Both countries perceived the establishment of an independent Kurdish state in the region, but throughout the process regional competition and both sides demand to control the developments on behalf of their interests triggered disagreements positioning the countries on the opposite sides.

Being different from Syrian crisis in 1957 within the nature of the Cold War triggered by the bipolar conflict's natural impacts, in October 1998 what brings Turkey and Syria on the brink of war for one more time was PKK. Another dilemma challenging Turkey regarding the regional politics was the cooperation with Israel. On the one hand, Turkey aimed to abstain from the domination by the domestic regional nexus of the PKK threat and from the isolation in regional politics. On the other hand, cooperation with Israel and military measurements taken against Syria were perceived as a threatening action by the Arab countries in the region in the context of Arab-Israeli conflict. However, from Turkey's perspective the support of PKK was so intense that Turkish Chief of Staff Hüseyin Kıvrıkoğlu defined Syrian attitude as an 'undeclared war' against Turkey.²⁹⁵ In addition, the ongoing developments in Iraq remained

²⁹³ Bayram Sinkaya, "The Kurdish question in Iran and its effects on Iran-Turkey relations" *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, (2018): 849, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13530194.2017.1361315>.

²⁹⁴ Sinkaya, 852.

²⁹⁵ Meliha Benli Altunışık and Özlem Tür, "From Distant Neighbors to Partners? Changing Syrian-Turkish Relations," *Security Dialogue* 37, no.2 (2006):237, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0967010606066172>.

influencing Turkey's relations with the regional actors through the Kurdish issue. Aykan indicates that Washington Agreement ceasing the fight between KDP and PUK in September 17 became a triggering point in Syrian crisis, which impelled Turkey to take measurement restricting PKK as the agreement and the situation in Iraq could cause a significant rise in PKK activities at the regional level.²⁹⁶ After Damascus' refusal to implement Turkey's repetitive demands Turkey initiated military option. In October 1998, Turkey sent 100.000 troops on the Syrian border forcing Damascus for expelling PKK and Abdullah Öcalan.²⁹⁷ Finally in 1998, concerning Turkish military and Israeli air forces²⁹⁸ Syria signed Adana agreement to cooperate with Turkey against PKK.

5.4. Relations with the US in the Regional-Global Nexus:

Re-emerging cooperation areas between Turkey and the US in Balkans, Caucasus, Central Asia and in the Middle East in 1990's, were welcomed by Turkey as an opportunity to remain the significance of its strategic importance in the transforming global system. The US also had valid reasons to remain cooperation since Turkey was at the center of the regional conflict areas in the post-Soviet territories, where the US desire to gain control over. Beyond strategic cooperation, the US represented Turkey as a role model in different regions with reference to its ethnic or religious identity.²⁹⁹ However, despite relatively more successful cooperation in

²⁹⁶ Aykan, The Turkish-Syrian Crisis of October 1998: A Turkish View, 179-180-181.

²⁹⁷ McDowall, David. *A Modern History of the Kurds*, 442.

²⁹⁸ McDowall, 443.

²⁹⁹ See, Emel Parlar Dal, "Reassessing the "Turkish Model" in the Post-Cold War Era : A Role Theory Perspective," *Turkish Studies* 15, no.2 (2014) : 258-282, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14683849.2014.926238>.

different regions surrounding Turkey, this was not the case in the Middle East. Mufti states that contrary to other members of anti-Soviet wing, Turkey did not experience an “enhanced security” after the Cold War.³⁰⁰ According to Robin, the Anglo American perspective often defining Turkey as “an island of stability” surrounded by an instable region ignores the threats of centrifugal forces, ideological collapse and interstate conflict in Turkey than any other European state and he states that such factors of potential instability became most apparent through the Kurdish issue .³⁰¹ In 1990’s rising political Islam and Kurdish question pulled Turkey directly into the region through domestic-regional liaisons especially after the Gulf War, creating a too complex international environment to control or influence the developments on behalf of its interests.

Aftermath of the war the US and Turkey started to have clashing interests in Iraq. Turkey and the US had different security priorities and different solutions for non-stability in the region. Overall, from Turkey’s perspective the economic burden of the war mostly due to closure of the pipelines and political developments regarding the de-facto Kurdish state and PKK activities in the region became the major subjects distinguishing it from the regional proposals of the US.

5.4.1. The Role of Kurdish Question and De-Facto Kurdish State

The establishment of de-facto Kurdish state played a crucial role in US-Turkey relations. Turkey’s dilemma of struggling with the regional security problems and maintaining staunch alignment with the US became another part of the complex task

³⁰⁰ Malik Mufti, “Daring and Caution in Turkish Foreign Policy,” 33.

³⁰¹ Philip Robins, “The Overlord State: Turkish Policy and the Kurdish Issue” *International Affairs* 69,no.4 (1993):658, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2620591>.

that Turkey encountered in the Post-Cold War. The intense and complex network in the regional affairs influencing the Kurdish issue, and the interlinked delicate balances between the domestic, regional and global actors, pressured Turkey's decision-making processes on Kurdish issue. Two dimensions straining relations can be named as the objectives and the methods. Turkey's main consideration in the Northern Iraq was prevention of an independent Kurdish state, rising Kurdish nationalism and restricting PKK activities which compel Turkey to demand stronger Iraqi central authority to control PKK camps and disintegration of the Kurdish groups to abstain from any momentum regarding the Kurdish separatist movements. However, the primary objective of the US was to reconcile Kurdish groups and create a Kurdish autonomy in the North while decreasing central authority of Saddam Hussein. In addition, the US was consolidating its hegemon status through democratization discourse in the new world order. Coincided with its purpose, the US was offering Turkey to follow democratic solutions for Kurdish problem. Because of this, it was critical of Turkey's Kurdish policy with reference to human rights and democratic values. However, from Turkey's perspective separatist movement was a terrorism problem rather than being a public issue. Surrounded by the liaisons of terrorist organization at the state and non-state level, Turkey remained using military options.

Since the beginning of the migration crisis, it was obvious that the regional context and multi-dimensional nature of the Kurdish question interrelated with the domestic politics of Turkey and its cross-border demographic structure would pose a far closer and intense threat to Turkey than the US and Europe. The unintended consequences of The Poised Hammer hosted in Turkey to protect Kurdish settlements in Northern Iraq brought harsh challenges to US-Turkey cooperation in the regional affairs. Protection of the safe zone in Northern Iraq obliged deactivating Saddam

Hussein's authority in the north, inevitably paving the way for the power vacuum to be filled by the local Kurdish groups and PKK. Aimed controlling the power vacuum Turkey activated multiple power sources in diplomatic, military and economic fields. It made regional diplomatic initiations with state and non-state actors while demanding international support to solve post-war issues.

Especially after mid-1990s, US-Turkey relations experienced significant challenges due to the developments in Northern Iraq.³⁰² Aftermath of the internal conflict between KDP and PUK, Turkey was not included Paris and Washington agreements. Taking regional response as an alternative Turkey had joined another tripartite meeting during Paris conferences denouncing the process. However, as the relations with Syria deteriorated, it reapproached with Israel to balance Kurdish activism. The US welcomed this rapprochement as a counterbalancing development against Iran, Iraq and Syria.³⁰³ However, from Turkey's perspective military agreement with Israel posed new challenges as it can position Turkey on and anti-Arab stance regarding Arab Israeli conflict.

Ankara process in 1996, had demonstrated clashing opposite demands of the US and Turkey regarding the future of the region between Iraq without Saddam Hussein and Iraq without an independent Kurdish state. However, in this process, Turkey failed to insist on preventive attempts regarding its concerns and rejections in the region with the impact of persuasion efforts of the US. However, as KDP withdrew from the process, the peace initiation ended up with a failure. In 1996, realizing the limitations of its influence in Northern Iraq, the US had withdrawn from Zaku,

³⁰² Meliha Benli Altunışık, "The Middle East in Turkey-USA Relations: Managing the Alliance, *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies* 15, no.2 (2013):162, <https://doi.org/10.1080/19448953.2013.775036>.

³⁰³ Meltem Müftüleri-Bac, "Turkey and the United States: The Impact of the War in Iraq," 66.

allowing freer space for Turkey to remain its military operations in Northern Iraq with the close cooperation of KDP against PKK in May 1997.³⁰⁴

Another complexity Turkey encountered during the Post-Cold War, was the international criticisms of the policies Turkey implemented on Kurdish issue. Although both countries agreed that PKK was a terrorist organization threatening regional stability, the cultural and political incompatibilities, that became more apparent after the withdrawal of the Soviet threat, caused disagreements among Turkey and the US.³⁰⁵ The “political non-military solutions” were perceived as federation or autonomy by Turks³⁰⁶, which was seen as a threat against the unity and survival of the state. At the beginning of 1990’s George H. Bush characterized the post-Cold War objectives with international cooperation against interstate aggression, Clinton added respect for human rights and democracy.³⁰⁷ While initial objective coincided with Turkish cooperation the second one resulted in rising criticisms against Turkey. The US illustrated its criticisms through ten percent suspension of 453 million military aid to Turkey signed on 29 July 1994 with reference to Cyprus question and human rights issue.³⁰⁸ The US aid to Turkey in 1995, 1996 and 1997, remained declining while becoming conditional sometimes to be determined by democratization progress of Turkey.

³⁰⁴ David McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds* (New York: I.B.Tauris & Co Ltd, 2007),389.

³⁰⁵ Mahmut Bali Aykan, “Turkish Perspectives on Turkish-US Relations concerning Persian Gulf Security in the Post-Cold War Era: 1989-1995” *Middle East Journal* 50, no.3 (1996):349-350, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4328955>.

³⁰⁶ Mahmut Bali Aykan, “Turkish Perspectives on Turkish-US Relations concerning Persian Gulf Security in the Post-Cold War Era: 1989-1995” *Middle East Journal* 50, no.3 (1996):350, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4328955>.

³⁰⁷ Tudor A Onea, *US Foreign Policy in the Post-Cold War Era: Restraint versus Assertiveness from George H. W. Bush to Barack Obama* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 47-49.

³⁰⁸ Mahmut Bali Aykan, “Turkish Perspectives on Turkish-US Relations concerning Persian Gulf Security in the Post-Cold War Era: 1989-1995” *Middle East Journal* 50, no.3 (1996):351, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4328955>.

Turkey conducted several military operations in Northern Iraq which had been subject to harsh criticisms of European countries that evaluated the Turkey's cross-border activities as opposite to the purpose of Operation Provide Comfort which was the protection of the local Kurds. However, the US supported military operations of Turkey against PKK in Northern Iraq.³⁰⁹ Even during the conflict among Iraqi Kurds, the US ignored military operations of KDP-Turkey cooperation.³¹⁰

5.5. Turkey and Iraq: Need for Regional Cooperation

The economic dimension of the war consequence influenced Turkey's foreign policy concerns and relations with the US. Opposite to the perspective of the US, Turkey demanded rapprochement with Iraq because of economic and political reasons, while distancing from the regional policies of the US. First, Ankara started making initiations for lifting of the sanctions and re-opening the pipeline to contrary of the US, after the tripartite meeting in 1992 with Iran and Syria.³¹¹ Also, the US was not pleased with the tripartite meetings which were initiated to replace the internationalization of the area by regionalization.³¹² Although Turkey was expecting to compensate the economic loss through the bargaining conducted with the US on modernization of the military, extension of the trade quotes and the financial support to Turkey and also through the increasing trade opportunities with the Gulf states, these remained restricted and incapable of compensating the cost of sanctions which was far higher than the estimations. Turkey's total loss had reached 100 billion dollars in ten years,

³⁰⁹ Henri J Barkey, "Turkey and Iraq: The Making of a Partnership" *Turkish Studies* 12, no.4 (2011): 666, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14683849.2011.622508>.

³¹⁰ William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774*, 163.

³¹¹ Mehmet Akif Kumral, *Rethinking Turkey-Iraq Relations: The Dilemma of Partial Cooperation*, 145.

³¹² Nasuh Uslu, *Türk Amerikan İlişkileri* (Ankara: 21.Yüzyıl Yayınları, 200), 327.

while the US aid was less than 1 % of it.³¹³ During the bargaining process the US had referred the Gulf countries to compensate Turkey's losses. Also, Turkey was hopeful about security cooperation and weaponry trade with the region after cooperation in Iraq, but it could not reach its goals in trade too.

As the weakening central authority in Iraq provided new opportunities for PKK settlements Turkey supported territorial unity and strong central authority in Iraq. Especially after the internal conflict among PUK and KDP, Turkey supported emerging rapprochement between KDP and Iraqi government which was the worst scenario from the US perspective. However, Turkey welcomed the disintegration among Kurdish groups that decreased possibility on an independent Kurdish state and isolation of PUK which cooperated with PKK, from the alignment between Iraq and KDP. In 1996 Operation Provide Comfort transformed to Operation Northern Watch to depoliticize the mission of the coalitional forces.³¹⁴

Human rights dimension of the PKK issue brought another dilemma for Turkey which caused difficulties to influence the international system. Once Turkey started isolating PKK in the region and decreased its material sources, PKK used international arena as a tool for political pressure on Turkey.

5.6. Relations with Europe in the Regional-Global Nexus

After withdrawal of the Soviet Union, Post-Cold War period dramatically transformed the threat perceptions of Turkey and Europe. Albeit great expectations based on the cooperation in the Gulf, Turkey could not approach its objective of re-

³¹³ Baskın Oran, *Türk Dış Politikası : Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar Cilt II*. (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2010), 258.

³¹⁴ Philip Robins, "Turkish foreign policy under Erbakan" *Survival* 39, no.2 (1997):85, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00396339708442913>.

emphasizing its strategic location. Benefiting Turkey's diplomatic ties with the West during the bipolar context of the global politics, Turkey's location had a crucial role in Western security for decades. However, after the Cold War and the Gulf War with the rising regional security issues, the demographic characteristics constituting an integrity with the ethnic and religious elements despite interruption by the state borders became more apparent. In 1997 separatist terror and Political Islam were defined as the most primary security threats because of the developments in 1990's. From Turkey's perspective the major threat had shifted from external to internal level inter-related with its regional liaisons. After Turkey's application to EC for full membership in 1987, EC responded that Turkey's application may be evaluated in 1993 at earliest. From Turkey's perspective during this delay, the needed cooperation of Turkey in the Gulf War could make an essential contribution to Turkey's application. So that, in the new world order, Turkey could remain adopting the system on the West side and have more saying in the world politics through EC. However, while Turkey was seeing the Gulf War as an opportunity in EC membership, regionalizing security and increasing significance of ideational elements after the Gulf War and the Cold War, had negative influence on the subjects that EC criticized Turkey.

Maintaining cool attitude towards Turkey's applications, EC officials emphasized Turkey's growing population that could result in migration waves, insufficient economic development and human rights record.³¹⁵ Sayarı states that, with Islamist activities rose in Turkey, Turkey's Islamic identity had become more apparent in the eye of the Europe which would bring difficulties in integration in the case of a new immigration wave.³¹⁶ These criticisms have been repeated by the European states

³¹⁵ Sabri Sayarı, "Turkey: The Changing European Security Environment and the Gulf Crisis" *Middle East Journal* 46, no.1 (1992) : 11-12, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4328390>.

throughout the 1990's. Since the beginning of the 1980's Islamic Revolution in Iran gave a momentum to political Islamist activities in the Middle East. Furthermore, negative repercussions of the Gulf War in Turkey, in economic and political fields contributed anti-Westernism while strengthening the arguments of alternative foreign policy paradigms in Turkey, proposing foreign policy agendas out of Westernism, such as Erbakanism. Rising political influence of radical Islam in Turkey, especially with increasing impact of Erbakan's Welfare party in Turkish politics gathered momentum offering regional solutions among Muslim countries to Turkey's regional problems. In 1997, the quote by former Dutch Foreign Minister Hans van Mierlo states religious dimension of Turkey's membership: "There is a problem of a large Muslim state. Do we want that in Europe? It is an unspoken question."³¹⁷ Turkey encountered new complexities to remain its Western secular vision in the eye of the EC. Also, with the end of the Cold War and declining need for Turkey's contribution to Western security, discordances and oppositions came to forefront.

The challenges Turkey encountered to influence the systemic elements in regional global nexus was valid in relations with the Europe too through Kurdish question. Until 1990 the resolutions offered by the European Parliament did not include Kurdish question but Saddam Hussein's genocide against the Kurds and Turkey's fight against PKK attracted EU's attention on the Kurdish issue.³¹⁸ Especially after the Gulf War, Kurdish refugee flows to Turkey made a dramatic

³¹⁶ Sayari, 12.

³¹⁷ Stephen Kinzer, "Turkey Finds European Door Slow to Open," New York Times, February 23, 1997 cited in Santa Monica, "Turkey and Europe" in *Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty* ed. F. Stephen Larrabee and Ian O Lesser, 45-70. (Pittsburg: RAND Corporation, 2003), 60.

³¹⁸ Marlies Casier and Joost Jongerden *Nationalisms and Politics in Turkey: Political Islam, Kemalism and the Kurdish Issue*. (Oxon: Routledge, 2011), 200.

contribution to internationalization of the subject. Kirişci says that Europe was relatively silent towards Kurdish issue in Turkey during the Cold War and states the role of refugee flows in April 1991, with human rights issues and rising violence in Turkey for the reassessment of Europe.³¹⁹ Many European political forums demanded minority rights for Kurds in Turkey.³²⁰ Condemnation of Turkey by European Parliament for excessive use of power against Kurds aftermath of the Nowruz events in 1992 was another example of the criticisms by Europe. In addition, as PKK changed tactic especially after 1993 because of the inspiration of developments in Northern Iraq proving the significance of the international support, its narrowing room for maneuver in the region with tripartite meetings, and decreasing material resources to resist military operations, EU criticism remained more intense. Unal states that:

The year 1993 constitutes a critical milestone in the entire conflict. There were two significant developments. First, the PKK reached the tipping point and perceived that it could not escalate the conflict to achieve a victory in a direct fight with its available resources. Thus, the PKK shifted to a different path to reach its aim through indirect means, that is, political coercion via the international arena, using intense terror activity over indirect targets to force Turkey to a political compromise. Second, the PKK started to concentrate on political activities, which Öcalan had strictly rejected in the beginning when he had foreseen a military victory.³²¹

New strategy of PKK was coincided with EU resolutions regarding Turkey's response to Kurdish question from the democratization and human rights perspective. Since then, EU increasingly pressured Turkey for democratic resolutions to solve Kurdish issue. In 1993, Germany and France banned PKK activities after substantive

³¹⁹ Kemal Kirişci, *The Kurdish Question and Turkey*, 171.

³²⁰ Kirişci, 171.

³²¹ Mustafa Coşar Ünal, "Is it ripe yet? Resolving Turkey's 30 years of conflict with the PKK," *Turkish Studies*, (2016): 98, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14683849.2015.1124020>.

attacks organized against Turkish targets in Europe, while pressuring Turkey for non-democratic policies such as abolishing of radical DEP party in 1994 which was determined by the West as violations of freedom of expression that would worsen the terrorist activities.³²² In 1995 Öcalan established “Kurdish Parliament in Exile” consisting of Kurdish intellectuals sent to Europe to attain legitimacy, international recognition and to convince Europe to force Turkey for political reconciliation.³²³

On April 1995, condemning PKK and Turkey’s military operations, European Parliament made a call to all members for a military embargo on Turkey.³²⁴ In 1996, referring Turkey’s lack of development in laws regarding Kurdish issue and human rights, the resolution passed by MEPs demanded to suspend Customs Union negotiations for Turkey. In December 1997 exclusion of Turkey in the full membership candidates list announced by the EU was met with deep anger in Ankara.³²⁵ In 1997 EU referred Copenhagen Criteria which requires “stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities”³²⁶ as the reason for the rejection of Turkish application.

Turkey’s decision-making process in the Gulf War was triggered by the anxiety regarding its decreasing significance in international system with the Soviet withdrawal. With the Gulf War Turkey hoped to gain leverage to maintain staunch alignment with the US, attain full membership in the EU, and prove its commitment

³²² Kemal Kirişci, *The Kurdish Question and Turkey*, 172.

³²³ Mustafa Coşar Ünal, “Is it ripe yet? Resolving Turkey’s 30 years of conflict with the PKK,” 98.

³²⁴ Kemal Kirişci, *The Kurdish Question and Turkey*, 173.

³²⁵ Alan Makovsky, “The New Activism in Turkish Foreign Policy,” *SAIS Review(1989-2003)* 19, no.1 (1999), 105 <https://www.jstor.org/stable/45345817>.

³²⁶ Kerim Yıldız and Noam Chomsky, *The Kurds in Turkey: EU Accession and Human Rights* (London: Pluto Press, 2005), 23.

to the UN as a middle power to sustain and increase its influence channels on the international politics. Especially upgrading the alignment with the US which was expected to shape the global politics as the winner of the Cold War competition, was essential for Turkey to adopt the post-Cold War system. However, rising regional issues in the Middle East after the Gulf War and ascending regionalization of the security with the disappearing Cold War shadow on the regional politics posed significant challenges to Turkey's middle power status. Turkey shouldered the major economic cost of the crisis due to the sanctions imposed on Iraq and allowed the use of its territories for Northern front attacks. However, neither politically nor economically Turkey did not receive a reward for its economic and strategic contribution. The post war environment posed a compelling puzzle including a transition from global conflict nature to regional conflict in the post-Cold War context. This puzzle between regional issues and international system drastically narrowed Turkey's canals to increase its influence on systemic elements until 1998. The withdrawal of Cold War shadow on regional politics, enabled an apparent manifestation and implementation of different security interests between Turkey and the West. So that, end of the Cold War and decreasing Western dependency on Turkey increased the criticisms against Turkish politics at the domestic and international level. From Turkey's perspective, regional context of the separatist Kurdish movement and PKK activities deepened with the declining central authority in Iraq after the Gulf War, were posing a survival threat against its national security when domestic Kurdish separatist demands were considered. However, the US had different security concerns and priorities in the region as well as a different proposal for Kurdish question. Turkey engaged in policies to prevent any border change in the region and establishment of an independent Kurdish state in Northern Iraq, while conducting a military war against

PKK at the regional level. On the other hand, the US prioritized removal of Saddam Hussein and establishment of a de-facto Kurdish state in Northern Iraq. In this era, Turkey initiated regionalist solutions such as establishing relations with the local Kurdish actors and tripartite meetings to control regional developments on behalf of its interests. However, the nexus between local Kurds (KDP and PUK), regional states (Syria, Iraq and Iran) and international actors (the US and EU) resulted in a complex dilemma for Turkey to adopt. Turkey's unstable policy with the US and local Kurds, resulted in mistrust in the eye of Syria and Iran. On the other hand, Turkey did not trust these actors because of their support to PKK. Turkey's Iraqi policy after the Gulf War and fight against PKK resulted in economic, military, and political regressions which started to threaten its middle power status. While rising expenditures for fight against terrorism dramatically increased and destroyed Turkey's military and economic capacity, rising oppositions on Iraq and Kurdish question brought a political regression in Turkey's relations with the US and EU. Europe harshly criticized Turkey with reference to its military operations in Northern Iraq and violation of human rights related to Kurdish issue whereas the US decreased military support to Turkey based on human rights subject. Although both EU and the US considered PKK as a terrorist organization, they were highlighting the democratic solutions to solve Kurdish issue. This thesis conceptualizes the environment Turkey encountered after the Gulf War as a security regionalization process. Rising regional conflicts and security network at the state and sub-state level dominated Turkish foreign policy agenda in 1990's. Furthermore, emancipation of the regional politics from bipolar context expanded the maneuver room of Turkey and the West for opposite regional politics. In this period, Turkey's middle power status was harshly challenged by the dilemmas in regional-global challenges.

To conclude, this chapter discussed the challenging international environment Turkey encountered as a middle power. Rising regional security issues in the Middle East became the major foreign policy subject dominating Turkey's political agenda throughout the 1990's. To respond rising Kurdish nationalism and cross border regional activism of the PKK, Turkey started to follow an active regional foreign policy in the Middle East including several diplomatic initiations with the regional state and non-state actors as well as the military operations. At the international level, with the end of the Cold War and declining dependence on Turkey's strategic position, the oppositions between Turkey and its traditional Western allies became more apparent. As the foreign policy implementations regarding the regional politics clashed, the actors found much less reasons to maintain the staunch alignment in the post-Cold War context and implemented opposite foreign policy agendas. So that, the regional-global nexus turned into a challenge against Turkey's middle power status.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS

This thesis aimed to explain the challenging regional and international environment Turkey encountered after the Gulf War, in the context of Turkey's middle power status and accelerating regionalization with the erosion of the Cold War. Having applied the theoretical framework of Systemic Impact Approach of Andrew Carr in Middle Power theory, this thesis argued that the dilemma between regional and international politics in the post-Cold War context challenged Turkey's middle power status. Furthermore, the discussion proposing the context driven nature of the region aimed to illuminate the transforming concept of the Middle East in Turkish foreign policy in different eras. By utilizing the middle power theory and regionalist perspective, this thesis reached three major conclusions.

Firstly, Turkey attained middle power status with the rising significance of its strategic location during the Cold War and due to the shadow of the cold war on regional politics, regional-global nexus did not turn into a challenge against Turkey's middle power status as it did after the Gulf War. Based on Carr's definition, this thesis categorized Turkey as a middle power with reference to its rising ability to influence some systemic elements through the strategic role it played and the in-action it reached in terms of Soviet invasion possibility towards its territories. Furthermore, the tangible

and intangible capacity of Turkey drastically improved during the Cold War with the strengthened diplomatic relations and economic and military capacity which enable to increase its influence on the specific elements of the international system. This thesis analyzes the previous period before 1990s to explain the relation between Turkey's middle power status and regional politics before 1990s and analyze the drastic change in regional-global nexus after the Gulf War as a threat started to challenge Turkey's middle power status. This discussion included questioning Turkey's middle power status and the role of regional politics during the inter-war and the Cold War eras. It indicated that, Turkey's foreign policy in the Middle East was dramatically influenced by the nature of international system. Through the lens of Carr's middle power definition, struggling with internal issues and threatened by invasion Turkey did not have a systemic level of influence during the inter-war era and it followed a small power diplomacy. Turkey followed a non-interventionist foreign policy in the Middle East to abstain from conflictual atmosphere in the region which was dominated by the colonial powers for years. Incapable of influencing the international system of war, instability, power vacuums and changing borders, Turkey aimed to protect its achievements after the War of Independence through isolation. Furthermore, this period illustrated the shifting nature of the region. Although Turkey was territorially a neighbor of the Middle East, it aimed to follow a distinct foreign policy from the region to illustrate that it renounced the previous Ottoman territories and to construct a Western identity. However, the changing international system with the Cold War, drastically changed the position of Turkey in the global politics, especially with the increasing significance of its strategic location.

The part discussing Turkey's middle power status and regional global nexus in the Cold War era indicated that rising significance of Turkey's strategic location at the

systemic level enabled it to influence the systemic elements and the shadow of the Cold War on regional politics caused regional-global nexus to be more compatible from Turkey's perspective. So that, the interaction between regional politics and international system did not pose a challenge to Turkey's middle power status as it did after the Gulf War.

During the Cold War, dualistic order of the international system drastically shadowed the regional politics. Directly threatened by Soviet Union, Turkey used its strategic position, diplomatic capabilities, and ideological tools to become a part of Western security wing to protect itself against a Soviet attack. Regional politics and Turkey's relations with the Middle Eastern actors were under the influence of the bipolar dynamics. Especially during 1950s the active foreign policy towards the region was totally pro-Western both in terms of conflict (Syrian Crisis) and cooperation (Baghdad Pact). With the rising oppositions between Turkey and the US and the room for maneuver in détente, Turkey aimed to follow a relatively multidimensional foreign policy. However, Soviet influence in the Middle East, anticolonialism, Arabs' desire for support in Arab-Israeli conflict on the one hand, and Turkey's NATO membership, non-interventionist stance to the regional conflicts which limited the scope of cooperation to the diplomatic and economic fields on the other, kept Turkey as a pro-Western non-interventionist actor aimed conducting peaceful and stable bilateral relations with the regional actors. So that, even during these periods Turkey's pro-Western stance and NATO membership determined the limitations of Turkey's regional policy. In addition, the mutual threat perception motivated the West to remain their alignment with Turkey.

In 1980s, new cooperation areas in the region emerged between the West and Turkey were on behalf of Turkey's middle power status. However, in this era the

regional political developments related to Turkey's domestic politics started to increase Turkey's concerns regarding the region and after the Gulf War, these concerns were going to cause much more serious problems. Regional affiliations of the separatist Kurdish groups and the impact of Islamic Revolution influencing political Islamist groups in Turkey increased the significance of regional politics from Turkey's perspective. At the same time, re-emerging Soviet threat after the invasion of Afghanistan, consequences of oil crisis, rising Islamist wave in the region created new areas of cooperation in US-Turkey relations.

Secondly, this thesis indicated that the decision-making process and Turkey's contribution to the Gulf War, extensively relied on the demand to maintain and increase its systemic influence which was the indicator of its middle power status. Receiving the end of the Cold War with anxieties regarding the declining significance of its strategic location in the post-Soviet global politics, Turkey needed to re-emphasize its role in the global politics with an adaptation to the new era. Confirming this concern, the US had already decided to cut its military spending, and the assistance provided Turkey in the Cold War context was ended. While Turkey's position in the Western security was re-questioned, the prospect of EC membership could be vanished. From this point of view, the possibility of an intervention to Iraq which was threatening the regional stability, provided Turkey a new role to play. Furthermore, the multi-national cooperation, legitimization of the decision based on UNSC resolutions and the leadership of the US as the winner of the Cold War competition, triggered pro intervention arguments which demanded to re-emphasize Turkey's strategic location though this conflict. Furthermore, Iraq was posing a direct threat against Turkey with its extensive military capacity and aggressive foreign policy discourse. Turkey was an exit door for Iraqi trade that without its support, efficient

implementation of the sanctions was not possible, whereas its permission to use of its territories was essential for the Northern front attack during the intervention to Iraq. With its contribution, Turkey aimed to play an active role in the peace-making process in the region after the war as a staunch ally of the US at the regional level in the context of the post-Cold War. In this context, Turkey aimed to increase its influence capacity in the international system through maintaining the alignments with the West against a new mutual threat and playing a pro-peace role at the international level through applying the decisions of the UN. All the things considered, Turkey contributed to the US-led multinational coalition's operations against Iraq to play an active role in the establishment of post-Cold War international system and re-emphasize the significance its strategic location. This aspiration to sustain Turkey's middle power status in the post-Cold War context through re-determined roles to influence the emerging international system. However, the post-war developments and accelerated regionalization of the security posed new challenges and oppositions between Turkey and the international actors.

Aftermath of the Gulf War Kurdish Question appeared as the major security concern of Turkey. First, as the migration issue after the Gulf War had acute economic, demographic, political and military impacts, the government, military, and foreign policy elites were alarmed to take immediate measures not only to end the migration wave but to prevent any prospective migration activity from Iraq. With the initiations of Turkey safe havens where air activity is forbidden in the north of 36th parallel were established for Kurdish population to return. However, the creation of de-facto Kurdish state based on the establishment of the safe havens, created a paradoxical task for Turkey. The developments in Northern Iraq was directly interlinked with the domestic Kurdish separatist movement in Turkey. Following the weakening Iraqi

central authority, PKK enlarged its camps in the Northern Iraq and with the strength it gained in cross border territories it conducted attacks against Turkey. Furthermore, the establishment of a Kurdish state in the region could rise the Kurdish nationalism and territorial aspirations inside different regional states including Syria, Turkey and Iran. In this era Turkey tried to influence the regional developments that turned into a survival threat for its peace and security. However, it encountered dilemmas between influencing regional security problems and maintaining traditional alliances with the Western actors.

Thirdly, this thesis argued that after the Gulf War the regional-global nexus started to pose challenges to Turkey's middle power status throughout the 1990s. As indicated by Carr, the middle power state is able influence international systemic elements on behalf of its interests by creating an action or in-action referring to prevent the occurrence of an attack. Focusing on rising Kurdish separatism and PKK as a survival threat against Turkey, it encountered complex dilemmas and challenges to influence international and regional politics on behalf of its interests. The expectations of Turkey at the international level from close cooperation with the US, and playing a non-ignorable economic, political and military role in the operations supported by UN, were not met. Furthermore, with the regional dependency of Turkey which sharply accelerated after the Gulf War, and withdrawal of bipolar shadow from the regional politics, made Turkey a direct interlocutor of the regional issues. After the Gulf War, Turkey's security priorities regarding PKK issue and the possibility of the establishment of a Kurdish state were not posing a mutual threat between Turkey and its Western allies anymore. Furthermore, the post-Cold War context, was enabling the expression of the oppositions between Turkey and its traditional Western allies at a much higher level. On the other hand, Turkey's alternative diplomatic initiations with

the local Kurdish actors and regional states failed to provide pro-Turkish consequences. Lacking diplomatic capabilities to prevent PKK expansion in the region and prevent rising Kurdish separatism, Turkey activated its military tools but as these policies were criticized by the US and EU, they had political and economic consequences on Turkey.

The thesis analyzed the compelling puzzle that challenges Turkey's influence on international system with reference to the links between domestic-regional and international politics. The first dilemma of Turkey was about the power vacuum in Northern Iraq. Objecting a de facto Kurdish state in 1992, Turkey had rejected the elections held in Northern Iraq among the local Kurds in 1992. However, once the de-facto state emerged, because it needed the cooperation of an authority in Iraq to conduct cross border military operations against PKK camps, Turkey refrained from hostile relations with these actors. For instance, Turkey was welcoming the disengagement emerged with the conflicts between KDP and PUK as it declined the possibility of an independent Kurdish state but then lack of authority and power vacuum in conflictual environment allowed PKK to enlarge its presence in the North. Re-emphasizing Iraqi central authority in the region as can be observed in Ankara process, the US proposal for re-integration of the local Kurds forced Turkey to admit the case and adopt it on behalf of its own interests. Another complex problem to influence regional issues and integrate international system, was the opposing priorities of Turkey and the US in Iraq in the post-war era. Turkey perceived the US as a canal to influence international change before the Gulf War. However, as the US prioritized withdrawal of Saddam Hussein and establishment of a de-facto Kurdish state in Iraq, its proposals threatened Turkey's security interests in the region. To the

contrary of Turkey's predictions to have a saying in the post-war regional politics, it was isolated from Paris Agreement and Washington process.

Following clashing regional political agenda with the US and European actors, Turkey initiated to create a regional response to rising separatist Kurdish separatist movement through tripartite meetings. These meetings were initiated oppose the international pressure on Northern Iraqi issue through a regional response with tripartite meetings including Iran and Syria. However, the long-term hostility, lack of trust and opposing interests in Northern Iraq after the conflict between local Kurds did not allow Turkey, Syria and Iran to produce consensus against rising security issues related to Kurdish separatist movement. Isolated from international and regional diplomatic solutions, Turkey intensified the military solution both against the PKK and Syria as a deterrent factor.

Kurdish migration waves aftermath of the Gulf War made great contribution to the internationalization of the Kurdish Question that will take Turkey's policies regarding Kurdish issue and PKK under the radar of the international actors. Although Turkey and the US perceived PKK actions as a threat in terms of the regional stability, they offered different proposals for the solution of the issue as the US highlighted non-military democratic solutions while Turkey was arguing that there was not a Kurdish issue but a PKK issue in Turkey.³²⁷ In the same vein, Turkey's Kurdish policy is referenced as a degrading area by the EU. With the end of the Cold War, changing security priorities highlighted the disputes and oppositions among Turkey and the Western actors.

³²⁷ Mahmut Bali Aykan, "Turkish Perspectives on Turkish-US Relations concerning Persian Gulf Security in the Post-Cold War Era: 1989-1995" *Middle East Journal* 50, no.3 (1996):350, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4328955>

Overall, this thesis benefited from regionalization concept and middle power theory to analyze post-1990 foreign policy of Turkey. As it aimed to prove the dilemmas between regional and global politics as a change, the thesis questioned the relations between Turkey's middle power status and regional affairs in historical context from early republican era to the post-Gulf War. The thesis indicated that, the regionalization literature and constructed nature of the concept "region" provides a coincided conceptual framework for Turkey's experience in the Middle East over different eras. In Turkey's experience the concept of the Middle East region, Turkey's liaison and belonging to it transformed depending on the systemic requirement since the early republican era to post-Gulf War. In addition, regionalization literature providing a perspective on how regional politics remained under the influence of the Cold War and then emancipated from bipolar shadow in the post-Cold War, explained the rising complexity between regional and global politics after the Gulf war. During the Cold War, Turkey remained following a regional policy that its limitations were determined by its commitment to NATO, as the relations were under the influence of dualistic nature and Soviet threat. The accelerating regionalization after the Cold War, was a transition period for Turkey as it had to develop a more independent regional foreign policy in the context of post-Cold War without traditional Western support. In this case, the systemic impact approach provided efficient tools. It's middle power definition contributed to the complexity over "unusual" middle power status of Turkey by providing a comprehensive understanding focusing on the outcomes. In addition it enabled to understand post-1990s development on the challenging nexus of regional-global affairs as it highlighted systemic role. Furthermore, Carr's definition of middle power relies on the relational perspective to power, which makes the middle power status highly dependent on the context. The relational power, as stated by Carr,

explains why the states have difficulties to transfer their power from one issue area to another. This perspective answers the question why Turkey as a middle power had difficulties to influence the system on behalf of its major security interest in the region during this transition period. Transforming international system and regional politics were a new task for Turkey which requires new elements to adopt. The middle power status Turkey attained in the Cold War context with diplomatic success and ability to efficiently use its military power did not remain the same in the Post -Cold War context as Turkey had difficulties to transfer these capabilities to solve its issues in the post-Cold War context.

To conclude, this thesis discussed how regional-global nexus turned into a challenge against Turkey's middle power status with the accelerating regionalization in the post-Cold War context after the Gulf War. It used Systemic Impact Approach of Andrew Carr and regionalization concept to describe transformations in the international system in which Turkey increasingly encountered complexities to influence. This thesis focused on the period from 1990 to 1998. Today, many scholars remain categorizing Turkey as a middle power and still regional issues remain posing challenges to it.

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APPENDICES

A. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKE ÖZET

Bu tez Türkiye'nin 1990'larda karşılaştığı soğuk savaş sonrası yükselen bölgesel güvenlik ağının ülkenin orta büyüklükte güç statüsü üzerindeki zorlayıcı etkisini Andrew Carr'ın sunduğu sistemik etki bakış açısı üzerinden incelemektedir. Son yıllarda çeşitli çalışmalar özellikle yakın döneme odaklanarak Türkiye'nin orta büyüklükte güç statüsüne ilişkin analizler ortaya koymaktadır. Bu tez ise Körfez savaşından sonra, soğuk savaşın bitmesi ve batı ittifakının dönüşmesinin yanında keskin şekilde yükselen bölge düzeyinde aktivitenin Türkiye'nin orta büyüklükte güç statüsünü tehdit eder hale geldiği en erken dönem olması açısından 1990lı yılların bir kırılım noktası olduğunu savunarak bu dönemi ele almaktadır. Uluslararası İlişkiler disiplinde orta büyüklükte güç teorisi içerdiği farklı yaklaşımlarla geniş bir literatüre sahiptir. Türkiye üzerine orta büyüklükte güç perspektifinden yapılan farklı çalışmaların kavrama yönelik çeşitli teorik yaklaşımları referans alması literatürü zenginleştirirken karmaşık bir hale getirebilmektedir. Çeşitli tanımlamaların işaret ettiği orta büyüklükte güç göstergelerinin farklı olmasından kaynaklı olarak, aynı döneme odaklanan çalışmalardan biri Türkiye'yi orta büyüklükte güç olarak değerlendirirken diğeri küçük güç olarak değerlendirebilmektedir. Türkiye'nin 1930'lu yıllardaki dış politikasını orta büyüklükte güç perspektifinden analiz eden Barlas, Türkiye'yi, bir imparatorluğun mirasçısı olması ve diplomatik gücü nedeniyle

olağandışı bir orta büyüklükte güç olarak değerlendirilebileceğini söylerken,³²⁸ Gürol ve Baba da Türkiye'nin ikinci dünya savaşından sonra orta büyüklükte güç statüsüne yükseldiğini vurgulamaktadır.³²⁹ Diğer yandan, Türkiye'nin orta büyüklükte güç statüsüne dair göstergeler olarak, ülkenin son dönemde yükselen ekonomik etkisine, dış politika faaliyetlerine, MIKTA ve G20 içerisindeki konumuna işaret eden Emel Parlar Dal bölgesel sorunların bu yükselişi zorladığını savunmuş ve ülkeyi kusursuz olmayan bir orta büyüklükte güç olarak tanımlamıştır.³³⁰ Başka bir çalışmada orta büyüklükte güce yönelik geleneksel teorik perspektiflerden biri olan davranışsal bakış açısıyla Türkiye'yi analiz eden Barlas ise çalışmayı orta büyüklükte güç dış politikası, iki savaş arası dönem ve belirli bir bölgeye yönelik olarak sınırlamıştır.³³¹ Ancak bu tez Carr'ın sunduğu sistemik etki bakış açısının Türkiye için diğer geleneksel perspektiflere kıyasla daha kapsayıcı ve açıklayıcı olduğunu iddia etmektedir. Öncelikle kısaca diğer perspektiflere, hiyerarşik perspektif, davranışsal perspektif ve kimliksel perspektif, değinmek sistemik etki bakış açısının farkının daha iyi anlaşılmasına yardımcı olacaktır. Hiyerarşik perspektif orta büyüklükte gücü, devletleri uluslararası sistemde belirli göstergelere göre sıralayarak tanımlar. Davranışsal perspektif ise orta büyüklükte gücü bu devletlerin takip ettiği belirli dış politika davranışları ekseninde tanımlar. Kimliksel bakış açısına göre ise orta büyüklükte güç öncelikle bir iddiadır. Devletler önce orta büyüklükte güç olduklarını

³²⁸ Dilek Barlas, "Turkish Diplomacy in the Balkans and the Mediterranean. Opportunities and Limits for Middle-power Activism in the 1930s." *Journal of Contemporary History* 40, no 3. (2005): 442 <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022009405054565>.

³²⁹ Gürol Baba and Murat Önsoy. "Between Capability and Foreign Policy: Comparing Turkey's Small Power and Middle Power Status." *Uluslararası İlişkiler* 13, no 51. (2016): 3-20

³³⁰ Emel Parlar Dal, "Profiling Middle Powers in Global Governance and the Turkish Case: An Introduction" in *Middle Powers in Global Governance* (Cham, Palgrave Macmillian, 2018):16 https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-72365-5_1.

iddia eder ve devamında da bu devletlerden beklenen dış politika davranışlarını ortaya koyacak şekilde bir dış politika izlemek için çaba sarf ederler. Geleneksel temelli geleneksel olmayan orta büyüklükte güç perspektifi sistemik etki bakış açısına göre ise bir devletin orta büyüklükte güç olup olmadığı sisteme olan etkisi üzerinden anlaşılır. Carr'a göre orta büyüklükte güçler uluslararası sistemde belirli bir açıdan temel çıkarlarını koruyabilen, bir değişikliği başlatan ya da yönlendiren devletlerdir. Carr bu bağlamda sisteme olan etkiyi temel alan sonuç odaklı bir yaklaşım sağlar. Bu sonuç odaklı yaklaşım soğuk savaşın bitiminden bu yana bölgesel zorluklar ve uluslararası sistem arasında kalan Türk dış politikasını analiz etmek adına etkili bir yaklaşım sağlar. Diğer taraftan, temel gösterge olarak sistemik etkiyi aldığından, Türkiye'yi olağandışı bir orta büyüklükte güç olarak tanımlamak yerine, sisteme etki edebildiği sürece stratejik konum, tarihsel güç, kimliksel ögeler gibi tüm etki kaynaklarını kapsayarak Türkiye'nin bir orta büyüklükte güç olarak tanımlanabilmesini sağlar.

Sistemik etki bakış açısı çerçevesinde Türkiye'nin orta büyüklükte güç statüsünü sistemle ilişkisi üzerinden tanımlayan bu tez ülkenin orta büyüklükte güç statüsüne yükselişini soğuk savaş dinamiklerine adaptasyonu üzerinden açıklar. 1990'larda soğuk savaşın bitimiyle ortaya çıkan sistemik dönüşümler ve hız kazanan bölgesel düzeyde siyasetin Türkiye'nin sistemle ilişkisi üzerinde yarattığı çıkmazlar nedeniyle Türkiye'nin orta büyüklükte güç statüsü tehdit altına girmiştir. Bu tez 1990 sonrası soğuk savaşın gölgesinin bölgesel politikanın üzerinden çekilmesi ile sıklaşan bölgesel güvenlik ağını açıklayabilmek için bölgeselleşme kavramından yararlanır ve bölgesel siyasetin soğuk savaşın zayıflamasıyla birlikte uluslararası sistemde yükselen belirleyiciliğinin altını çizer.

1. Teorik ve Kavramsal Çerçeve:

Sistemik etki bakış açısı ve bölgeselleşme kavramı bu tezin teorik ve kavramsal çerçevesini oluşturmaktadır. Carr'ın göreceli güç kavramı üzerinden geliştirdiği sistemik etkiyi temel alan orta büyüklükte gücün uluslararası sistemde bir değişiklik yaratabilmesi beklenmektedir. Ancak bu, bir değişikliğin başlatılması olabildiği gibi bir işgalin önüne geçilebilmesini, yani sistemde bir eylemsizlik yaratılabilmesi halini de kapsamaktadır. Bu bağlamda, soğuk savaş denklemleri içerisinde en başta olası Sovyet işgalinin önüne geçebilmesi Türkiye'nin orta büyüklükte güç statüsüne yükselişinin göstergesi olarak ele alınmakta ve devamında batı kanadında gerçekleşen sisteme uyumun, sistemik etkiyi yükseltebilecek diplomatik, ekonomik ve askeri getirilerine değinilmektedir. Yukarıda da bahsedildiği üzere Carr'ın sonuç odaklı olan bu yaklaşımı devletlerin motivasyonları, girişimleri ya da kimlikleri ile ilgilenmez. Carr göreceli güç kavramını, devletlerin bir soruna ilişkin çözüm kapasitelerini farklı bir bağlama doğrudan aktaramamalarının nedeni olarak gösterir. Bu da soğuk savaş dinamikleri bağlamında bir orta büyüklükte güç olabilmeyi başaran Türkiye'nin bu kapasitesini soğuk savaş sonrası sistemde ortaya çıkan sorunlara çözüm üretebilmek adına doğrudan aktaramayışını açıklamaktadır.

Bu çalışmada sistemik etki bakış açısını desteklemek için kullanılan bölgeselleşme kavramını daha net ortaya koyabilmek adına bölge kavramını anlamak önemlidir. Farklı disiplinler bölge kavramını farklı şekillerde tanımlarken, uluslararası ilişkilerde bölge kavramı sıklıkla Joseph Nye'in tanımladığı gibi birden fazla ulus devletin birbirleriyle politik olarak ilişkili oldukları bir zemin olarak kullanılmaktadır. Ancak Hettne devletler arasındaki karşılıklı bağlılık, ortak etnik, tarih, kültürel geçmiş gibi unsurların ya da ekonomik, siyasi, sosyal ve kurumsal bağlamın ötesinde yeni araştırmacıların bölgeyi probleme ya da soruya yönelik olarak tanımlandığını ifade

etmektedir. Pek çok farklı yaklaşım da bölgenin inşa edilen bir kavram olduğuna dikkat çekmiş ve bu inşa sürecinde coğrafi yakınlığın önemini vurgulamıştır. Bölgenin zaman ve olay bağlamında yeniden tanımlanabilen bir kavram olarak tanımlanması Türkiye'nin topraklarına her zaman komşu olduğu Orta Doğu'ya ilişkin dönüşen ve zamanla bölgeye dahlini artıran dış politikasını anlamaya yardımcı olmuştur. Bölgeselleşme kavramını açıklamak için ise Fawcett'in artan bölgesel aktivite olarak tanımladığı bölgeselleşme tanımından bahsedilir. Fawcett'in bölgeselleşme tanımı bölgeye vurgu yapar ve bölgeselleşmeyi en genel haliyle bölge içerisinde ekonomik, sosyal ve siyasi faaliyetin yoğunlaşması olarak tanımlar. Devamında ise güvenliğin bölgeselleşmesini savaşların sınırların ötesine taşıdığı, bölgesel ülkelerin buna toplu cevap ürettiği ve uluslararası aktörlerin ilgisini çeken durumlar olarak tanımlar. Bölgeselleşme soğuk savaş dinamiklerinin özellikle seksenlerin ikinci yarısından sonra zayıflaması ile hız kazanmış ve bölgesel siyaset daha görünür bir hale gelmiştir.

2. 1990 Öncesinde Türkiye'nin Orta Büyüklükte Güç Statüsü ve Bölgesel Siyaset

1990'lardan sonra bölgesel-küresel siyaset arasındaki çıkmazların Türkiye'nin orta büyüklükte güç statüsünü tehdit ettiğini ve bu dönemin bir kırılım noktası olduğunu iddia eden bu tez karşılaştırma yapabilmek için önceki dönemlerde de bu statüyü ve bölgesel-küresel siyaset ağını sorgular. Türkiye cumhuriyetin kuruluşundan bugüne Orta Doğu'ya yönelik oldukça dikkatli bir dış politika yürütmüş ve bölge içerisinde devam eden uzun dönemli çatışmaların dışında kalmaya yönelik bir tutum içerisinde olmuştur. Literatürde de değinildiği üzere soğuk savaş döneminde bölgesel aktivite soğuk savaş dinamiklerinin gölgesi altında devam etmiştir. Sovyet tehdidi ile karşılaşan Türkiye iki kutuplu sistem içerisinde kendisini batı kanadında

konumlandırmış ve özellikle kutuplar arası düşmanlığın keskinleştiği dönemlerde batı yanlısı bir bölgesel politika belirlemiştir. Türkiye perspektifinden, Bağdat Paktı ve Suriye krizi bu dönemde bölgesel çatışma ve iş birliğinin soğuk savaşın etkisi altında gerçekleştiğini gösteren gelişmeler olmuştur. Aynı şekilde Türkiye'nin Amerika ile olan anlaşmazlıklarına ve Sovyet tehdidinin yoğunluğuna bağlı olarak çok boyutlu dış politika girişimlerinde bulunduğu dönemlere rağmen, dış politikadaki genel seyir, iki kutuplu yapının sınırlılıkları içerisinde devam etmiştir. Bu sınırlılıklar Türkiye'nin NATO üyeliği, batı kanadındaki konumu ve bölgesel politikada devam eden iki kutuplu dinamiklerden kaynaklanmaktadır.

Özellikle petrol krizi ve bölgesel gelişmeler batının Türkiye'nin güneyindeki coğrafyaya yönelik tehdit algısının dönüşmesine neden olmuş ve bölgedeki bazı siyasi gelişmeler batı kanadının çıkarlarını doğrudan etkiler bir hale gelmeye başlamıştır. Körfez savaşı öncesi dönemde yeniden yükselen Sovyet tehdidi ve batının aleyhinde bulunan bölgesel siyasi gelişmeler ABD-Türkiye ittifakına yeni iş birliği alanları tanırken, giderek hızlanan bölgesel güvenlik ağı soğuk savaşın bitimiyle birlikte Türkiye için çok daha ciddi ve belirleyici bir rol oynamaya başlayacaktır. Seksenli yıllar boyunca İran İslam devriminin etkileri, İran-Irak Savaşı, bölgesel düzeyde faaliyet gösteren ve seksenlerde yükselişe geçerek Türkiye'nin en temel güvenlik kaygısı haline alan PKK gibi mevzular Türkiye'nin iç-bölgesel siyaset bağını gittikçe kuvvetlendiren bir hal almıştı. Türkiye'nin uluslararası sisteme etki kanallarını ve stratejik önemini yeniden vurgulayan bölgesel iş birliği alanları Türkiye'nin orta büyüklükte güç statüsüne pozitif yönde etki ederken, soğuk savaş bağlamının 1990 sonrasında çekilmesiyle Türkiye iç-bölgesel bağlantısının kuvvetlenmesine neden olan bölgesel dinamiklerle baş başa kalacaktır. Böylece bölgesel iş birlikleri Türkiye

için giderek önemli bir hale gelecektir. Ancak Türkiye bu iş birliklerini etkili şekilde yürütemez.

3. Körfez Savaşı:

Körfez Savaşını sistemik etki bakış açısı üzerinden değerlendiren bölüm, Türkiye'nin Körfez Savaşına dahil oluşundaki beklentilerini soğuk savaş sonrası sistemle olan ilişkisi bağlamında inceler. Soğuk savaş dinamikleri içerisinde Türkiye'nin sistemik etki yaratabilmesine olanak tanıyan iki kutuplu sistemin sona ermesiyle birlikte Türkiye uluslararası sistemdeki yeni konumuna dair bir belirsizlikle karşılaşmış, ülkenin batı ile ittifakı sorgulanır bir hale gelmiştir. Diplomatik, askeri ve ekonomik düzlemde soğuk savaştan yararlanan Türkiye soğuk savaşın bitimini endişeyle karşılamıştır. Çok geçmeden küresel bağlamda bir tehdit olarak algılanan olay, Saddam Hüseyin'in Kuveyt'i işgali, Türkiye tarafından uluslararası bir meselede barış yönünde rol oynama, soğuk savaşın galibi ABD'ye olan bağlılığını ispatlama ve yeni düzende de bu ittifak doğrultusunda söz sahibi olma noktasında bir fırsat olarak görülmüştür. Türkiye'nin soğuk savaş sonrası dönemde de küresel siyasetteki etkisini devam ettirebilmesi, sistemik etki bakış açısına göre orta büyüklükte güç olarak kalabilmesi için gerekliydi. Bu bağlamda Türkiye krizin çözümlenmesine ilişkin ekonomik ve askeri müdahalelere katkıda bulunmuş ancak sistemin dönüşen doğası ve yükselen bölgesel güvenlik sorunları nedeniyle umduğu sistemik etki kanalını açamamıştır.

2 Ağustos 1990'da Saddam Hüseyin Kuveyt topraklarını işgale başlamış ve saldırılar kısa sürede küresel boyutta endişelere yol açmıştır. Birleşmiş Milletler Güvenlik Konseyi tarafından defaatle yapılan çağrılara rağmen Saddam Hüseyin ülke topraklarından çekilmeyi reddetmiştir. Bu işgal, güçlü ordusu ve agresif dış

politikalarıyla Irak'ın bölge ülkeleri tarafından bir tehdit olarak algılanmasına neden olmuştur. Böylece İran-Irak savaşı boyunca Irak'ı İran tehdidine karşı Arap devletlerin temsilcisi olarak gören devletler tutumu Kuveyt'in işgaliyle değişmiştir.

Birleşmiş Milletler Güvenlik Konseyinin 660 sayılı kararı doğrultusunda tüm üye ve üye olmayan devletlere Irak ile tüm ekonomik faaliyetlerin durdurulması yönünde çağrı yapılmıştır. Ancak bu küresel çağrının yansımaları Irak ile yürüttüğü ticari faaliyetlerin boyutu ile doğru orantılı olarak her ülke için farklı olmuştur. Irak ile olan ticaret hacmi döneminin en büyük ikinci ticaret hacmi olan Türkiye için bu yaptırımlar yıkıcı sonuçlar doğuracaktır. Bu dönemde ABD ile temaslarda bulunan Türkiye Kerkük-Yumurtalık boru hattını kapatarak ekonomik yaptırımların en önemli parçası olmuştur. Irak'ın ticari faaliyetlerinin neredeyse yüzde sekseninin³³² Türkiye'den geçtiği düşünüldüğünde Hale'in de bahsettiği gibi Türkiye'nin katılımı olmadan Irak'a ekonomik bir yaptırım uygulamak mümkün değildi.³³³ Ekonomik yaptırımların işgali durdurmada başarısız olmasının ardından askeri müdahale ihtimali gündeme gelmiştir. Türkiye bu müdahalede rol oynayarak bölgesel barış ve istikrar için bir tehdit unsuru haline gelmiş Saddam Hüseyin'den kurtulmak ve uluslararası sistemdeki rolünü ve önemini yeniden vurgulamak istemiştir. Birleşmiş Milletler Güvenlik Konseyi tarafından alınan 678 sayılı karar ile birlikte, askeri müdahaleye yasal dayanak sağlanması ve tüm ülkelerin yardıma çağırılması, Türkiye'nin Birleşmiş Milletler'e ve NATO'ya olan sorumluluklarını gündeme getirmiştir. Ancak, Türkiye'nin operasyona dahil olma durumu, iç politikada kararlı bir muhalefet ile

³³² Meltem Müftüler-Bac, "Turkey and the United States: The Impact of the War in Iraq," *International Journal* 61,no.1 (2005/2006): 63, <https://doi.org/10.2307/40204129>.

³³³ William Hale, Turkey, the Middle East and the Gulf Crisis, *International Affairs* 68, no. 4(1992): 684, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2622709>.

karşılaşmış ve bu müdahaleye giden sürece Ali Bozer ve Necip Torumtay'ın istifası damga vurmuştur. Öte yandan Türkiye müdahaleye dahil olmaya dair, savaş sonrası barışın inşası sürecinde, bölge politikalarında şekillendirici bir yol izleme, Birleşmiş Milletlere bağlılığını ve alınan kararın uygulanabilmesi noktasındaki stratejik önemini vurgulama ve özellikle de soğuk savaş düzeninden galip olarak ayrılan ve küresel siyaseti yeniden tanımlaması beklenen Amerika ile güçlü ittifakını devam ettirerek yeni düzene etki edebilme gibi beklentilere sahiptir. Soğuk savaş sona ermiş ve Sovyet tehdidi ortadan kalkmış ancak Türkiye'nin sınır komşusu yalnızca bölgesel düzeyde değil uluslararası boyutta bir ortak tehdit olarak tanımlanmıştır. Türkiye'nin savaş sonrası sistemik etkisini artırmaya ve orta büyüklükte güç statüsünü kuvvetlendirmeye yönelik motivasyonlara sahip olmasına karşın sistemik dönüşüm, savaş sonrası bölgesel gelişmeler, ve bunun iç-bölgesel-küresel siyaset bağlantısı üzerindeki çıkmazı Türkiye'nin orta büyüklükte güç statüsünü tehdit eder bir hale gelmiştir.

Türkiye cumhuriyetin kuruluşundan itibaren sürdürme gayreti içinde olduğu Orta Doğu çatışmalarına müdahil olmaktan kaçınan politikasının aksi yönde, uluslararası bir boyut kazanan iki Arap devleti arası savaşa dahil olmuştur. Öte yandan, bu politika, batı yanlısı oluşu yönüyle Türk dış politikasına paralel olarak değerlendirilebilmektedir. Ancak, müdahaleden sonra soğuk savaş bağlamının tutkal etkisi yarattığı Türkiye batı iş birliği, soğuk savaş sonrasında aynı şekilde devam etmezken bölgesel politikalarda ortaya çıkan çatışmalar da bu ayrımı derinleştirmiştir. 15 Ocak 1991'de ABD öncülüğünde 34 ülkeden oluşan bir koalisyonla Irak'a Çöl Harekatı Operasyonu adında bir askeri müdahalede bulunulmuştur. Türkiye sürece üç temel katkıda bulunmuştur, Kerkük-Yumurtalık boru hattının kapatılması, sınıra asker yığarak Irak askerlerinin güneydeki yoğunluğunun azaltılması ve hava operasyonları için üslerin kullanıma açılması. Koalisyon güçlerinin askeri müdahalesiyle savaş kısa

sürede sonuca ulaşmış ve Güvenlik Konseyi 3 Nisan'da 687 sayılı kararında Kuveyt'in bağımsızlığını duyurmuştu. Ancak Irak'ta merkezi gücün sarsılması, kuzeyde ve güneyde devlet altı grupların ayaklanmalarına neden olmuştur. Kuzey Irak'ta meydana gelen Kürt ayaklanmalarının sert şekilde bastırılması sonucunda, Saddam Hüseyin'den kaçan Iraklı Kürtler Türkiye ve İran sınırlarına ulaşmışlardır. Kürt göçmen problemine çözüm arayışı Türkiye'nin de girişimleriyle kuzey Irak'ta koalisyon güçleri tarafından korunmaya devam eden güvenli bir bölge oluşturulması ile sonuçlanmıştır. ABD, Fransa, İngiltere, Kanada ve Avustralya'nın da içinde bulunduğu birinci Huzuru Temin Harekatı sonrası Iraklı Kürtlerin Kuzey Irak'a dönüşleri sağlanmış, Türkiye'nin güneyinde kalmaya devam eden güçler olası bir Saddam tehdidine karşı Iraklı Kürtleri korumayı sürdürmüşlerdir. Böylece Türkiye olası bir göç hareketinin, ekonomik, siyasi ve demografik alanlarda ortaya çıkarabileceği zorluklardan kendisini korumayı hedeflemiştir. Ancak, uçuşa yasaklı bölge Kuzey Irak'ta de-facto bir Kürt devletinin kurulmasının önünü açmıştır. PKK ile mücadele eden ve Kürt milliyetçiliğini tehdit unsuru olarak gören Türkiye zorlayıcı bir siyasi atmosferlere karşılaşacaktır.

4. 1990 Sonrası Türkiye'nin Orta Büyüklükte Güç Statüsü

Soğuk savaştan ve Körfez savaşından sonraki süreç, temel sistemik bir dönüşüme ve bölgede yükselen güvenlik ağına işaret etmektedir. Orta büyüklükte güç statüsüne katkı sağlayabilecek motivasyonlarla, uluslararası sistem üzerindeki etkisini artırmak isteyerek ABD'nin isteği doğrultusunda savaşa dahil olan Türkiye'nin doksanlardan sonra iç-bölgesel-küresel siyaset ağına sistemik etki sağlamanın önünde zorlayıcı bir bulmacaya dönüşmesi ile bu statü zorlu bir sınavdan geçmiştir. Huzuru temin Harekatından sonra Kuzey Irak'ta ortaya çıkan de-facto yapılanma, Türkiye'nin sürdürmeye devam ettiği PKK ile mücadele, soğuk savaşın sona ermesiyle geleneksel

batılı müttefiklerle ittifakın dönüşen doğası ve bölgesel politika üzerindeki anlaşmazlıklar, bölgesel aktörlerle ittifak geliştirmedeki başarısızlıklar, Türkiye'nin orta büyüklükte güç statüsünü devam ettirmesinin önündeki temel sorunlar olarak ortaya çıkmış, bu sorunların birbirlerine bağlandıkları noktalar Türkiye'nin sistemi etkilemesine yönelik kanalları tıkamıştır.

Kuzey Irak'ta de-facto yapılanmanın başlaması ile birlikte Türkiye güneyindeki siyasi gelişmelere ilişkin söz sahibi olabilmek ve onlara etki edebilmek adına Iraklı Kürtlerle iletişim içerisinde olmuştur. Bölgede meydana gelen herhangi bir güç boşluğu PKK'nın kamplarını genişletmesine ve Türkiye'ye karşı terör saldırılarını yoğunlaştırmasına fırsat veriyordu. Üstelik bölgede bir Kürt devletinin kurulması domino etkisi yaparak komşu ülkelerin sınırlarına taşabilir, Kürt milliyetçiliğini bölgesel bağlamda güçlendirebilirdi. Körfez savaşı öncesinde Irak'la yapılan antlaşmalar sonucunda PKK'ya karşı sınır ötesi operasyonlar yürütebilen Türkiye aynı imkanı savaş sonrası ortamda da devam ettirmek ve PKK'ya fırsat tanıyabilecek olası bir güç boşluğu ihtimalini ortadan kaldırmak istemektedir. Bu nedenle Iraklı Kürtlerle yakın ilişkiler kurmak ve bölgedeki varlıklarını desteklemek Kuzey Irak'ta PKK yanlısı ve Türk hükümeti karşıtı bir yapılanmanın oluşmasının önüne geçme amacı taşımaktaydı. Ancak bu noktadaki ilk ikilem, Türkiye'nin Iraklı Kürtleri ve Kuzey Irak'taki otoritelerini desteklemesinin bir Kürt devleti kurulma ihtimalini de güçlendirmesiydi.

ABD'nin soğuk savaş sonrası düzende de ihtiyaç duyacağı bir müttefiki olduğunu Körfez Savaşı üzerinden kanıtlama gayreti içerisinde olan Türkiye, soğuk savaşın galibi ile sıkı dostluğunu devam ettirerek soğuk savaş sonrası düzende sisteme etkisini azami düzeye çıkarmayı ve bölgesel politikada barış sürecinde söz sahibi olmayı hedeflerken, ilişkilerin ve beklentilerin umulduğu gibi gitmeyişi sistemik

etkide tıkanmalara sebep olmuştur. Saddam Hüseyin üzerinden tanımlandığı düşünülen ortak tehdit algısı savaş sonrasında ortaya çıkan farklı önceliklerle sarsıldı. ABD Saddam Hüseyin'in devrilmesini öncelerken, Irak'ta merkezi otoritenin zayıflayıp devlet altı grup faaliyetlerinin sınır ötesini etki altına alarak hızlanması Türkiye için istenmeyen bir durum halini aldı. KDP ve PUK arasında çıkan çatışmalar sonrasında Türkiye bölgedeki istikrarsızlıktan rahatsızlık duyarken, KDP ve Irak hükümeti arasındaki koalisyon Türkiye tarafından son derece olumlu karşılanmış, fakat bu ittifak ABD'nin güçlü itirazlarıyla karşılaşmıştır. Türkiye'nin, Paris ve Washington süreçlerinin dışında bırakılması da savaş sonrasında bölgesel politikada Türkiye ile birlikte yürünmediğinin kanıtı olmuştur. Irak'a uyguladığı ekonomik yaptırımların zararını ABD ve Körfez ülkeleri ile ticaret hacmini artırarak kapatmayı uman Türkiye, ne ABD ne de Körfez ülkeleri ile bu düzeyde bir ticaret hacmine ulaşamamıştır.

Tüm bunların yanında, savaştan sonra Irak hükümeti ile olan ilişkiler giderek önem kazanmış Türkiye siyasi ve ekonomik arenada komşusunun iş birliğine ihtiyaç duyar hale gelmiştir. Yaptırımların kaldırılması ve boru hattının tekrar açılmasını isteyen Türkiye, merkezi otoritenin kuvvetlenmesini desteklemiş, Kuzey Irak'ta KDP ile Irak hükümetinin ittifakını memnuniyetle karşılamıştır.

Kuzey Irak'ta meydana gelen gelişmeler ve bağımsız bir devlet kurulması ihtimali özellikle kendi sınırları içerisinde Kürt nüfusa sahip Suriye, İran ve Türkiye için ortak bir tehdit teşkil etmekteydi. Bu bölgesel aktörler 1992 yılında Ankara'da üçlü görüşmeler düzenleyerek, Kuzey Irak'ta bir Kürt devleti kurulmasını istemediklerini açıkça duyurdular. Türkiye, batılı müttefikleriyle bölgesel endişeleri farklılaştıkça bölgesel aktörlerle yaklaşarak duruma olan itirazını belirtme çabası içinde olmuştur. Yine Paris görüşmelerine dahil edilmeyen Türkiye, bir kez daha Suriye ve İran'la bir

araya gelerek süreci onaylamadığını ifade etmiştir. Ancak Türkiye PKK ile mücadelede bölgesel iş birliği beklentilerinin karşılanmadığını ve Suriye'nin ülke içerisindeki PKK faaliyetlerini durdurmaya ilişkin yeterli özeni göstermediğini belirtmiş sonrasında da Suriye'yi PKK'ya desteğini kesmesi yönünde uyarıp ilişkileri dondurmuştur. Bölgesel güvenlik ağının diğer bir boyutu da Kuzey Irak'ta farklı tarafları desteklemeye başlayan İran ve Türkiye'nin bu ittifakı devam ettirememeleri olmuştur.

Soğuk savaşın bitimiyle birlikte Türkiye ve geleneksel batılı müttefikler arası anlaşmazlıklar, soğuk savaş dönemine kıyasla çok daha görünür bir hal almıştır. Avrupa Konseyi Türkiye'nin 1987'de yaptığı başvuruyu en erken 1993'te değerlendireceğini belirtmiş, Türkiye Körfez savaşına katılımının bu sürece katkı sağlayacağını düşünmüştür. Ancak beklenenin aksine savaş sonrası yükselen bölgesel güvenlik sorunları, Türkiye'nin iç ve bölgesel sorunlara çözüm üretme şekli ve bölgeye ilişkin farklılaşan politikalar Avrupa ile Türkiye'nin uzaklaşmasına neden olmuştur. Soğuk savaş sonrası dönemde önemi artan sınır ötesi devlet altı gruplar ve kimliksel elementler, Türkiye'nin sisteme etkisini artırmasını sağlayabilecek olan Avrupa Birliğine girememesinde rol oynamıştır. 1990'larda Kürt sorunu bölgesel düzeyde kalmamış, özellikle Iraklı Kürtlerin göçe zorlanışından sonra, Ortadoğu'da Kürt meselesi uluslararası bir boyut kazanmıştır. Bu uluslararası boyut Türkiye'nin Avrupa Birliğine giriş sürecinde ve ABD ile ilişkilerinde dikkat edilmeye başlanır bir hal alırken ortak tehdidin çekilmesi bu ayrışmaları keskinleştirmiştir. Kuzey Irak'taki tecrübe PKK'nın strateji değiştirmesine neden olmuş, ve örgüt dolaylı hedefler üzerinden Türkiye'yi siyasal uzlaşmaya zorlamıştır. 1995 yılında Avrupa Parlamentosu Türkiye'nin askeri operasyonlarını kınamış ve ülkeye askeri ambargo uygulanmasına ilişkin çağrıda bulunurken, 1997 yılına gelindiğinde AB Türkiye'nin üyelik

başvurusuna ret sebebi olarak demokrasi, insan hakları ve azınlık haklarının korunması gibi unsurları içeren kriterlerin eksikliğini göstermiştir.

Sonuç olarak bu tez, 1990'lar sonrasında ortaya çıkan iç-bölgesel-küresel siyaset bağının nasıl Türkiye'nin orta büyüklükte güç statüsünü tehdit eder hale dönüştüğünü incelemiştir. Türkiye'nin sistemle ilişkisine odaklanarak, Carr'ın sistemik bakış açısını teorik çerçeve olarak kullanmış ve bölgeselleşme kavramından yararlanmıştır.

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