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Between East and West: Turkey's Foreign Policy in a Multipolar World

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AB—Arab Spring

CDA—Critical discourse analysis

DA—Discourse analysis

IR—International Relations

MEC—Middle Eastern Conflict

MENA—Middle East and Northern Africa

TFP—Turkish foreign policy

TR—Turkish Republic

UNGA—United Nations General Assembly

Abstract

The AKP¹'s proactive foreign policy and the decline of EU-Turkey and US-Turkey relations, along with Turkey's strengthening ties with its Eastern neighbors, has sparked a heated scholarly and media debate about the axis shift of Turkish foreign policy—from the West to the East. The purpose of the present thesis is to analyze if the arguments of the axis shift supporters are grounded enough to prove Turkey's Eastern turn in light of recent developments in the Middle East.

Multi-faceted research was carried out in order to answer this question. Firstly, the Turkish system of values was studied through content and critical discourse analyses within a constructivism framework. Thus, public speeches by Turkish officials were analyzed to trace the presence of nine core European principles, singled out by Ian Manners, in the Turkish system of values. Secondly, in order to analyze if today's Turkish foreign policy aligns with Western policies, Turkey's voting behavior in the United Nations General Assembly was compared to that of the EU and USA. The research was based on the analysis of the selected United Nations General Assembly resolutions on the Middle East. Research results proved that the idea of Turkey's abrupt and unequivocal shift to the East are exaggerated, and instead claimed that Turkish foreign policy-making was strengthening its independent voice rather than adopting an Eastern stance.

Key words: Turkish foreign policy, axis shift theory, West-East world division, EU values, United Nations General Assembly, Arab spring, AKP.

¹Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi – Justice and Development Party

INTRODUCTION

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

As an EU-oriented, close American ally within NATO, Turkey has always been perceived as a western ambassador in the Middle East. Recently heated debates on the axis shift of Turkish foreign policy (TFP) started both in Western and Turkish scholarly and media debates. “Is Turkey Leaving the West?”¹, “Who lost Turkey?”², “Is Turkey drifting away from the West?”³, “Turk’s Eastern Turn”⁴, “Disillusioned with EU, Turkey looks East”⁵ and many similar headings appear in the Western media, signifying a tendency to oppose the foreign policies of Kemalism and the AKP in respect to West-Turkey relations.

Turkish columnists from *Today’s Zaman* and *Hurriyet* daily news started the same debates arguing if recent pro-activism in Turkish foreign policy can be treated as an indicator of the pro-Eastern stance of the incumbent Turkish government. While Western analysts were mainly accusing Turkey of changing its foreign policy outlook and intensive integration into the Muslim world, the Turkish media was predominantly claiming multi-dimensionalism in Turkish foreign policy-making, rather than an abrupt and unambiguous shift towards East.

Axis shift theory supporters claim that the Islamist strategies of the AKP, a ruling party, risk eroding well-established cooperation with Western allies^{6 7}. The arguments for Turkish alienation away from the West are as follows: Turkey’s open conflict with Israel, which is the closest USA ally in the region, after the Mavi Marmara incident, Turkey’s “no” to the nuclear sanctions against Iran approved by the UN, Turkey’s visa elimination policies with Middle Eastern countries, and loss of EU enthusiasm among the Turkish population, to name a few.

¹Soner Cagaptay, “*Is Turkey Leaving the West? An Islamist Foreign Policy Puts Ankara at Odds With Its Former Allies.*” *Foreign Affairs*, October 26, 2009.

²Dominique Moisi, “*Who lost Turkey?*” *European voice*, February 2, 2009.

³Cornell Svante, “*Turkey’s drift away from the West*”, *The Jerusalem Post*, January 14, 2009.

⁴“*Turkey’s Eastern Turn*,” *Financial Times*, 25 November 2009.

⁵Daniel Steinvoth, “*Disillusioned with the EU. Turkey looks East.*”, *Der Spiegel*, November 12, 2009.

⁶Soner Cagaptay, “*Is Turkey Leaving the West? An Islamist Foreign Policy Puts Ankara at Odds With Its Former Allies.*”, *Foreign Affairs*, October 26, 2009.

⁷Nick, Danforth, “*How the West Lost Turkey.*”, *Foreign Policy Magazine*, November 25.

Moreover, aforementioned debates gave rise to the debate about so-called “neo-Ottomanism” or “re-Ottomanism”. Some experts in international relations see the AKP’s foreign policy making pattern ambitions to become a regional power in the Middle East.⁸

Nonetheless, contrary to the media highlighting anti-western rhetoric of Turkish foreign policy-making, western officials do not share the same opinion. As *Today’s Zaman* reports, a US ambassador to Turkey, Francis Ricciardone, dismisses Turkey’s Eastern orientation and axis shift. He states, “The US administration does not believe that Turkey has turned its back on the West”.⁹

Similarly, Turkish officials disagree with the popular believe that Turkey is drifting away from the West. Turkish President Abdullah Gul argues that the axis shift claim stems from ignorance and bad intentions.¹⁰

According to Turkey’s foreign trade minister Zafer Caglayan, outpouring comments on Turkey’s axis shift indicate disturbance over Turkey’s entering new markets in the Middle East. Turkey’s economic success is a well-known fact, which can be illustrated by its skyrocketing GDP (the 17th in the world) and fastest-expanding markets in the neighboring countries. Turkey’s recent improvements in trade relations with neighbors should not be perceived as “drifting from the West”, but rather as an expanding of fields of influence, Zafer Caglayan says.¹¹

Even though the topic of axis shift in Turkish foreign policy seems to be a debatable issue in today’s political discourse, one can observe the lack of fundamental literature on the topic apart from articles and op-ed pieces in the foreign affairs press. Besides, the topic is very new and as such it has not been worked on to a great extent. Therefore, the scientific lacuna of the issue justifies the purpose of my research.

⁸ Omer Taspinar, “Turkey’s Middle Eastern policies: Between Neo-Ottomanism and Kemalism.” *Carnegie papers* 10 (2008): 20.

⁹ “US Ambassador Dismisses Shift of Axis in Turkish Policies.” *Today’s Zaman*, January 17, 2011.

¹⁰ “Claims of axis shift stem from ignorance, bad intentions, says Gül”, *Today’s Zaman*, June 15, 2010.

¹¹ “Axis shift rumors reflect disturbance over Turkey’s entry into new markets.” *Today’s Zaman*, July 31, 2010.

The main question of the study is to examine if there is a sound ground to claim that Turkey is leaving the West for the sake of the East in the light of recent developments in the MENA region. Therefore, to answer the main question, several sub-questions need to be discussed in the framework of the research:

- ✓ On an ideological level, what is Turkey's official program in policy-making? How Western are the values promoted by the government in force?
- ✓ On an executive level, what is Turkey's actual behavior in respect to Middle Eastern issues? Which side does Turkey take while making decisions on the international arena?
- ✓ What is the correlation between Western and Eastern dimensions in Turkey's foreign policy-making nowadays?

I will carry out two-folded research focusing both on ideological and executive or implementation criteria as shift indicators.

RESEARCH MODE AND METHODOLOGY

The first chapter will deal with the directions of current Turkey's foreign policy (TFP). I will analyze the "West-East" paradigm in TFP, by way of a literature review on the topic and direct references to Turkey's behavior in the international arena.

Thereafter, in the second chapter I will investigate Turkey's official stance in the MENA region on a governmental level. In other words, I will analyze what Turkish officials say in their public speeches about Middle Eastern topical problems. Material that is to be analyzed is Erdoğan and Davutoğlu speeches on the "Arab spring," and other public statements referring to the MENA region available online in English on the websites of the Turkish government, as well as the publications of *Today's Zaman* and *Hurriyet* daily.

Within constructivism by means of the discourse analysis method, the aforementioned texts will be analyzed to trace concepts that stand for Western values. For the purpose of this research, the Western set of values will be based on the normative ethics of the EU proposed by Ian Manners (2008), which are also considered to be traditional and universally recognized European values. Eventually, the degree to which the Western

values are presented and their connotation in the texts under analysis will signify the grounds (if any) to talk about the axis shift in TFP.

After thorough analysis of what Turkey says in respect to MENA questions, for the second stage of the analysis I will focus on what Turkey actually does with regard to the same issues. To pass from an ideological to implementation level, I will proceed with the next criterion for the axis shifting—Turkey’s voting behavior in the UN General Assembly (UNGA).

By means of quantitative methods, in the third chapter I will calculate the level of coherence of Turkey voting in line with the West or, vice versa, contrary to it in order to see the patterns of Turkey’s alliance-making in the UNGA. It will show Turkey’s willingness either to carry out its own independent policies or work in cooperation with Western powers such as the USA and the EU.

In view of the evaluations mentioned above, the degrees of Western and Eastern dimensions in Turkish foreign policy-making will be integrally examined so that appropriateness of axis shift rhetoric will be either proven or declined.

CHAPTER I

POLEMICS ON TURKEY'S CURRENT FOREIGN POLICY DIRECTION: EAST OR WEST—WHICH IS THE BEST?

1.1 AXIS SHIFTING: GLOBAL AND TURKISH PERSPECTIVES

The phenomenon of axis shift in Turkey's foreign policy should be discussed from two perspectives: firstly, from a broad geopolitical perspective in the context of pole shift in international relations and secondly, from a domestic perspective with a focus on the dynamics of Turkish foreign policy developments.

The end of the Cold War signified the transition from a bipolar "USA versus the USSR" system into a multipolar one in which the military, economic, and cultural influences are distributed between more than two powers. Shifting alliances are peculiar for the multipolar world we live in today. In the geopolitical context, Turkey's axis shift can be considered Turkey's answer to a world power shift and Turkey's attempt to adapt to the realities. The first assumption in the context of this thesis is that there is a pole shift in world power division and that a new multipolar global system is developing. If world power is shifting, the assumption is that Turkey is responding to the changes observed in the world system.

In terms of pole division of the world into the west and "the rest" (the division proposed by Nial Ferguson), there is a strong belief among a number of scholars that after many years of Western dominance in the international arena, one can observe the rise of the East in political, economic, and social aspects¹². Therefore, there are debates about the rise of Eastern powers with reference to China in particular¹³ and more generally referring to Eastern/Asian countries in the Middle East, as well as India and South Asian "tigers"¹⁴. Economic success in these countries translates into political and military strength, which makes them potential rivals for the Western leading countries.

Turkey, which geographically belongs to several regions simultaneously and has close ties with all of them (Europe, Asia, the Middle East, Central Asia and the Caucasus, and the Turkic world), has multiple options in alliance making. Thus, presumably, if the

¹²Nial Ferguson, *Civilization: The West and the Rest*, New York: Penguin, 2011.

¹³Henry Kissinger, *On China*. New York: Penguin, 2011.

¹⁴James F. Hoge, "A global power shift in the making" *Foreign affairs* 83 (4) (2004): 4-9

world treads “East”, it might be a beneficial and doable mission to strengthen its ties with the potential leaders of the world.

Turkey’s ambitions to enter the EU and its NATO membership indicate its zealous desire to be a part of the Western world. On the other hand, friendship with the Muslim Brotherhood ¹⁵ is considered by some analysts to be incompatible with its Western ambitions. As was mentioned above, many columnists argue Turkey’s intentions to integrate with the East instead of the West. Nonetheless, not every scholar supports this idea, pointing out the fact that integration tendencies in the East and Middle East in particular are not strong enough for Turkey to make decisive steps to become a part of it.

If we look at the West, there is sound ground to talk about a Western bloc that includes the USA and members of the EU. Those countries are unified economically and politically, which resulted in institutional unification if we look at the EU. On the contrary, the Middle East does not look homogeneous and there is an obvious absence of the common voice of the Middle East. As USAK’s expert in MENA region, Dr.Guner Ozkan claims that integration dynamics in the Middle East region are weak, contrary to the EU. The Middle East does not tend to unite and, consequently, there is no single Middle Eastern bloc. The Middle East is diverse and conflicting on all levels. It cannot replace the EU for Turkey. According to him, Turkey cannot be more part of the Middle East than it already is¹⁶.

Apart from the multipolar angle, axis shift in TFP can be analyzed by means of the internal perspective, i.e. through the analysis of the dynamics of developments of Turkish foreign policy itself. Ground studies were carried out in this respect both by Turkish and foreign scholars.

Fundamental research on modern TFP was conducted by a British professor, William Hale, who investigated Turkey’s relations with the West and East in a chronological

¹⁵The Arab world’s most influential pan-Islamist political and social movement was founded by the Egyptian school teacher Hassan al-Banna in 1928. Initially an Egyptian opposition organization, the Muslim Brotherhood has gained supporters throughout the entire MENA region .

¹⁶GunerOzkan, “*On the role of Turkey in a new Middle East and axis shift in Turkish foreignpolicy.*” Interview taken at USAK, June 2, 2012.

framework from 1774 to 2000. His book on Turkish foreign policy (2000) has been received as authoritative and is now considered classical reading on the subject.¹⁷

Another outsider's perspective on Turkish foreign policy is presented by Graham E. Fuller, an American author specializing on the geopolitics of Islam and the West. In his book "The New Turkish Republic: Turkey as a Pivotal State in the Muslim World" (2003), he gives a special status to Turkey in the Middle East due to its multifaceted foreign relations. According to him, Turkey's downgrading ties with Washington stem both from world geopolitical changes and American sanctions and assumptions.¹⁸

Valuable for our research are the studies of Turkish academicians: Feroz Ahmad,¹⁹ who focused on Turkey's post-war politics (1993), Tarik Oguzlu's²⁰ research on the Europeanization and Middle Easternization of Turkish foreign policy (2008), and Ziya Onis,²¹ whose research of Turkish integration into the western world is based on political economy theories (2007).

1.2 WEST-EAST PARADIGM IN TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY: HISTORIC OUTLINE

To analyze the "West-East" dichotomy in Turkey's politics, a quick chronological overview of Turkish foreign policy-making should be carried out. The notions of West and East are ambiguous and not easy-to-define terms in modern geopolitics. There is no one and a single division of the world into West and East accepted by all international relations scholars. To avoid misunderstandings and ambiguity, for the purpose of this research, the West will stand for the EU and the USA, while the East will refer to Middle Eastern and Northern African countries, i.e. the Arab/Islam world. This context is quite broad, which gives us the possibility to grasp change to a full extent.

From a historical perspective, one can trace the Westernization tendencies starting from the 16th century, when the Ottoman elite started to adopt European ideas, lifestyles, and

¹⁷William Hale, *Turkish foreign policy, 1774-2000*, Frank Caas Publishers, 2000.

¹⁸Graham E. Fuller, *The New Turkish Republic: Turkey as a Pivotal State in the Muslim World*. USIP Press, 2008.

¹⁹Feroz Ahmad, *The Making of Modern Turkey*, Routledge, 1993.

²⁰Tomer Oguzlu, 'Middle Easternization of Turkey's Foreign Policy: Does Turkey Dissociate from the West?', *Turkish Studies* 9(1) (2008): 3-20.

²¹Ziya Onis, *Turkish Politics in a Changing World: Global Dynamics and Domestic Transformations*. Istanbul: Bilgi University Press, 2007.

ways of thinking. The Ottoman elite were western-looking, which can be proven by their fluency in French. Moreover, the number of military schools and academies imitating western ones was immense.

The first Sultan who brought Turkey to the Europeanization road was Sultan Mahmud the Second. His modernization process was based on a system of Napoleonic order, which is famous in history under the name *tanzimat* (“reorganization”). It was aimed to strengthen Turkey’s belonging to the West.²² Thus, cultural and political ties with Europe flourished in the Ottoman times, but westernization as a key factor of foreign policy making starts with Kemalism.

Since the birth of the Turkish Republic in 1923, the concept of the West has stood synonymous with modernity, prosperity, democracy, and development. Atatürk, the father of the Turkish Republic, reformed the system with the ideology known as “6 arrows of Kemalism”: republicanism, populism, revolutionism, secularism, nationalism, and statism. His famous words “the West has always been prejudiced against the Turks, but we, Turks, have always moved towards the West. In order to be a civilized nation, there is no other alternative,” describe the country’s foreign policy-making strategies of the time.²³

The newly born Turkish republic was busy with nation building, which resulted in the neglect of policies towards MENA countries. The secular republic was committed to modernism and a Turkish-ethnic identity rather than to a Muslim identity. Islam in Turkey underwent changes; it was nationalized, or “Turkified”. Former Ottoman territories were seen as sources of regional problems, while Western countries served as models.²⁴

The foreign policy motto was “Peace at home, peace in the world”. Many experts claim that Atatürk’s program to make allies with the West was caused by historical necessity. The West was the most “accessible and advantageous place for the newly born Turkish Republic.”²⁵ Turkey began a dialogue with Western democracies and joined League of Nations in 1932, motivated by the influential role of the West in geopolitical

²²Mesut Ozcan, *Harmonizing Foreign Policy: Turkey, the EU and the Middle East*. Ashgate, 2008.

²³William Hale, *Turkish foreign policy, 1774-2000*, 18

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵Temur Sahika, “Atatürk only could go west, experts say,” *Hurriyet Daily News*, November 9, 2009.

developments. As İlder Turan, a political-science academic at Istanbul's Bilgi University points out, "Atatürk stood closer to the West than to the East for political reasons because he wanted to see Turkey as a civilized culture in the Western part of the world."²⁶ In the East-West dichotomy, Turkey was choosing between the powerful West (the USA and European countries) and colonial East. The pragmatic character of policy-making during the Kemalism era explains why the choice was made in favor of the West. Some scholars even argue that westernization was not an option, but a must for Turkey as a newly born state.²⁷

Pro-Western orientation did not mean reluctance to cooperate with the East. Turkey was establishing close ties with Middle Eastern countries, keeping in mind that France and Great Britain were active in the region and friendship with them could ease the relations between western allies.

Westernization and Europeanization in particular, in the sense of adaptation to European institutional and social norms and practices, served as a strong tool for democratization and liberalization reforms in Turkey. In order to get access to the EU, the Turkish Parliament began to introduce political and human rights reforms designed to meet the Copenhagen political criteria through the enactment of harmonization packages. Thus, wide-ranging reforms were executed: change in basic legal codes (i.e. the new Civil Code or the Anti-Terror Law), the abolition of the death penalty, freedom of expression, broadcasting in and learning the Kurdish language, and changing the composition and functions of the National Security Council.²⁸

During 1950-1980, one can observe an evident strengthening of the Western dimension in Turkey's policy-making. While ties with the Arab world remained limited during the Cold War, cooperation with the West became more intense. These well-known facts illustrate how Turkey acted in line with Western orientation: in 1949 Turkey became the first Muslim country to recognize Israel; in 1952 Turkey joined NATO and in the following years other international organizations such as the IMF, CSCE, and OECD; during the Algerian War of 1954-1962, Turkey supported France, not the Algerian

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷Temur Sahika, "Atatürk only could go west, experts say," *Hurriyet Daily News*, November 9, 2009.

²⁸Susanna Verney, IfantisKostas, *Turkey's Road to European Membership: National Identity and Political Change*, Routledge, 2009, 77-120.

independence; in 1958 Turkey allowed the USA to use Incirlik during the Lebanese crisis; in 1956 Turkey sided with the Western powers during the Suez Canal crisis. The absence of Turkey's sensitivity to its southern neighbors' pan-Arabic concerns and aspirations stems from limited alliance-making options during the Cold War. In light of the bipolar division of the world, the pro-Western option was the only one possible. After the Second World War, the USSR presented a big existential threat for Turkey. Meanwhile, the USSR was making strategic allies in the Middle East to resist the Western dominance in the region. For this purpose, the Soviet Union was providing financial and military assistance to the Arab countries. Consequently, Turkey and the Arab World happened to be on "different sides of strategic fence".²⁹

Significant changes occurred in Turkey's foreign policymaking in the early 1980s, with Turgut Ozal coming to power. With his liberation policies, which were the part of the so-called "Ozal Revolution", he introduced the concept of Turkey as a "bridge country", which ought to appropriate the best of the West and the East. Hence, Turkey re-opened a forgotten dialogue with the Middle Eastern countries. The main reason for this was the rise of an economic dimension in Turkey's foreign policy-making.

In the 1980s, Turkey was perceived as a miracle economy, or in Andrew Mango's words, a "young tiger economy". This is demonstrated in the growth of Turkish exports from 2.91 million units in 1980 to 20 billion units in 1990.³⁰

One of the main concerns of Turgut Ozal was to globalize the Turkish economy by means of widening its trade horizons. This objective resulted in numerous projects in cooperation with Middle Eastern countries and the post-Soviet world in the sectors of trade, tourism, and construction.

Ozalism played an important role not only in the development of purely economic cooperation with neighbors, but also in the re-establishment of a wider Turkish identity abroad. Hence, close economic and political cooperation with post-Ottoman states and neighbors such as the Middle East, Central Asia, and the Balkans, based on long-forgotten cultural similarities, was renewed with Ozal's expansionist foreign policy.

²⁹William Hale, *Turkish foreign policy, 1774-2000*, 92.

³⁰Andrew Mango, *From the Sultan to Atatürk: Turkey*. Haus Publishing, 2009, 35-49.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union, close ties with post-Soviet Turkic republics were established. The Turkish identity underwent changes. It became more Ottoman than Turkish, covering all neighboring Muslim peoples (like Kurds in Northern Iraq) and all minorities in Turkey. For example, during the Gulf War, Turkey acted as a protector of Iraqi Kurds and Turkmens as its “Big Brother”.

Many analysts see ambitions for regional power in Ozal’s motto “again great Turkey”, and signs of neo-Ottomanism.³¹ Likewise, there is a tendency in the western media to perceive Ozalist policies as aggressive policymaking and label them as pan-Ottoman, pan-Turkic, and even a pan-Islamist march of Turks.

As interviews with USAK’s experts show, there is a common belief among Turkish analysts that the weakening of the Western dimension started not with AKP’s government, as is highlighted in contemporary media, but years before it, with Ozal’s revolution.³²

1.3 WEAKENING THE WESTERN DIMENSION IN TODAY’S TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY-MAKING

To summarize, after the dismemberment of the Soviet Union and especially in the last decade, Turkey has begun to employ a more active foreign policy in its region. Its previous foreign policies, which often followed the footsteps of Western countries and especially the USA, began to give way to more independent and proactive policies.

As an important member of NATO and the OIC and a long-time candidate for the EU, Turkey has been extending its sphere of influence in the Balkans, Caucasia, North Africa, and the Middle East. While Turkish companies have been investing and doing business in those lands, the Turkish state has begun to have a greater impact on the social and political developments in the region. For instance, its influence is clearly observed in developments related to the Arab spring, the Palestinian issue, and Iranian affairs, which we will discuss later on.

³¹ Cengi Çandar, “Turgut Özal: The Ottoman of the 21st Century,” *Sabah*, April 28, 1992.

³² Guner Ozkan, “On the Role of Turkey in a New Middle East and Axis Shift in Turkish Foreign Policy.” Interview taken at USAK, June 2, 2012.

Turkey's new active foreign policy and diplomacy, which have given rise to recent "axis shift" debates, seem to be mostly the result of the conservative approach of the AKP government that has been ruling the country since 2002.

AKP's foreign policy is said to be masterminded by the academic Ahmet Davutoğlu, who was initially the chief adviser to the foreign minister and later was persuaded to take full responsibility as the foreign minister of the country. In his articles and in his well-known book *Stratejik Derinlik* (Strategic Depth 2001), he elaborates on his theories and concepts as well as their prospective applications. His "civilizational" approach, as opposed to "the clash of civilizations" attributed to Samuel Huntington, focuses on solving, ending, or at least mitigating chronic problems in the international arena and seems to promote more peaceful solutions as his notion "zero-problem with neighbors foreign policy" implies.³³

In a very metaphorical way, Ahmet Davutoğlu defines Turkey's foreign policy-making behavior as follows: "Turkey as an international player was previously seen as having strong muscles, a weak stomach, heart problems, and fair-to-middling brain power. In other words, it had a powerful army but weak economy, lacked self-confidence and was not good at strategic thinking".³⁴

He presents his "remedy" to Turkey's weaknesses in his "Strategic Depth" foreign policy course. His solutions are: maintaining a balance between security and democracy, the "zero problem with neighbors" concept, a multi-dimensional approach in foreign policy-making, a search for alternatives (strengthening ties mainly with MENA neighbors and cooperation with global actors such as the USA, NATO, the EU, Russia, and China), and a rhythmic diplomacy (serious, sustained, and always active).

On the implementation level, we may see how the theoretical framework of "Strategic Depth" was put in practice. During the AKP's government, Turkey established good trade relations with ex-enemy Russia and strengthened its ties with the Arab world, which signifies the "zero-problem policy" and multi-dimensional philosophies.

³³Ahmet Davutoğlu, *Stratejik derinlik: Türkiye'nin uluslararası konumu*. Istanbul: Küre Yayınları, 2001, 77.

³⁴Nimet Seker, "A Shift in Turkish Foreign Policy: Turkey's Strategic Depth", Qantara, August 7, 2009.

Moreover, Turkey acted as a mediator and peacekeeper in the Balkans, as it positively contributed to the independence of Kosovo and also played a stabilizing role in Georgia during that country's conflict with Russia.

Other evidence of Turkey's intentions to make new friends and improve relations with neighbors is shown through its brave and proactive taboo-solving policies. For a long time in history, Turkey avoided to touch upon issues such as the Armenian question, Israel and Syria, and the West and Iran. With AKP coming to power, we see positive changes in these aspects. Thus, President Gul made an official visit to Armenia about opening borders between countries after a long absence of Armenian-Turkish dialogue. Similarly, Turkey played a mediator role in the conflict between Syria and Israel and warmed the relations between Turkey and Iraqi Kurds.

From a broad perspective, one can see that the multi-dimensional approach started with Ozalism and focused mainly on Central Asia and the EU. It was not invented by the AKP government, but instead was shifted to new dimensions and focused primarily on the Middle East.

However, in spite of this constructive and peaceful approach, Turkey also gives the impression that it might resort to use of force in the region. Critics of the AKP government refer to it as pro-Islamist and pro-Arabic, expressing concern for Turkey's potential imperial ambitions. In Western media, Ahmet Davutoğlu was nicknamed the "Kissinger of Turkey", which draws a parallel between him and famous politician and scholar Henry Kissinger, who started the power shift debate in world politics discussed above.³⁵

All ruling Turkish officials such as Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu, Prime Minister Erdoğan, and President Abdullah Gul belong to the "Anatolian elite" which is considered to be pro-Islamic and conservative. Erdoğan closeadvisor, Cuneyt Zapsu's statement, "we are the Ottoman successors and we are not ashamed of it",³⁶ can be a ground reason for debate on the aggressive and "neo-ottomanistic" intentions of the AKP, which some intellectuals fear.

³⁵Nimet Seker, "A Shift in Turkish Foreign Policy: Turkey's Strategic Depth", Qantara, August 7, 2009.

³⁶"Axis shift rumors reflect disturbance over Turkey's entry into new markets", Today's Zaman, July 31, 2010.

Thus, many have felt the potential of the use of military force in Turkish foreign policymaking. This could be the case with the Syrian government's bloody suppression of popular protests in several cities, the recent crises with Israel including the Gaza flotilla incident, and Israeli support for Greek Cypriot explorations of oil and natural gas in the East Mediterranean. In fact, Turkey's recently active role reflects Davutoğlu's notion of "rhythmic diplomacy".

Therefore, less people are taking Turkey's support of the West as a given in the international arena. The logical question may arise: what caused changes in Turkey's stance? Obviously, the answer cannot be one and single factor, as any international relations phenomenon is always explained by a mixture of motives. We can divide the issues which led to Turkey's current stance into two main groups: 1) The Western factor, concerned mainly with the decline of the West and problems in the "Turkey-West" dialogue; and 2) The Turkish success story, which makes Turkey a strong and independent player on the international arena.

1.3.1 DECLINE OF THE WEST AS AN ENGINE FOR TURKEY'S DRIFT

Internal Western problems should also be taken into consideration. The current socio-economical situation in EU countries does not seem to be bright. The economic downturn, financial crises, bankruptcy of some national economies like those of Greece and Italy, and the possible collapse of economies in Spain and Portugal in the short run provide a rather grim picture.

Moreover, one observes quite different perceptions and opinions on central problems and policymaking in the EU. As for future prospects, many scholars forecast the strong possibility of the collapse of the Euro as the common currency and even the dismemberment of the EU.

Similarly, due to domestic economic problems and increasing migration, extreme right and racist parties in several EU countries have become stronger and even come to power. Thus, multiculturalism, as well as democratic and liberal values, which are considered to be at the basis of contemporary European civilization, are weakened. The much-talked-of mass shooting in Norway carried out by Anders Breivik in the name of the annihilation of multiculturalism in Europe is a good example to justify this argument.

The European image is also weakening abroad. Consequently, the EU has less moral and political influence over others. In brief, these developments seem to restrict the EU influence in international politics.

Another factor that pours oil on the flames is stalled EU accession process for Turkey. Back in 1959, Turkey applied for associate membership in the European Economic Community. In 1987 it proceeded with an application for full membership. Regardless of this long period of the EU story for Turkey, it still has the status of a candidate country.

The present stage of the Turkey-EU relations has been metaphorically referred to as a “train crash”. This metaphor was invented by EU Enlargement Commissioner, Olli Rehn, in a comment on the Cyprus dispute. The Prime Minister of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, stated that Turkey will not comply with EU demands to open its ports to the Republic of Cyprus unless the trade embargo for Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus was lifted.

Using the constructivism approach suggested by Dominique Moisi in his book “The Geopolitics of Emotion” (2009) we can trace Turkey’s emotional stance in regard to the EU accession process.³⁷ The main emotions would not be positive. Many analysts claim that Turkey’s inferiority complex is caused by the “unwanted child in the European family” syndrome and the disillusionment of a European dream.

Although Turkey has close economic and political relations with the EU, it still has a candidate status. However, in recent years the Turkish government and its people have lost their interest in gaining membership, because economically Turkey does better than most of EU countries and it also feels that it will never become a member due to the reluctance or refusal of some EU states.

Surveys carried out by USAK in major Turkish cities such as Istanbul, Ankara, Izmir, Adana and Bursa show that the degree of Euro-skepticism among the Turkish population is growing every year. Thus, in response to the question “Does the EU behave sincerely and fairly toward Turkey?” in 2004, 55% of interviewed answered “No”, whereas in 2006 the same indicator reached 84%. As for the time span of

³⁷Dominique Moisi, *The Geopolitics of Emotion: How Cultures of Fear, Humiliation, and Hope Are Reshaping the World*, Deckle Edge, 2009.

Turkey's EU membership, the majority of interviewed spoke in favor of "never" or "in the long run", with extremely low indicators for "soon", which did not exceed 14%.³⁸

Interesting research was carried out by German scholars to trace out the recurring statements on the EU accession process in the Turkish press. The high percent of statements underline Turkey's negative attitude towards EU behavior. Some statements show the fear of rejection and Turkey's stung dignity: "Many Turks make plans to reject the EU before it rejects Turkey", "Focusing on privileged membership is an indignity for Turkey", "The EU keeps us waiting—they will benefit from us and yet will not accept us".

The press has also expressed feelings of inferiority: "Turk-Arab and Turk—Turkic relations make more sense than being a small fish in the big sea", "We will not accept anything less than full membership".

Others react with pride and independence: "We don't ask for privileges. What we ask is equal and fair treatment", "We are not interested in baby-sitting the old and clumsy population of Europe", "They should accept us only the way we are".³⁹

As for the Turkey-US story, long-lasting allies were going through critical times during the last decade. Bush's presidency was marked by a significant decline of cooperation between the countries. The former warm-hearted friendship between Turkey and the USA was cooled by the American activism in the Iraq war. The Northern part of Iraq presents a big threat for Turkey due to the fact that it is occupied by the Kurdish terrorist organization, PKK. Any disorder in that area may cause uprisings among Turkish Kurds for independence, which could result in a civil war in Turkey. Therefore, Turkey strongly criticized America's actions in Iraq.

Another obstacle for Turkey-US relations is the Iranian nuclear program. In 2010, Washington imposed new sanctions over the Iranian nuclear program and Turkey, together with India and China opposed them. Consequently, the USA stopped selling

³⁸"*USAK Surveys on Turkish Security and Foreign Policy*", Ankara: USAK, 2010.

³⁹Bernard Steunenberg, Christiane R uth, "*Between Reason and Emotion: Popular Discourses on Turkey's Membership of the EU*", *South European Society and Politics*, 16:3 (2011), 452-460.

the arms Turkey needed to fight against the PKK. All in all, a lack of consensus in the Middle East has weakened cooperation between former allies.

1.3.2 TURKEY'S SUCCESS STORY STRENGTHENS ITS INDEPENDENT VOICE

Contrary to the EU, the recent global economic crisis has not influenced Turkey to a great extent. The country broke a record in exports in 2011. It is considered among the top 17 economies in the region and soon expected to rise to top 10. Following China, it is currently the second fastest growing economy in the world. This rise as an economic power contributes to Turkey's political power as well.

In addition to its political and economical power, Turkey increases its soft power through public and cultural diplomacy. For instance, Turkish soap operas are currently watched in over 30 countries in the region. This brings more tourists to the country. Likewise, Turkish companies investing in various countries contribute to the employment of local people and to national economies through their taxes. Thus, the image of Turkey is being promoted.

As Turkey has recently left its laicism (which involved both jacobinist and fundamentalist secularism) for a more positive and reconciliatory approach towards religion, it began to support stronger ties and cooperation with Muslim countries as well as Muslim minorities in other lands.

The new Turkish foreign policymakers suggest that Turkey wants a just and prosperous world where wealth is shared and the gap between the rich and the poor is minimized. They claim that they do not have imperialistic ambitions, nor are they after a sort of neo-Ottomanism, which frightens some politicians and intellectuals.

The authority of Turkey in the Middle Eastern world is being strengthened by its success story both in terms of economy and democracy building. Hence, Turkey serves as a model for MENA countries in terms of human rights and economic progress. The Turkish model in the Middle Eastern discourse stands for "a secular, democratic,

Muslim country aiming to achieve Western standards in cooperation with the West, by applying liberal free-market policies”.⁴⁰

1.4 TURKEY’S FLIP-FLOPPING STANCE IN MIDDLE EASTERN ISSUES

As mentioned above, both Western and Turkish developments led to transformations in Turkey’s policymaking, from non-involvement to a leading role. In the past, Turkey often followed the lead of Western powers such as the USA, and some European countries—often through the context of NATO and the EU—and it rarely had independent initiatives. However, Turkey’s cooperation with the West is not taken for granted any longer.

Depending on the region and the issues involved, one sometimes finds Turkey in cooperation with the EU and the USA, and at other times in competition or even conflict with them. For example, in Syria, Turkey is in cooperation with the USA and the EU as opposed to the Syrian government, which is supported by Iran, Russia, and China.

In Middle Eastern conflict, Turkey is sometimes in line with softer EU policies, while at other times it is in open conflict with Israel. However, in spite of Prime Minister Erdoğan anti-Israeli rhetoric, which won the hearts of the Arab street and the seemingly hostile relations with Israel, one should note that Turkey still maintains most of its economic and military ties with Israel.

With respect to Iran’s relations with the USA, Israel, and the EU, Turkey openly opposes the use of force against Iran and at times appears to support or even protect that country from some UN sanctions and embargos. As one can observe, in a very independent manner, Turkey acted with regard to the US sanctions against the Iranian nuclear program. Turkey acted contrary to the Western world, but in line with Brazil to vote against the sanctions.

Uprisings in the Middle East such as the Arab spring served as a litmus test for Turkey’s alliance making and its “zero-problems with neighbors” principle. Turkey

⁴⁰ Andrew Mango, “The Turkish Model”, Middle Eastern Journal 29:4 (1993): 730.

welcomed the revolutions and overthrowing of the incumbent regimes in Tunisia (2011) and Egypt (2011) with open arms, in line with the opinions of Western countries.

Not so definite was Turkey's stance in the Libyan case. When the West decisively stood against Qaddafi, Turkey's initial reaction was evasive. Western activism, which we can see in the dynamic opposition to the Qaddafi regime (sanctions, no-fly zone over Libya, and military intervention as a part of the NATO operation "Unified Protector") was met by Turkey's passive and lukewarm behavior. During the first stages, Turkey did not support the no-fly zone as a NATO member and was careful not to issue any official position aligning it either with the West or Middle East. In later stages, Turkey joined operation "Unified Protector" and participated through military assistance (5 ships and 1 submarine), hosting refugees (500 injured Libyans were treated in Turkish hospitals) and issuing financial support amounting to \$300 million.

Obviously, double standard rhetoric in Libya and initial hesitancy to act in line with the West can be explained by the fact that in Libya, contrary to in Tunisia and Egypt, Turkey had national interests. Libya became one of the biggest markets for Turkish contractors, and during 2000-2010 foreign trade between Turkey and Libya was skyrocketing. Apart from strong economic cooperation, Turkish and Libyan regimes were on very friendly terms, as seen when Qaddafi gave Erdoğan the prize for human rights in 2010 for his "distinguished service to humanity".

Turkey's flip-flopping stance in Libya could be explained by a number of motives. One motive is of a purely pragmatic nature: there were many contracting businesses in Libya and 25,000 Turkish citizens employed in the country. Secondly, ideological factors were also of great importance: NATO's unsuccessful stories in Afghanistan and Iraq taught Turkey not to trust in the efficiency of NATO interventions. Moreover, Turkey had strong doubts about the Western justification for intervention, with the possibility of pure oil interests under the guise of a democracy and human rights campaign. Finally, alliance making motives influenced Turkey as well: Libya was considered a "Muslim brother", and the Arab League stated that military strikes in Libya went beyond the UN mandate; supporting the West might mean going against the "zero problems" policy as it was still unclear who would come to power in the end.

The Libyan example illustrates that today's Turkey takes into consideration national interests and does not feel embarrassed to sing a song different from the West when it comes to national interests.

Even so, it is still unclear if Turkey's tendency to have a more independent voice is strong enough to support the behavior pattern of drifting away from the West.

II NINE CORE WESTERN VALUES THROUGH TURKEY'S LENSES

2.1 THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS

There are a myriad of ways to study foreign policymaking in International Relations and constructivism is one of them. In this chapter I will base my research on the assumption that foreign policy decision-making can be analyzed by taking into account values and norms prevailing in a given society.

Social constructivism (constructivism in a shorthand) appeared as a new school of thought in International Relations after the end of the Cold War, as a product of the historical context and the attempt to solve theoretical discussions between neorealists and liberals.⁴¹

After the end of the Cold War, neorealists' concept of the balance of power and the idea of a power balance between two blocs was shattered, as there was no other great power to oppose the USA directly following the collapse of the USSR.⁴² The Cold War debates gave rise to a new approach—constructivism. Theoretical roots of constructivism stem from the influence of philosophy, sociology, and sociological institutionalism. Contrary to already existing IR theories, constructivists insist not on the causal significance of the non-material but rather on social factors such as shared ideas, norms and values.⁴³

⁴¹Ian Hurd, 'Constructivism.' In *The Oxford Handbook of International Relations*, edited by Reus-Smit Christian, 298–317. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

⁴²Emanuel Adler, 'Seizing the Middle Ground: Constructivism in World Politics', *European Journal of International Relations* 3(3): 319-363.

⁴³Christian Reus-Smit, "Constructivism." In *Theories of International Relations*, ed. by Burchill Scott, 188-213. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 1996.

Emphasis on *normative* and *ideational* as well as material structures and the significant role of identity in shaping political action is particular to the works of prominent constructivists such as Hall⁴⁴, Wendt⁴⁵, Rae⁴⁶, and Reus-Smit.⁴⁷

To explain the formation of state behavior, one needs to find its driving force or interest. According to constructivists, interests are shaped by identities—or in Alexander Wendt's words, “identities are the basis of interests”.⁴⁸ Identities are at the heart of the constructivists' approach. They define states' interests and, consequently, their actions. According to Richard Hall, “identity is the relationship of the other to oneself”⁴⁹, and in Wendt's words, “social identities are sets of meanings that an actor attributes to itself while taking the perspective of others. [Social identities are] at once cognitive schemas that enable an actor to determine ‘who I am/we are’ in a situation and positions in a social role the structure of shared understandings and expectations”⁵⁰, while Katzenstein defines identities simply as “mutually constructed and evolving images of self and other”.⁵¹

All the definitions of identities are built on the opposition between “self” and “other”. Therefore, the way a state or nation identifies itself gives us an idea of its alliance-making behavior, foreign policy-making strategies, and explains its preferences in the international arena.

The cliché image of Turkey as a bridge country that unites Asia and Europe with the famous Bosphorus bridge in Istanbul, where you can literally cross continents, justifies the recent debates on Turkey's belonging. Thus, studies of Turkish identity and the degree to which Turkey identifies itself with the West are helpful in understanding if Turkey is gradually moving away from the West.

⁴⁴Richard Hall, *National Collective Identity: Social Constructs and International Systems*. New York: Penguin, 1999.

⁴⁵Alexander Wendt, ‘*Anarchy is what States Make of it*’, *International Organization* 46(1992): 236-259.

⁴⁶Heather Rae, *State Identities and the Homogenization of Peoples*, Cambridge University Press: 2002.

⁴⁷Christian Reus-Smit, “*Constructivism*.” In *Theories of International Relations*, ed. by Burchill Scott, 188-213. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 1996.

⁴⁸ Alexander Wendt, ‘*Anarchy is what States Make of it*’, 243.

⁴⁹Richard Hall, *National Collective Identity*, 31.

⁵⁰ Alexander Wendt, ‘*Collective Identity Formation and the International State*’, *American Political Science Review* 88(2) (1994): 183-222.

⁵¹Peter J. Katzenstein, *Norms and National Security: Police and Military in Postwar Japan*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996, 16.

Identities are shaped by normative and ideational structures embedded in the society. These non-material structures belong to the world of ideas.⁵² Ideas have meaning only if shared. Within constructivism, “ideas are mental constructs held by individuals, sets of distinctive beliefs, principles, and attitudes that provide broad orientations for behavior and policy”.⁵³ Nina Tannenwald points out four major types of ideas: ideologies or shared belief systems, normative beliefs, cause–effect beliefs, and policy prescriptions.⁵⁴

To narrow down our research we will focus on the normative (or principled) beliefs, which Nina Tannenwald defines as “beliefs about right and wrong”. According to her, “they consist of values and attitudes and imply associated standards of behavior”.⁵⁵ To trace the axis shift in Turkey’s foreign policymaking on an ideological level, i.e. level of normative and ideational factors, we will study the Turkish identity through the system of its normative beliefs, values in particular. The purpose of this part of the research is to answer the question if there is a tendency towards the weakening of the Western component in the Turkey’s system of values.

In order to proceed with the research we need to have a well-defined model of Western values. Values, as mentioned above, are considered components of normative structures. Therefore, to study values, the study of normative principles is required. According to the constructivist approach, institutions and supranational actors serve as normative powers with set norms and standards.

Ian Manners claims that the EU “has always been and will always stay a normative power in world politics”, implying that the EU promotes a series of normative principles that are generally acknowledged in Europe (which stands for the West for Turkey in the framework of our research) and also within the UN system.⁵⁶ His “normative power approach” aims at the better understanding of principles the EU promotes as a normative power to contribute to the well being of its citizens. He points out the core 9 principles of the EU ethics, which are considered to be the key European

⁵²Christian Reus-Smit, “Constructivism”, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 1996, 193.

⁵³Nina Tannenwald, “*Ideas and Explanation: Advancing the Theoretical Agenda*”, *Journal of Cold War Studies* 12 (2005): 15.

⁵⁴Ibid.

⁵⁵Ibid.

⁵⁶Ian Manners, ‘*The Normative Ethics of the European Union*’, *International Affairs* 84:1(2008): 65-80.

values among EU experts. They are: sustainable peace, social freedom, consensual democracy, human rights, supranational rule of law, inclusive equality, social solidarity, sustainable development, and good governance.⁵⁷

Our research is based on the Fairclough statements that “ideologies reside in texts” and “texts are open to diverse interpretations”.⁵⁸ Though texts have been studied scientifically since ancient times, the method of discourse studies that will be used in our research is considered to be the postmodern phenomenon. Here and thereafter we will refer more often to the term “studies of discourse”, not simply *discourse analysis* (DA), in order to include in the research framework the method of content analysis as well. The fathers of discourse studies belong to postmodernism: Jacques Derrida⁵⁹, Jean-Francois Lyotard⁶⁰, and Fredric Jameson.⁶¹

In discourse analysis the notion of “discourse” is perceived as a broader term than text: “I shall use the term discourse to refer to the whole process of social interaction of which a text is just a part”.⁶² Discourse stands for “a text in context”⁶³ and “a shared way of apprehending the world”.⁶⁴ Thus, discourse analysis helps to build the narrator’s picture of the world. Foucault’s assumption that “truth, morality, and meaning are created through discourse” justifies the relevance of DA for the ethic realm of our research.⁶⁵

There are several schools within the study of discourse: ethnography (Goffman⁶⁶, Lakoff⁶⁷), critical discourse analysis (Fairclough⁶⁸, van Dijk⁶⁹, and Wodak⁷⁰), and linguistic discourse analysis (Halliday & Hasan⁷¹).

⁵⁷Ian Manners, *The Normative Ethics of the European Union*, 2008, 73.

⁵⁸Norman Fairclough, *Critical Discourse Analysis*. London: Longman, 1995.

⁵⁹Jacques Derrida, *Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of the Human Science* Alan Bass, 1966

⁶⁰Jean-Francois Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984.

⁶¹Fredric Jameson, *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1981.

⁶²Norman Fairclough, *Critical Discourse Analysis*. London: Longman, 1995, 63.

⁶³Van Dijk, *Handbook of Discourse Analysis*. London: Academic Press, 1985, 19.

⁶⁴John Dryzek, *The Politics of the Earth: Environmental Discourses*. (Oxford University Press, 1997), 33.

⁶⁵Michael, Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge and The Discourse on Language*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1972.

⁶⁶Erving Goffman, *Frame Analysis*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974.

⁶⁷George Lakoff, *Moral Politics: What Conservatives Know That Liberals Don't*, University of Chicago Press, 1996.

⁶⁸Norman Fairclough, *Language and Power*, London: Longman, 1989.

⁶⁹Van Dijk, *Handbook of Discourse Analysis*. London: Academic Press, 1985.

⁷⁰Ruth Wodak, *Challenges in a changing world: Issues in critical discourse analysis*. Vienna: Passagenverlag, 1999.

⁷¹Halliday Michael and Ruqayia Hasan, *Cohesion in English*, London: Longman, 1976.

To avoid “cherry picking” (choosing the results which fit the assumption the most), we will combine several methods within discourse studies, both of quantitative and qualitative characters. Firstly, as a quantitative method, we will use “the technique for compressing many words of text into fewer content categories based on explicit rules of coding” i.e. the content analysis in order to quantify norms and principles through text connotation and to discover patterns through word frequencies.⁷²

Secondly, to carry out qualitative research we will use the method of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to “reveal how texts are constructed so that particular perspectives can be expressed delicately and covertly”.⁷³ Not only we will try to analyze the way the speakers refer to the values under the study in every single discourse, but we will also make an attempt to trace the threads that connect one text to another, which will help to present a full and clear picture.

The material for the analysis is based primarily on public speeches from Turkish officials who belong to the ruling party and, therefore, represent the current political and social view of today’s Turkey. These are Recep Tayyip Erdoğan speeches delivered during his famous Arab tour to the MENA countries after the outburst of the Arab Spring: in Cairo (September 2011) and Libya (April 2011), his legendary speech dedicated to Gaza accident that made him a prominent orator in the Middle East, and Ahmet Davutoğlu speech at the Group of Friends of Syrian People Meeting (February 2012). Moreover, we will include some of Erdoğan and Davutoğlu statements published in Turkish daily press, as well as Abdullah Gul’s speech on “Development and Democracy in the Islamic World”⁷⁴, which are relevant for the issues under analysis. Moreover, a remark should be made that we are focusing only on what is being said, which might not align with the implication level.

⁷²Bernard Berelson, *Content Analysis in Communication Research*. New York: Free Press, 1952.

⁷³Rob Batstone, *Grammar in Discourse: Attitude and Deniability*. In *Principle & Practice in Applied Linguistics*, ed. by Seidlhofer, Bernard, 197-213. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995.

⁷⁴Abdullah Gul, “*Lecture on The Islamic World Democracy and Development*.” Delivered at the Examinations Schools, Oxford, November 8, 2010.

2.2 TURKEY’S SYSTEM OF VALUES THROUGH DISCOURSE STUDIES OF ERDOGAN AND DAVUTOGLU SPEECHES

The assumption that “the words that are mentioned most often are the words that reflect the greatest concerns”⁷⁵ lies in the basis of the content analysis we have carried out.

For each value we singled out the units of meaning i.e., 1) proper names of values and 2) synonymous or conceptually relevant categories. The basis of categorization can be summed up in the definition: "A category is a group of words with similar meaning or connotations".⁷⁶ Thereafter, we traced out how many times the orator referred to the units of meaning in his speech. The collected data is presented in the table:

Content Analysis of Erdoğan and Davutoğlu Speeches on MENA Issues

Value	Frequency of explicit usage	Frequency of implicit usage (referring to semantically or thematically related words)	
		Positive	Negative
Sustainable peace	16	Stability(11), ceasefire (3), internal peace(5), security(10), international peace (3), regional peace (4)	Attacks(9), bloodshed (8), spilling of blood (5), interventions (2), massacres (5), war (3), banditry (1), terror (2)
Social Freedom	12	Free will (3), dignity (5)	Interventions (2)
Consensual Democracy	22	People’s will (8), transition process (9), political transformation (2)	Autocracy (3), oppression (19), violence (7), despotism (3), tyranny (4),

⁷⁵Bernard Berelson, *Content Analysis in Communication Research*. New York: Free Press, 1952, 7.

⁷⁶Robert Philip Weber, *Basic Content Analysis*, CA: Newbury Park, 1990, 37.

			aggressiveness (5), cruelty (4)
Human rights	11	Justice (4), liberty (8), legitimacy (9), freedom and dignity (5), safety (3), security (7)	Self-interest (1), interventions (2), humanitarian crisis (3), inhuman practices (2), injustice (6)
Rule of law	9	Law (10), legitimacy (9), territorial integrity and sovereignty (4), international law(2), diplomacy(1), justice (6)	Injustice (4), instability (4), insecurity (5), lawlessness (2), illegality (3)
Equality	3	Inclusiveness (2), unity and integrity (3)	Hatred (4), animosity (2)
Social solidarity	2	Secure humanitarian zones (2), humanitarian aid (12), humanity (3), common historical ties (2), brothers (22), sisters (5), brotherly people (7), bonds of brotherhood (4), kinship ties (2), partnership (2)	Inhumanity (5), hostility (4)
Good governance	2	Well-being (3), cooperation (2), stability (6)	Instability (3)

The first observation that should be made here is the generally high degree of Western values' presence in the speeches of Turkish officials. Out of 9 values, all of them except for sustainable development have been extensively mentioned while referring to Turkey's course of actions concerning Middle Eastern issues. Even sustainable development cannot be considered as an omitted or intolaterated value, since the discourse of the speeches lies in another topical dimension. The speeches are mainly focused on recent revolutions in the MENA region, the overthrowing of regimes, political changes, and transformations. Therefore, there is no place for sustainable development talk while internal wars and revolutions are in the spotlight.

As we may see from Recep Erdoğan statement made during his Cairo speech, Turkey's aspirations almost re-quote core European values: *"Turkey is positing a strong will to help peace, stability, tranquility, democracy, universal law, rights and freedoms to prevail in its region"*.⁷⁷

While referring to the abovementioned values, Turkish officials always stand for and never against them. Such values as peace, freedom, democracy, rule of law, equality, solidarity, and human rights are always promoted with a positive connotation. On the contrary, concepts opposite to the key values are condemned in a harsh and abrupt way, as we may see from Erdoğan speech in which he accuses Israel of inhuman behavior during the Gaza accident.

If we look at the table, there is an obvious domination of the key value—democracy. The frequency of its usage exceeds all the others. Democracy stands for the heart of Turkey's hierarchy of values. Generally speaking, we can claim that all the other values serve as inalienable components of democracy and democracy is considered the sum of all the values added together.

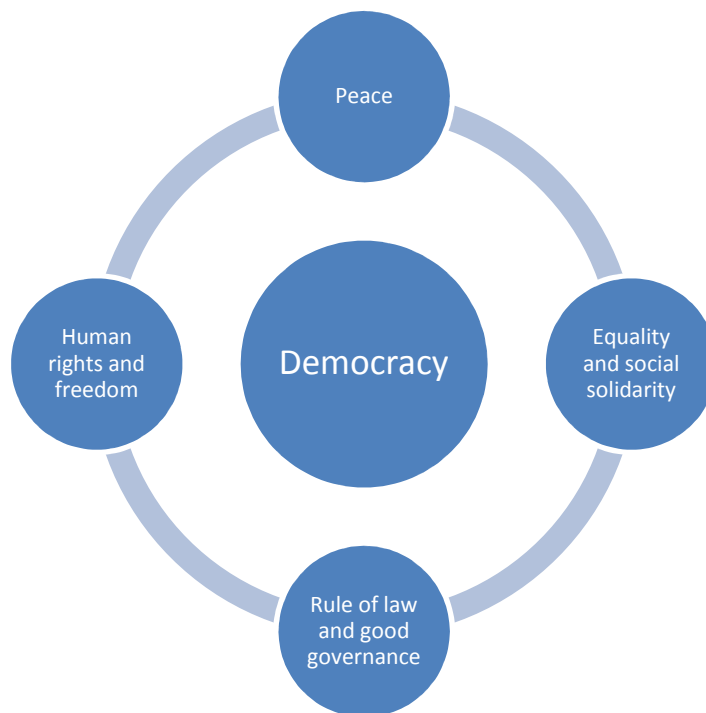
On the one hand, the high frequency can be explained by the topicality of democracy for the Arab spring, as the will to make a democratic transition is the key message of the wave of revolution. On the other hand, apart from the Arab spring rhetoric, democracy for Turkey has special meaning as it is perceived as a national boast. The Turkish model

⁷⁷Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, *"Speech on Egypt's Transition to Democracy."* Delivered at PM's official visit to Egypt during his Arab spring tour in Cairo, September 12, 2011.

of democracy is being portrayed as a success story for Middle Eastern countries, and Turkey presents the strongest democracy in the region.

Values, as we may see from the table, are highly interconnected. For example, such units of meaning as justice, legitimacy, security, stability, and free will are discussed in the framework of more than one value. According to interchangeable categories and semantic proximity, we grouped values into mutually complementary couples: freedom and human rights, equality and social solidarity, and rule of law and good governance. Peace has an independent stance as well as democracy, the last being an amalgam of all the values, as it has been mentioned above.

The system of values can be presented as a chain of virtues with democracy at the heart:



Apart from the quantitative methods in the content analysis, we used qualitative measures while analyzing the expression of every value separately.

2.2.1 DEMOCRACY: WESTERN OR A PARTICULAR TURKISH MODEL?

The engine of the recent developments in MENA was to strive for the political transformation of autocratic regimes. Therefore, we will start with the core value in the study—democracy.

The Merriam-Webster Dictionary gives the following definition of democracy: “*government by the people; especially, rule of the majority; a government in which the supreme power is vested in the people and exercised by them directly or indirectly through a system of representation usually involving periodically held free elections; the common people especially when constituting the source of political authority; the absence of hereditary or arbitrary class distinctions or privileges*”.⁷⁸

In fact, the notion of democracy covers several aspects and can have a myriad of definitions depending on the aspect that is emphasized. Therefore, J. Dalton Russell singles out three understandings of democracy: 1) democracy as institutions and procedures of democratic governance; 2) democracy as freedom and liberty; and 3) democracy within social dimension (social welfare and benefits).⁷⁹ Democracy to which Ian Manners refers is “consensual democracy”, i.e. democracy as institutions and procedures of governance such as proportional representation (PR) electoral systems, coalition governments, and powersharing among parties.⁸⁰ Meanwhile, democracy in the context of speeches primarily deals with freedom and liberty due to its topicality within the context of Arab spring.

Turkey’s understanding of democracy in a broader context is justified by Erdoğan saying in 2004 before the Arab spring uprisings: “*Instead of having democracy particular to us, democracy adjusted to a sense of plurality, multiple voices, and tolerance has to be set up in Turkey. What is ideal is an organic democracy penetrated to the all administrative, social, and political fields—not a mechanical democracy that has confined itself to elections and specific institutions*”.⁸¹

⁷⁸Webster's dictionary. Chicago: Webster Press, 2002.

⁷⁹Dalton Russell, and Shin Doh, “*Understanding Democracy: Data From Unlikely Places.*” *Journal of Democracy* 18:4 (2007): 142-157.

⁸⁰Ian Manners, ‘*The Normative Ethics of the European Union*’, *International Affairs* 84:1(2008):70.

⁸¹Recep Tayyip Erdogan, *Speech on “Conservative Democracy and the Globalization of Freedom*”, The American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 29 January 2004.

The AKP's commitment to democracy stems from Recep Erdoğan political declarations as a conservative democrat who promotes democracy and AKP's zeal to serve demos on any possible occasion: "*We exist for the people; we fulfill our duties for the people*".⁸²

A CDA of speeches under the study shows that democracy is perceived as a great value for Turkey's society. This idea is recurrent, and it can be traced in all the texts and be revealed by means of three types of legitimation models proposed by R. Wodak: authorization, rationalization, and moral evaluation.⁸³

Within the authorization model, the officials express modality by means of personal statement: "*our slogan must be more freedom, democracy, and human rights*"⁸⁴, and role model authority when referring to Turkey as a good example for the MENA countries. Thus, Recep Erdoğan revokes the Turkish experience of transition to democracy in his Cairo speech. "*In Turkey, too, the nation's yearning for democracy was voiced strongly. In 1950, the nation shouted: enough, power to the people*",⁸⁵ he said.

Hence, Turkey does not only express strong belief in the values of democracy, but also it acts as if it feels a historical responsibility to assist MENA countries in their transition on the basis of a country that has already gone through the same transformation.

Within the rationalization model, causal explanations of Turkey's behavior regarding the Libyan case are used. During his Arab spring tour, Recep Erdoğan enthusiastically welcomed uprisings and consensual democratic transformations on the Road Map of Turkey for Libya: "*The fundamental purpose of our policy regarding Libya is the creation of necessary conditions to ensure a transition to constitutional democracy in line with the legitimate demands of the people and the preservation of Libya's territorial integrity and sovereignty*".⁸⁶

⁸²Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, "Recent Developments in Libya." (speech presented at the website of Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, April 2, 2011).

⁸³Ruth Wodak, *Challenges in a changing world: Issues in critical discourse analysis*, (Vienna: Passagenverlag, 1999).

⁸⁴Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, "Recent Developments in Libya".

⁸⁵Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, "*Egypt's Transition to Democracy*" (speech delivered at PM's official visit to Egypt during his Arab spring tour in Cairo, September 12, 2011).

⁸⁶Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, "Recent Developments in Libya".

On the level of moral evaluation one can observe the usage of analogies and metaphors. Democracy is seen as an essential need for a nation, and that is why Erdoğan compares it to bread and water: “*Democracy and freedom is as basic a right as bread and water for you, my brothers*”⁸⁷.

Adjectives expressing moral evaluations such as “worthy/unworthy” when it comes to democracy justify its great value in Turkey’s perception: “*Libyan people have been considered for a long time unworthy of democracy*”.⁸⁸

Once the great value of democracy for Turkey has been justified, the logical question may arise as to the status of democracy as a solely western value. Does Turkey’s democracy strive make it a western country? To put it differently, does Turkey’s support for democracy give it an antagonistic status towards the Muslim Middle East?

At this point, a passionate polemic can arise in terms of the roots and nature of democracy. Is democracy a purely Western invention? Can it exist only in the West or there are fertile soils for democratic growth in other parts of the world as well? The most debatable question is if democracy can co-exist with Islam and, consequently, if potential Arab democracy is a myth or reality.

Scholars’ opinions vary in this matter. Some of them argue that Islam is “the very antithesis of secular Western democracy”⁸⁹, “not hospitable to democracy”⁹⁰, and alien to the Muslim mindset.⁹²

Others believe that Islam and democracy are compatible and there are possible positive developments in regard to the issue of their co-existence in the MENA region (John Esposito and John Voll,⁹³ and Wright⁹⁴).

⁸⁷ Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, “On Egypt’s Transition to Democracy”.

⁸⁸ Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, “Recent Developments in Libya”.

⁸⁹ Kurshid Ahmad, “*Islam and Democracy: Some Conceptual and Contemporary Dimensions.*” Policy Perspectives 2:1 (2000): 33.

⁹⁰ Samuel Huntington, “*Will More Countries Become Democratic?*” Political Science Quarterly 3 (1984): 214-241.

⁹¹ Lewis, Bernard. *Faith and Power: Religion and Politics in the Middle East.* Oxford University Press, 2010, 36.

⁹² Elie Kedourie, *Democracy and Arab Political Culture*, Washington Institute for Near East Policy Publishing, 1992.

⁹³ John L. Esposito, and John O. Voll, *Islam and Democracy.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1996.

⁹⁴ Robin Wright, “*Islam and Liberal Democracy: Two Visions Of Reformation,*” Journal of Democracy 7.2 (1996): 64-75.

In the “Democracy and Development in the Islamic World” speech delivered by Abdullah Gul at Oxford University, the President of the Turkish Republic claims that “democracy and human development can flourish in the Islamic world”⁹⁵. The statement that the “Islamic tradition was not alien to democracy”⁹⁶ justifies Turkey’s position in this issue. Abdullah Gul does not see Islam as the reason behind the democratic deficit in today’s Middle East. He points out other motives behind it, some of which are closely connected with the Western influence, such as the colonial aftermath and “the lack of justice in the international arena, the politics of the privileged, and the impotence of international bodies”.⁹⁷ Moreover, he argues that “absolutism” did not exist in the authentic Islamic state traditions”, which means that autocracy is not a component of Islam. Thus, one can fight against autocratic regimes without fighting against Islam.

Turkey’s strong “no” to autocratic regimes is loud and convincing in Ahmet Davutoğlu speeches:

“Turkey is against oppressive mentality that was ruling in the Middle East”.

“We should work on denying the Regime the means with which to perpetrate atrocities against the Syrian people”.

“Those who pursue policies based on atrocity, and those who think their power is endless will lose sooner or later”.

*“We cannot let the Syrian regime turn entire neighborhoods into open-air prisons”.*⁹⁸

Obviously, Turkey’s officials build their support for democracy on binary opposition, or “democracy vs. autocracy”. Meanwhile, the antithesis, “democracy vs. Islam”, is absent in Turkey’s discourse, as Turkey does not see Islam as an obstacle to democracy, or as a counter-value to it.

This fact explains that for the supporters of incompatibility between Islam and democracy, Turkey’s commitment to democracy is still disputable, while for their opposition Turkey is contributing to the development of democracy to a great extent.

⁹⁵Abdullah Gul, “Lecture on The Islamic World Democracy and Development”, 3.

⁹⁶Ibid.,7

⁹⁷Ibid.,19-26.

⁹⁸Ahmet Davutoğlu, “Humanitarian Crisis in Syria” (speech delivered at Group of Friends of Syrian People Meeting. Accessed February 24, 2012, Tunis).

The pivotal issue here is secularism. Even though Turkey has been a secular state since Atatürk's times, it is still a Muslim country. Consequently, for those who believe in bad chemistry between Islam and democracy, Turkey's democracy is still under question. Moreover, the current ruling party is being constantly accused of Islamist policy-making by Western media outlets. Though the AKP preserved secularism as a social value, the critics of the ruling party point out the contradictions in the messages sent by Recep Erdoğan in respect to the religious matters. For example, he states that Turkey is "*laik musluman bir devlettir*" (a secular Muslim state) and at the same time he expresses hopes "to make a Medina of Istanbul", which may sound like rightist aspirations to some extent. The expression *laik musluman bir devlettir* is contradictory in itself and can be referred to as an "oxymoron", i.e. a stylistic device based on the deliberate combination of two opposite notions, which in this case are "secular" and "muslim".

Another ambiguous statement related to democracy was made by the Prime Minister at the earliest stages of his career in 1997: "*Demokrasi bir aractir! Amac degil!*"⁹⁹ This literally means "Democracy is not a goal, but a tool". Shortly thereafter, he drew a parallel between democracy and a train, suggesting that one should get off the train at the right station.

The metaphor of democracy as a train gave rise to polemics in terms of the AKP's commitment to democracy. At the same time, the concept of democracy as a tool disclaims the entire idea of democracy being a value. At this point, the logical question will arise: if democracy is a train, what is the final destination? What is the purpose and what is the hidden agenda? It gives the impression that Turkey sees democracy as a tool for progress and modernity in Atatürk's spirits, when in fact democratization and westernization were a part of civilizational project that does not see democracy as a dreamland. It questions the idea of democracy as a universal and ultimate value; on the contrary it projects it as a temporarily needed tool, which might be disregarded tomorrow. On the other hand, the metaphor can be explained by the reasons that are not devaluating democracy. Firstly, it can be the misunderstanding on the level of

⁹⁹Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, "Democracy is not a goal" (speech presented in the Province of Siirt, December 12, 1997).

comprehension in the sense that democracy is not necessarily opposed to other types of governance in Erdoğan quote; it rather disclaims the idea of one type of governance being a goal. Likewise, Recep Erdoğan states in one of his interviews, *“The goal is the happiness of the people. Democracy, as all the other systems and all religions are all tools for the happiness and peace of the people. The goal is the human being and happiness of humanity”*.¹⁰⁰

Moreover, the metaphor can signify the tendency to adjust democracy to the needs of Turkish society. Logically, Turkey cannot have exactly the same relationship with democracy as Western countries, largely due to the historical context and the religious polemics previously discussed. This argument does not depreciate the degree of Turkey’s commitment to democracy in today’s policy-making, but rather proves the impossibility of its universal recipe and justifies the necessity of Turkey’s own model of democracy.

2.2.2 PEACE: REGIONAL AND GLOBAL DIMENSIONS

Another value following the wake of democracy is peace. Recep Erdoğan peace philosophy stems from the well-known formula of Atatürk: “Peace at home, peace in the world”.

Great importance is given not only to internal or national peace: *“Turkey attaches great importance to the cessation of all hostilities, the establishment of internal peace and national unity”*¹⁰¹, but also to world and regional peace.

In his reception speech for the Qaddafi human rights prize, Erdoğan said: *“The only thing we want in our region and in the globe is peace and justice. If there is prosperity in the region, every state will benefit. All regional states would benefit from peace, harmony and stability”*.¹⁰²

Another allusion to the same belief is found in Erdoğan Libya speech: *“We have always said this: Countries that cannot solve their internal problems, that cannot put an end to their internal conflicts, that cannot achieve a consensus within themselves, cannot*

¹⁰⁰Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, “Two Things Will Be Voted on Here” (interview taken by Wall Street Journal, September 10, 2010).

¹⁰¹Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, “Recent Developments in Libya”.

¹⁰²Ibrahim Varlik, “Erdoğan Receives Gaddafi Human Rights Award”, Today’s Zaman, December 1, 2010.

achieve a bright future or defend their interests outside. That is why we called for a national consensus in Palestine. That is why we tried to help bring about a political consensus in Lebanon. That is why we made efforts for the establishment of a democratic consensus in Iraq. We always supported the regional countries' internal peace, national consensus, unity and integrity, and democratic development."¹⁰³

At this point, by means of the rationalization model, the orator justifies TFP in its deep concern for regional peace in countries such as Lebanon and Iraq. In this vein, regional peace is perceived as the guarantee of the global peace.

Therefore, every misdeed in the MENA region is seen as a threat to global peace, as we can deduct from tough comments about the Gaza Flotilla incident: *"World peace has been deeply wounded"*.¹⁰⁴

In a likewise manner, Recep Erdoğan talks about the Israel-Palestine problem in general. According to him, it is a matter of humanity and a big concern for global peace, not just a Middle Eastern question.

The concept of peace stands for non-violence and no bloodshed. Turkey says a decisive "no" to any kind of blood spilling in any MENA conflict. In Syria: *"We must commit ourselves to end the bloodshed in Syria at all cost"*, in Egypt: *"We do not want a single person to be injured in Egypt"*, in Gaza: *"Israel, with no excuse, no reason can wash the blood on her hands."*¹⁰⁵

Strong irreconcilability with bloodshed stems from a firm belief in peaceful means of resistance. Thus, Recep Erdoğan insists on *"a peaceful transition process and protection of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Libya"* and *"opening the way for peaceful democratic transition in Syria"*.¹⁰⁶

Even though democracy is considered a high value, the ways it is reached are of great importance as well: *"During this entire process of resistance, stay away from arms, but*

¹⁰³Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, "Recent Developments in Libya".

¹⁰⁴Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, "Response on Israel's Attack against Humanitarian ships in Gaza." (speech presented at the AKP Plenary Meeting, June 1, 2010).

¹⁰⁵Ibid.

¹⁰⁶Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, "Recent Developments in Libya".

*stand up for your history. Stand up for your culture. Do not let them be wounded. Wage only the dignified struggle for freedoms”.*¹⁰⁷

In official statements, Turkey portrays itself as a regional peacekeeper in MENA countries: “Turkey has always been, in the Middle East, on the side of peace”. Meanwhile, the region is full of conflict and at times the side of peace may be arguable. As a result, Turkey’s commitment to peace as a universal value does not always bring it closer to the Western camp, as we have already discussed it in case of democracy. For example, Erdoğan proposal “*to raise Palestinian flag in the UN and let that flag be the symbol of peace and justice in the Middle East*”¹⁰⁸ may not align with Western peace-making policies.

2.2.3 HUMAN RIGHTS AND FREEDOM

The next values to analyze are human rights and freedom. Again, Turkey displays a proactive position in this respect and speaks in favor of the defense of human rights: “Turkey is shouting the truth and the just at every opportunity”.¹⁰⁹

The great value of human rights is emphasized: “*Human rights and justice are not voluntary favors that can be bestowed on people. These are sacred values that every human being is entitled to*”, and inevitability of their supremacy: “*In all periods of history, sooner or later, human dignity has broken all chains, pulled down all walls, and the voice of the oppressed has been heard, even if slowly at first.*”¹¹⁰

In 2010 Recep Erdoğan received a human rights prize from Libyan leader Qaddafi. Many columnists find this fact ironic, as well as the whole the idea of a human rights prize from the politician who is considered in some circles as a perpetrator and tyrant. At the prize-giving ceremony, the Turkish Prime Minister promised “*to continue to protect the rights of people in the Middle East and all around the world and to carry universal values to Turkey and the region*”.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁷Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, “On Egypt’s Transition to Democracy”.

¹⁰⁸Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, “*On Middle Eastern Issues*”. (speech delivered at the 15th plenary UNGA meeting, September 22, 2011).

¹⁰⁹Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, “On Egypt’s Transition to Democracy”.

¹¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹¹Ibrahim Varlik, “*Erdoğan Receives Gaddafi Human Rights Award*”

On the whole, Recep Erdoğan constantly puts Turkey at war with the oppressors: *“Political leaders should build their future on justice, not oppression”*¹¹², and he draws a distinct line between Turkey and any entity that acts against humanity, as we see from his tough talk to Israel about the Gaza incident: *“As much as you stand behind the bloody operation and aggressiveness behind terror, as much do we stand behind justice”*.¹¹³

In the light of recent developments in MENA, freedom is estimated as the first and most important human right by Recep Erdoğan, and that is why he metaphorically calls the Arab spring *“an outcry for freedom and democracy.”*

Once again, one can observe great sensitivity for freedom issues in his slogan in a Cairo speech: *“In our world today, freedoms can no longer be postponed or ignored”*.¹¹⁴

Thus, in these critical times when most of the countries in the world try not to stay indifferent to the MENA revolutions, both the West and Turkey participate in the regional development under the motto to protect freedom and human rights. Those two core values are present both in the Western and Turkish rhetoric. However, Western and Turkish hearts do not always sing in unison. The Libyan case is a good example that illustrates the tension between Turkey and the West about this issue.

When the West condemned Turkey for hesitancy in its sanctions on Libya, Turkey responded in a counter-attack manner blaming the West for pursuing purely oil interests in Libya. Recep Erdoğan stated the absence of self-interest from the Turkish side: *“As required by the principles and values that we believe in, our stance has focused on upholding human rights and justice, rather than pursuing self-interest”, “the life and right of each and every one of our Libyan brothers are above all considerations of interest; this is the way it should be”*.¹¹⁵

When saying *“I want to underline this once more: while doing this, we carry no hidden agenda. Our sole agenda is to guarantee the unity and wellbeing of Libya”*¹¹⁶, in a roundabout way he suggested the presence of a hidden plan of other countries with an active stance in Libya.

¹¹²Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, “On Egypt’s Transition to Democracy”.

¹¹³Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, “Response on Israel’s Attack against Humanitarian ships in Gaza.”

¹¹⁴Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, “On Egypt’s Transition to Democracy”.

¹¹⁵Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, “Recent Developments in Libya”.

¹¹⁶Ibid.

Finally, in his statement *“For us, a drop of a Libyan blood is more valuable than a billion dollars worth of oil wells”*¹¹⁷, one can hear a voice hinting at the Western oil ambitions, regardless of the human rights rhetoric. In spite of that, the West and Turkey carried out the same official agenda: to provide freedom and human rights in the MENA region.

2.2.4 RULE OF LAW AND GOOD GOVERNANCE

The next interchangeable values are rule of law and good governance. Good governance is first and foremost democratic governance: *“It exists for the people. It gains meaning with the existence, will, and support of the people. Our basic philosophy is this: The people must live so that the state can live”*.¹¹⁸ Good governance cannot exist within the autocratic mentality: *“There is no administration in history that remained in power by using oppression, intimidation, and fear”*.¹¹⁹

To emphasize the importance of the rule of law in Turkey’s governance, Recep Erdoğan claimed in his Libya speech: *“You should know that the Turkish people always stand by the side of the right and the rightful”*.¹²⁰

In its internal affairs, the Turkish government bases its decisions on legitimacy, saying *“We have to meet legitimate demands of our people through legitimate ways,”* and Turkey conducts the same behavior pattern in international arena. *“We want the NATO operation to be conducted efficiently, in line with the directives drawn out by the UN Security Council resolutions and accepted in consensus by the NATO Council”*.¹²¹

Lawlessness is perceived as the worst enemy of good governance, according to the Prime Minister. In his accusatory speech to Israel, he underlines Turkey’s devotion to laws: *“As much as you stand behind illegality, we stand behind laws”*. He firmly believes that laws should work in all governmental practices, even at war: *“We know that war, as well as peace, has its laws. In war you do not attack children, in war you*

¹¹⁷Ibid.

¹¹⁸Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, “On Egypt’s Transition to Democracy”.

¹¹⁹Ibid.

¹²⁰Ibid.

¹²¹Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, “Recent Developments in Libya”.

do not attack women or old people, in war you do not attack civilians or religious functionaries, in war you do not attack those who are hoisting the white flag, health and rescue personnel; not in wartime, but in peace time, those who do these things not only violate the law, at the same time they trample humanity under their feet, they abandon humanity”.¹²²

Turkey shows implacability to any act against legitimacy and its readiness to be tough when it comes to punishment of those who did wrong: *"Like individuals, states have to pay the price of their murders for a more fair, livable and secure world order"*.¹²³ Therefore, murderers should be called murderers and taboos should never exist in political discourse.

2.2.5 EQUALITY AND SOLIDARITY

Equality, as a democratic value, is a big issue and serious challenge for Turkey's government, taking into consideration the Turkish multiple identity. Though minorities exist in all European countries, the fact that they are called minorities presupposes the existence of the majority. It is a different case for Turkey. The majority is too diverse and hard to define. It is a difficult and demanding task to make a Kurd or Laz feel equal to a Circassian or Turk. Nonetheless, there is a need for equality in Turkish society and this need was revealed by the AKP. Instead of creating a common "mono-Turkish identity" so-to-speak, they preserve the plurality of modern Turkey. There is no artificial engineering of a one and only identity: Kurd is called Kurd, Circassian is called Circassian, and so forth. Nonetheless, the administration claims the equality of all under the Turkish sky. The electoral campaign song of the AKP in 2011 is a good illustration for this idea. The name of the song is "*Ayni*", which means "same/equal" in English and begins with the unifying lines: "We came from the same road, we drank the same water".

Recep Erdoğan claims that "*Everyone is equal when it comes to justice*", and he defines his mission as "*to reinforce the conviction that different religions, different civilizations, and cultures can live in peace and tolerance together*".¹²⁴ This conviction is already being reinforced by Turkish example. Turkey's inner conflicts, such as the

¹²²Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, "*Response on Israel's Attack against Humanitarian ships in Gaza.*"

¹²³Ibid.

¹²⁴Ibid.

Kurdish problem and other minority issues could represent MENA's hostilities in miniature. As long as Turkey manages to solve them, its experience can be an asset for other countries in the region.

Apart from an ethnic aspect of equality, Turkey's government is firmly against any discrimination based on social criteria and it defines oligarchy as a crime not acceptable in any democratic society.

In his Cairo speech, Erdoğan humiliates oligarchs in a very harsh manner: *"When the imam comes to us as we die, he will not address us as the president, as the head of state, as the prime minister, or as the minister. I am now talking to the trillionaires: the imam will not address you as trillionaires. He will address us all as simple men or women. What will come with you will only be the shroud. Nothing else"*.¹²⁵

One can observe an extremely high degree of solidarity expressed by Turkish officials in the respect to the Arab spring. In every second paragraph of Erdoğan and Davutoğlu speeches, they call Egyptians, Libyans and Syrians *"sisters and brothers"*: *"We are here today to express in the strongest terms our solidarity with our Syrian brothers and sisters"*¹²⁶; *"I would like to call upon my brothers from Benghazi from this platform"*¹²⁷; *"I have a request from my brothers from Tripoli, Benghazi, Misurata, Tobruk, Ecdebiya, Zintan, Zawiya, Sebha, and Brega"*¹²⁸; and *"Our people will always stand by the brotherly Libyan people and will work together with our Libyan brothers for the future of Libya"*.¹²⁹

This solidarity stems, on the one hand, from the general support of democracy and on the other from the kinship and blood ties with the MENA countries. In his Cairo speech, Erdoğan asserts: *"As Turkey, we cannot remain indifferent to the developments in the Middle East not because Turkey is a part of the same geography, but because we have a common history and we have ties of eternal brotherhood"*.¹³⁰

As a result, he constantly refers to blood terms while accusing bloodshed and claims Turkey's vulnerability to hostilities in brotherly nations: *"If one life is lost in Egypt, be*

¹²⁵Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, "On Egypt's Transition to Democracy".

¹²⁶Ahmet Davutoğlu, "Humanitarian Crisis in Syria".

¹²⁷Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, "Recent Developments in Libya".

¹²⁸Ibid.

¹²⁹Ibid.

¹³⁰Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, "On Egypt's Transition to Democracy".

it that of a soldier, of a policeman, or a civilian, it is as if that life was lost from the Turkish nation”.¹³¹

In a likewise manner, he said *“acrying Palestinian child in Gaza hurt a mother in Ankara, and similarly the voice of youth in Cairo was welcomed with the same enthusiasm in Tripoli, Damascus, and Istanbul”*.¹³²

Moreover, zealous solidarity can be traced by the frequent usage of the plural pronoun “we”, which emphasizes the spirit of brotherhood and collectiveness: *“We have sincerely strived towards overcoming the difficulties you are going through. We will continue to support your legitimate demands and strive to prevent the injustices to which you are exposed”*.¹³³

An extensive display of solidarity with the Middle East provokes ambiguous discussions among Western columnists.

As long as Turkey officially states the principles of its solidarity in a general manner, e.g.: *“Everyone must be sure of one thing: whatever we want for ourselves, we also want for others”*¹³⁴ or *“We represent a mentality that seeks for its brothers whatever it wants for itself”*¹³⁵—these statements do not give rise to any polemics. For example, in the case of Somalia when Erdoğan said, *“Regardless of which culture we come from or where we live, I am confident that our common heritage as human beings will motivate us to ease the suffering of Somalia”*.¹³⁶ Turkey’s zeal to help Somalia was met by international circles as a simple expression of universal solidarity, but as soon as solidarity became more specified and changed its focus to brotherly Muslim nations, it provoked mixed reactions from the West. Here is where the axis shift discussions come from.

On the one hand, Turkey’s ambitions to spread democracy and other values in the MENA region can be perceived as a simple solidarity with neighboring countries: *“If we want democracy, prosperity, justice, and freedom for ourselves, we want the same things for the brotherly peoples. Just as we want peace, security, stability, development,*

¹³¹Ibid.

¹³²Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, “On Egypt’s Transition to Democracy”.

¹³³Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, “Recent Developments in Libya”

¹³⁴Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, “On Egypt’s Transition to Democracy”.

¹³⁵Ibid.

¹³⁶Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Speech in the 15th plenary meeting of UNGA.

*unity, and integrity for ourselves, we want the same things for the brotherly countries”.*¹³⁷

On the other hand, some political scientists see not just simple solidarity in Turkey’s strengthening ties with the Middle East, but rather a potential for Turkey’s further integration into the region, which means a change of direction for the country that was always considered west-looking. Moreover, Erdoğan winning speech statement: “*Believe me, Sarajevo won today as much as Istanbul, Beirut won as much as Izmir, Damascus won as much as Ankara, Ramallah, Nablus, Jenin, the West Bank, Jerusalem won as much as Diyarbakir*”¹³⁸, provokes the discussions about neo-Ottoman notes in Turkey’s foreign policy-making among some political scientists.

Logically, the West may become suspicious about Turkey’s “hand-in-hand and shoulder-to-shoulder” policies with MENA countries. Nonetheless, it does not signify a shift of Turkey’s values from the western to eastern pattern. On the contrary, Turkey’s officials promote an image of Turkey as of a democratic country with the same values that the West shares. A remark should be made here however; Turkey adapts these values to Turkey’s geographical, political, and social realities, which may at times strengthen its independent voice in the eyes of the West.

¹³⁷Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, “On Egypt’s Transition to Democracy”.

¹³⁸Mustafa Akyol, “*Turkey’s Maturing Foreign Policy*”, July 7, 2001.

III TURKEY'S VOTING BEHAVIOR IN THE UNGA

3.1 METHODOLOGICAL UNDERPINNINGS

Voting in the UNGA gives member states an opportunity to reveal publicly their preferences in the international arena. Consequently, the UNGA is considered to be a platform for the expression of national interests and a forum for countries to debate about issues in international affairs. Due to the non-binding character of UNGA resolutions, countries feel free to speak in an unbiased manner on world problems when there is solely a moral obligation to support the implementation of resolutions.¹³⁹

Voting in this deliberative body serves as a good indicator of alliance making on the modern geopolitical map of the world. Thus, we can observe coherence in the voting behavior of groups within the UNGA, based either on geographical (African or Middle Eastern countries) or institutional (Group of 77, the EU) criteria.¹⁴⁰

Turkey has been a UNGA member since the UN's establishment in 1945. Despite the fact that the main part of Turkey lies in the Middle East, Turkey is considered to be a Western camp player. The key reasons for this are its EU accession ambitions and its prolonged friendship with the USA.

With regards to the idea of an axis shift in global politics, which was highlighted by many analysts in the beginning of 21st century, Turkey's preferences and foreign policy dimensions were questioned and examined through the "East-West" lens. In this case, Turkey's voting behavior in the UNGA can serve as a good pointer of its foreign policy-making strategies.

The debates over axis shift in Turkish foreign policy arise in light of three main issues: hostilities with Israel with regards to the Middle East Conflict (MEC), Turkey's position regarding the USA and the EU sanctions and embargos on Iran, and Turkey's initial negative position toward the initiative to introduce a "no-fly zone" in Libya in 2011. These debates originate from the diverse perspective on the development of the situation in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region.

¹³⁹Thomas Hovet, *Bloc Politics in the United Nations*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960.

¹⁴⁰Simon Hug, "What's in vote?" (paper presented at APSA Annual Meeting, 2012), 3.

Therefore, for the purpose of this research, we focused on UNGA resolutions for MENA countries. The resolutions under analysis were selected using geographical criteria related to ongoing conflicts in the MENA region. The main bulk of resolutions refer to the MEC and Iranian issues and touch upon the following questions: sovereignty of Palestinians in occupied Palestinian territory, Israeli practices affecting the human rights of the Palestinian people, applicability of the Geneva Convention for the protection of civilians in the Palestinian territory, peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine, assistance to Palestinian refugees, and resolution of the Syrian Golan Heights and Jerusalem issue. The resolutions also refer to the situation of human rights in Iran. The resolutions on the Arab spring are not numerous, due to the fact that the phenomenon is new and not many resolutions have been discussed and voted for in the UNGA.

As for the timeframe, we limited the scope of resolutions to a recent 4 year period from 2007 to 2011, focusing on 5 UNGA sessions. Traditionally, the axis shift in Turkish foreign policy making is associated with the AKP government, the chronological timeframe of which is from 2002 onwards. For the purpose of this study, we focused on the second term of the AKP government, which were the most important years with the regard to MENA conflict solving. During 2007-2011, traditional issues (i.e. human rights in Iran and Palestinian, Jerusalem and Syrian Golan disputes) and new questions brought to the UNGA forum by the Arab spring uprisings (the restoration of the sovereignty of Libya at the Human Rights Council and the UN Interim Force in Lebanon). Consequently, based on the abovementioned criteria, 50 resolutions from 5 UNGA sessions were selected from the United Nations Bibliographic System (UNBISNET). The complete database for the research is presented in Appendix 1 “Selected UNGA resolutions on the MENA issues: 62nd-66th sessions”.

The purpose of the presented study was to analyze the degree of Turkey’s recent deviation in decision-making for the MENA region from the previous European one. One important remark has to be made: one should not equate the European voting pattern to the Western one. As we will see from the resolutions about MENA issues, which are one of the most disputable and show the highest degree of roll-call voting, there is no coherent western opinion. The EU and the USA are not on the same page,

which changes the trajectory of our research. Instead of the dichotomy “Turkey vs. the West”, we have 3 components’ structured research: “Turkey vs. the EU vs. the USA”.

In the presented study we used both quantitative and qualitative analyses. Firstly, by means of calculations we ascertained the level of Turkey’s voting conformity with the EU voting. Not all of the UNGA resolutions proceed with voting. Within the scope of the conducted study, we selected only those that did, as they present the best occasion for the countries to express an opinion. In the UNGA voting rounds, i.e. roll-calling resolutions, four possible outcomes can occur: voting for, voting against, abstaining and non-voting/non-participating. There are several ways of coding votes the choice of which depends on the purpose of the research. In our case, we coded any deviation from the EU consensus as non-compliance regardless whether it is abstaining, non-voting or the opposite vote.

Aware of the fact that numerous types of coding and the calculation of voting behavior are introduced into the UNGA voting analysis by various scholars such as Hurwitz¹⁴¹, Hosli¹⁴², Rasch¹⁴³, and Lijphart¹⁴⁴, I chose the most appropriate for the presented study. We relied on the formula that was derived from Lijphart’s index of cohesion with Rasch’s modifications, which was introduced by a group of scholars working on the Europeanization of Central and Eastern European Countries’ voting behavior in the UNGA.¹⁴⁵

According to the method they proposed, we calculated the coherence of Turkey and the USA with the EU countries. The calculations are presented in the table, “Conformity with the EU consensus and the EU majority on MENA issues: Turkey and the USA: 62nd-66th UNGA sessions” (see appendix 2).

¹⁴¹Leon Hurwitz, “*The EEC in the United Nations: The Voting Behavior of Eight Countries, 1948-1973*”, *Journal of Common Market Studies* 13(3) (1975): 224-243.

¹⁴²Hosli Madeleine, Kampen Evelyn, “*Voting Cohesion in the United Nations General Assembly: The Case of the European Union*”, Paper presented at the ECPR Fifth Pan-European Conference 24-26 June 2010, Porto.

¹⁴³Maximilian Rasch, *The European Union at the United Nations: the functioning and coherence of EU external representation in a state-centric environment*. Amsterdam: Martinus Nijhof Publishers, 2008.

¹⁴⁴Arend Lijphart, “*The Analysis of Bloc Voting in the General Assembly: A Critique and a Proposal*”. *American Political Science Review* 57(4) (1963): 902-917.

¹⁴⁵Góra, Magdalena, Maciej Stepka, and Zubek Marcin, “*Europeanisation of Central and Eastern European Countries voting behavior in the UN General Assembly*.” (paper based on the research conducted within the project “Reconstituting Democracy in Europe”).

Thereafter, we gathered the percentage rates of European consensus (the percent of the cases when all the EU members voted unanimously), European majority (the percent of the cases when the EU decision was not met by some of the EU members), Turkey’s conformity and non-conformity with the voice of the EU, and the USA’s conformity and non-conformity with the EU voting for each of the 5 sessions under analyses.

Moreover, besides merely quantitative study, we carried out a qualitative analysis of several resolutions, which present the most controversial cases, in order to trace Turkey’s voting behavior patterns.

3.2 TURKEY’S INDEPENDENT VOICE IN UNGA IN PATTERNS: FROM NON-VOTING TO DECISIVE OPPOSITION

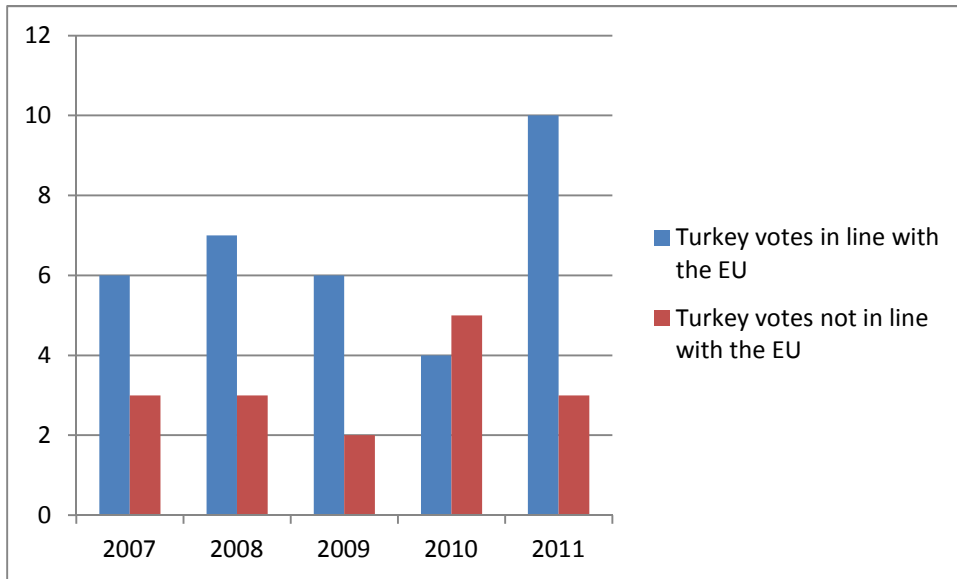
The first important observation to be made as for the assumption of Turkey’s tendency not to vote in line with the West is that it has been fully approved in the case of Turkey’s conformity with the USA and there is still room left for discussion in terms of Turkey’s conformity with the EU.

Obviously, there is no coherence between Turkey and the USA on MENA issues, as we can see from the number of resolutions in which Turkey votes in line with the USA, which is zero for each of the 5 sessions:

Session/Year	Turkey votes in line with the EU	Turkey votes not in line with the EU	Turkey votes in line with the US	Turkey votes not in line with the US
66/2011	10	3	0	13
65/2010	4	5	0	9
64/2009	6	2	0	8
63/2008	7	3	0	10
62/2007	6	3	0	9

On the contrary, the rate of the Turkey’s conformity with the EU is high. For 4 sessions out of 5, Turkey’s conformity with the EU exceeds non-conformity, as we can see from Graph 1:

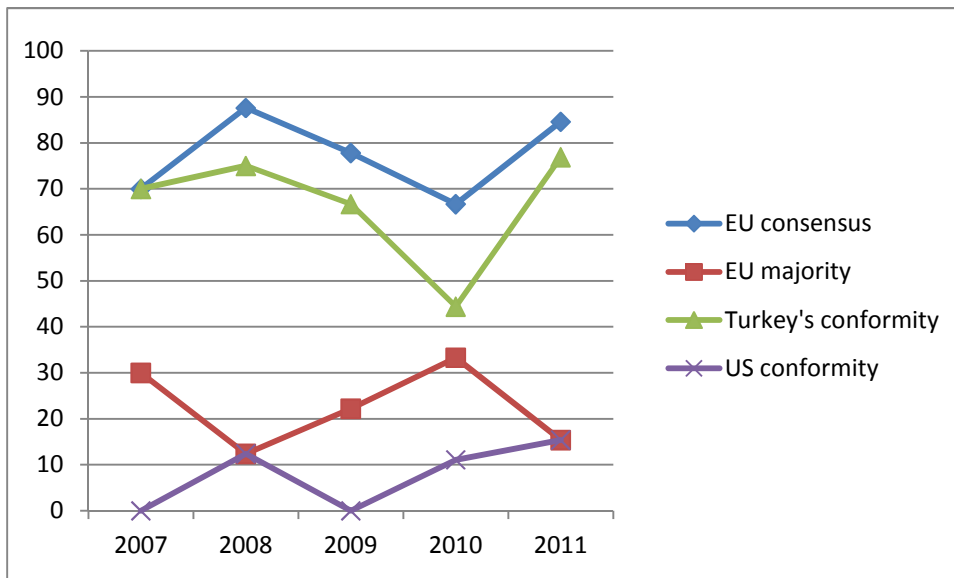
Graph 1 “Turkey’s Conformity and Non-Conformity with the EU in UNGA: 2007-2011”



Only in 2010 did Turkey vote more often contrary to the EU majority, while in all other cases its conformity with the EU substantially exceeds non-conformity. Consequently, the general tendency in Turkey’s voting behavior is full non-compliance with the US and a high rate of conformity with the EU.

Graph 2 shows that the EU tends to express a common voice on policymaking in MENA region, as EU consensus considerably outnumbers EU majority throughout the time frame analyzed.

Graph 2 “The EU consensus, the EU majority, Turkey’s, and the USA’s conformity to EU voting at the UNGA: 2007-2011”



One can observe a direct relation between EU consensus and Turkey’s conformity: with the rise of the EU consensus rate, Turkey’s conformity increases and vice versa; when the EU’s unanimity decreases, Turkey’s independent voice speaks louder and louder. Logically, the opposite phenomenon is observed while looking at the correlation between the EU majority and Turkey’s conformity.

While Turkey’s conformity with the EU varies from 44% to 77%, with the average 67%, the USA maximum index of conformity with the EU barely reaches 16%. Therefore, one can claim that there are non-compliance tendencies in the Western bloc itself (as we see from comparison of the EU and the USA voting behaviors), rather than Turkey’s shifting from the West.

The graph indicates that Turkey’s conformity does not follow either downward or upward tendencies. There are moderate rises and falls within the scope of 10% changes, with the only exception in 2010, which appears to be a critical point when the rate of conformity reached the lowest index throughout the analyzed period and 45% when Turkey took a non-voting stance toward the Interim Force in Lebanon and human rights in Iran issues.

As was already stressed above, Turkey votes in all cases contrary to the USA decision. Non-compliance with the USA is a consistent trend in Turkey's voting behavior. Relying on the empirical data under the analysis, one can trace Turkey's two main voting patterns in the UNGA.

Mainly, Turkey contradicts the USA while voting in line with the EU. This is the first pattern of Turkey's voting behavior. It prevails in the majority of cases under analysis. The issues under the debate when Turkey follows this pattern are mostly focused on the MEC: 1) permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan Heights over their natural resources; 2) Israeli practices affecting the human rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories; and 3) the applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in time of War to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the other occupied territories; 4) Palestine refugees' properties and their revenues, assistance to the refugees; 5) peaceful settlement of the Palestinian question.

The second pattern of Turkey's voting behavior, which aligns neither with the USA nor with the EU, presents divergent preferences of Turkish foreign policy. For about half of the analyzed resolutions, Turkey did vote differently. It is an interesting question: what are these issues and how important is it to analyze the shift in Turkish foreign policy? For answering such a question, we must imply both qualitative and quantitative analysis.

Interestingly, in the majority of the second pattern cases, Turkey chose a non-voting strategy. For instance, in 2007 and 2011 Turkey did not vote on the resolution on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, while all the European members in consensus with the USA were supportive for the resolution condemning Iran. Likewise, Turkey declined to express any position by non-voting when it came to the restoration of the rights of membership of Libya in the Human Rights Council. The majority of the EU members alongside with the USA voted for, while Turkey with the EU minority represented by Belgium, the Netherlands, and Romania chose to refrain by non-voting.

The non-voting strategy signifies the low degree of Turkey's variance because, as was mentioned above, there is an option to "abstain" from voting by pressing the relevant button. This results in the official abstaining position, which signifies that the state is familiar with the issue and does not support either of the sides. Meanwhile, non-voting may stand for simple non-presence at the procedure. In the cases, Turkey's representatives did not justify non-voting. No public statements were made in the discussion section from Turkey's side, which makes it difficult to trace the motives behind the non-voting behavior. In the Iranian case, it was justified by Turkey's friendly stance towards Iran under the AKP government and its strive for cooperation. In 2011, Turkey did not support the USA and EU sanctions on the Iranian nuclear program and took the Iranian side in the issue, which provoked negative reactions from the international community. In the Libyan case, the non-voting strategy emphasized Turkey's hesitancy, "flip-flop stance", and "wait and see approach", as was already discussed in the introduction chapter.

Another good example of Turkey's reluctance to follow the West is its support of the resolution on "The division for Palestinian Rights of the Secretariat", which aims at the creation of informed public opinion in support of these rights. In this case, Turkey's "yes" stood out against unequivocal American "no" and the European almost unanimous abstention (with the exception of Cyprus and Malta).

Likewise, in a number of other recurrent resolutions on Palestinian matters, such as the "Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People" and "Creation of Special Committee to investigate Israeli practices affecting the human rights of the Palestinian people and other Arabs of the Occupied territories" in 2008-2011, Turkey displayed the position opposite to the USA and the EU consensus.

In these cases, the independent voice of Turkey is louder than in non-voting. While Europe abstained, the USA voted against, Turkey offered a decisive yes. The reason for this lies in the recent dynamics of Turkey-Israel relations. Due to long-lasting and elaborate cooperation on political, military, and economic ground, Turkey and Israel have always been considered close allies. Nonetheless, with the AKP's coming to power, many aspects of TFP have changed. Today, Turkey demonstrates a pro-Palestinian rather than pro-Israeli stance. We can see it from Erdoğan statements in the UNGA:

*“Turkey’s support for the recognition of the State of Palestine is unconditional. We will continue to work actively for the resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict, the recognition of the State of Palestine, the achievement of unity among Palestinians, and the lifting of the illegal blockade enforced against the people of Gaza”.*¹⁴⁶

Turkey’s pro-Palestinian position was strengthened by tension in Turkey-Western relations (with the USA in particular: Johnson’s letter in 1964 disputes Cyprus, the Middle Eastern conflict, the Iraq war, and US sanctions on the Iranian nuclear program) as well as by downgrading diplomatic relations with Israel, caused by the Gaza flotilla incident (2010), when nine Turkish soldiers were killed by Israeli forces.

At the UNGA plenary meeting, Recep Erdoğan expressed strong criticism about Israel’s behavior during the Gaza incident: *“The attack of the Israeli armed forces on the international humanitarian aid convoy in high seas last May resulted in grave civilian casualties and was an unacceptable act”.*¹⁴⁷

Moreover, the Prime Minister calls on Israel to apologize: *“In light of international law, Turkey’s expectation is a formal apology and compensation for the aggrieved families of the victims and the injured people. Israel must apologize and pay compensation to the families of our martyrs and lift the blockade on Gaza”.*¹⁴⁸

In the eyes of the international community, Turkey’s pro-Palestinian stance offers an impression of Turkey’s strengthening ties with the Muslim world, which strongly believes that Palestine belongs to Palestinians and not to Israel, instead of supporting the internationalization of Jerusalem as Western countries do.

All in all, the second voting pattern indicates the rise of Turkey’s independent voice in the UNGA. Nonetheless, this tendency is not the dominating one, due to the fact that the big picture reveals Turkey as country voting mostly in line with the EU members.

¹⁴⁶Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Speech on the 15th Plenary Meeting of the UNGA, September 22, 2011.

¹⁴⁷Ibid.

¹⁴⁸Ibid.

IV CONCLUSIONS

The research examined the grounds for the axis shift theory in TFP both from global and domestic perspectives. The main purpose of the study was to analyze the weakening of the Western dimension in today's Turkish foreign policy.

The character of drastic changes in TFP with the AKP coming to power proved to be a disputable question. While the idea of Turkey's Eastern turn is claimed by the Western media, Turkey's officials and scholars argue that there is multi-dimensionalism in TFP, rather than a change of direction from West to East.

From a broad geopolitical context, Turkey's axis shift was viewed as part of a pole shift in today's multi-polar world system. An emergence of powers other than the Western ones such as China and the South Asian "tigers" along with the strengthening of the MENA region can be considered an ally-making alternative for Turkey, a country that lies in the crossroads of the West and East. This geostrategic position gives it multiple options for partnerships. After the end of the Cold War, Turkey did not need to choose one power in a bipolar system, and in the spirit of time Turkey can follow changing power-shifting patterns.

From a domestic perspective, the profound study of TFP was carried out to trace the dynamics of the "East-West" paradigm throughout Turkish history. Hence, the strong Western dimension of Turkey's foreign policy-making was revealed, starting from the Ottoman Empire with Sultan Mahmut's *tanzimat* until its apogee during the Atatürk's era, when "West" stood synonymous with progress and modernity. Nonetheless, both academia and media began to question Turkey's Western aspirations with the AKP coming to power in 2002. Turkey's "no" to the USA and EU sanctions over Iran and its ambiguous stance in the MENA region on Arab spring issues (e.g. the Libyan case) led to the rise of the axis shift debates.

The results of the study suggest that Turkey's recently proactive foreign policymaking does not translate to Turkey's direct and definite shift to the East.

The Libyan case proved to be particularly interesting for the axis shift debates as it serves as a good illustration of how Turkey initially opposed the Western consensus by not supporting the no-fly zone over Libya, and after hesitancy eventually joined the

Unified Protector, NATO's peacekeeping operation in Libya. Though Turkey's overall stance in Libya can be characterized as lukewarm, which we see from Turkey's initially cautious and indecisive behavior, in the end Turkey work in line with the West by participating in the NATO operation. On the one hand, the Libyan case shows Turkey's determination to have its own opinion about MENA issues that might not coincide with the Western stance, which destroys the image of Turkey as a "Western puppet" and reveals Turkey's independent thinking. On the other hand, we see that Turkey does not prioritize its national pragmatic interests over the western consensus and eventually joins the intervention in Libya together with the West.

The study of TFP shows that the weakening of the Western dimension is caused, on the one hand, by the decline of the West (economic downturn, crisis of multiculturalism) and problems in "Turkey-West dialogue" ("train crash" in EU accession process, decreasing cooperation with the USA) and, on the other hand, by Turkey's success story in terms of the economy and democracy-building efforts, which made the Turkish Republic a role model for many other countries in the region.

To analyze the axis shift on an ideological level, we examined the Turkish system of values in order to investigate how Western the Turkish values are. The results showed that, despite the axis shift polemics, Turkey's officials actively promote and stand for values that are considered to be core European values. The study revealed that the official program in policy-making on an ideological level can be considered pro-Western. Turkey tends to share common principles and values with the West when it comes to ethical justifications of the actions in the international arena. During the Arab spring tour of Recep Erdoğan, his speeches portrayed Turkey as a fighter for democracy and an ambassador of Western values in the Middle East. Through the discourse studies of the speeches, the assumption of Turkey's commitment to the Western system of values was proven. Meanwhile, and logically enough, the study also revealed slight differences caused by a historical context and geopolitical realities in the interpretations of values through the Western and Turkish perspectives.

On an executive level, the analysis of the Turkish voting behavior in the United Nations General Assembly showed that the concept of "West" is not homogeneous in the Turkish perspective. If we look at Turkey's voting behavior toward Middle Eastern issues, we see full non-compliance with the USA and a high degree of conformity with

the EU. However, despite the high rate of Turkey's conformity with the EU, Turkey did not always vote in line with EU countries. These divergent preferences of foreign policy-making show the growth of Turkey's independent voice in the international arena. In such cases, Turkey either chose a non-voting pattern (the prevailing one) or opposed the EU consensus by a contrary vote. Nonetheless, there is no ground to claim a strong opposition to the EU consensus in the UNGA, because in the big picture, despite the rise of Turkey's independent voice in the international arena in cases of several resolutions, we see that Turkey votes mostly in line with EU policies.

Both on ideological and executive levels, the study we carried out suggests that it is more appropriate not to claim that there has been an TFP axis shift from the West to the East in a bipolar geopolitical system, but rather a strengthening of the multi-dimensional approach and a more independent voice in the international arena, driven by pragmatism in foreign policy-making.

The results of our research may be used in debates about Turkish foreign policy today, Turkey's prospects for alliance making, the geopolitical division of the MENA region in light of Arab spring, and the dialogue between the West and Middle East and Turkey's role in it.

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APPENDIX 1

SELECTED RESOLUTIONS ON MENA ISSUES: 62 ND -66 TH UNGA SESSIONS			
UN Resolution symbol	Session/ Year	Date of the resolution	Description of the resolution
A/RES/66/11	66/2011	18.11.2011	Resolution on restoration of the rights of membership of Libya in the Human Rights Council (document A/66/PV.60)
A/RES/66/175	66/2011	19.12.2011	Resolution on situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran (document A/66/PV.89)
A/RES/66/225	66/2011	22.12.2011	Resolution on permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources (document A/66/PV.91)
A/RES/66/18	66/2011	30.11.2011	Jerusalem : resolution (A/66/PV.69)
A/RES/66/79	66/2011	09.12.2011	Resolution on Israeli practices affecting the human rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories
A/RES/66/77	66/2011	12.09.2011	Resolutiosn on applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in time of War to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the other occupied territories (document A/66/PV.81)
A/RES/66/75	66/2011	09.12.2011	Palestine refugees' properties and their revenues : resolution

			(document A/66/PV.81)
A/RES/66/78	66/2011	09.12.2011	Resolution on Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan
A/RES/66/80	66/2011	09.12.2011	Resolution on the occupied Syrian Golan
A/RES/66/17	66/2011	30.11.2011	Peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine : resolution (document A/66/PV.69)
A/RES/66/72	66/2011	09.12.2011	Resolution on Assistance to Palestine refugees
A/RES/66/74	66/2011	09.12.2011	Operations of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (A/66/PV.81)
A/RES/66/15	66/2011	30.11.2011	Division for Palestinian Rights of the Secretariat (document A/66/PV.69)
A/RES/65/226	65/2010	21.12.2010	Situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran (document A/65/PV.71)
A/RES/65/16	65/2010	30.11.2010	Peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine : resolution (document A/65/PV.55)
A/RES/65/17	65/2010	30.11.2011	Jerusalem : resolution (A/65/L.18)
A/RES/65/101	65/2010	10.12.2010	Palestine refugees' properties and their revenues : resolution (document A/65/PV.62)
A/RES/65/14	65/2010	30.11.2010	Division for Palestinian Rights of the Secretariat (document A/65/PV.55)
A/RES/64/89	64/2010	09.12.2010	Operations of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (A/66/PV.81)

A/RES/65/13	65/2010	30.11.2010	Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (document A/66/L.15 and Add.1)
A/RES/65/303	65/2011	30.06.2011	Resolution on financing of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (document A/RES/65/303)
A/RES/65/102	65/2010	10.12.2010	Resolution on work of the Special Committee to investigate Israeli practices affecting the human rights of the Palestinian people and other Arabs of the Occupied territories (document A /C.4/65/L.12)
A/RES/64/282	64/2010	24.06.2010	Resolution on financing of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (document A/64/PV.101)
A/RES/64/176	64/2009	18.12.2009	Situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran
A/RES/64/87	64/2009	09.12.2009	Resolution on Assistance to Palestine refugees
A/RES/64/16	64/2009	30.11.2009	Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (A/64/L.20 and Add. 1)
A/RES/64/19	64/2009	30.11.2009	Peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine : resolution (document A/64/PV.54)
A/RES/64/90	64/2009	10.12.2009	Palestine refugees' properties and their revenues : resolution (document A/C.4/64/L.14 A/64/405)
A/RES/64/20	64/2009	02.12.2009	Jerusalem : resolution A/64/PV.54

A/RES/ES-10/17	10th emergency session 2009		Resolution on establishment of the United Nations Register of Damage caused by construction of the Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (document A/ES-10/L.20/Rev.1)
A/RES/63/201	63/2008	22.12.2008	Resolution on permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources (document A/66/PV.91)
A/RES/63/91	63/2008	05.12.2008	Resolution on Assistance to Palestine refugees
A/RES/63/26	63/2008	26.11.2008	Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People document A/63/PV.60)
A/RES/63/29	63/2008	26.11.2008	Peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine : resolution (document A/63/PV.60)
A/RES/63/298	63/2009	03.06.2009	Resolution on financing of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (document A/63/PV.93)
A/RES/63/94	63/2008	05.12.2008	Palestine refugees' properties and their revenues : resolution (document A/63/PV.64 A/64/405)
A/RES/63/30	63/2008	26.11.2008	Jerusalem : resolution A/63/PV.60)
A/RES/63/93	63/2008	05.12.2008	Operations of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East A/63/PV.64)

A/RES/63/27	66/2008	26.11.2008	Division for Palestinian Rights of the Secretariat (document A/63/PV.60)
A/RES/ES-10/18	10th emergency session 2009	16.01.2009	General Assembly resolution supporting immediate ceasefire according to Security Council resolution 1860 (2009), (document A/ES-10/L.21/Rev.1)
A/RES/62/168	62/2007	18.12.2007	Resolution on situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran (document A/62/PV.76)
A/RES/62/181	62/2007	19.12.2007	Resolution on permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources (document /62/PV.78)
A/RES/62/102	62/2007	17.12.2007	Resolution on Assistance to Palestine refugees
A/RES/62/80	62/2007	10.12.2007	Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People document A/62/PV.65)
A/RES/62/83	62/2007	10.12.2007	Peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine : resolution (document A/62/PV.65)
A/RES/62/105	62/2007	17.12.2007	Palestine refugees' properties and their revenues : resolution (document A/62/PV.75)
A/RES/62/104	62/2007	17.12.2007	Operations of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East A/62/PV.75)
A/RES/62/81	62/2007	10.12.2007	Division for Palestinian Rights of the Secretariat (document A/63/PV.60)

APPENDIX 2

Session/Year	Number of resolutions	EU consensus		EU majority	
		Nº	%	Nº	%
66/2011	13	11	84.6%	2	15.4%
65/2010	9	6	66.7%	3	33.3%
64/2009	8	7	87.6%	1	12.4%
63/2008	10	7	70,00%	3	30%
62/2007	9	7	77.8%	2	22.2%

Session/ Year	Number of resolutions	Turkey				USA			
		C		N/C		C		N/C	
		Nº	%	Nº	%	Nº	%	Nº	%
66/2011	13	10	76.9	3	20.1	2	15.4	11	84.6
65/2010	9	4	44.4	5	55.6	1	11.1	8	88.9
64/2009	8	6	75	2	25	1	12.4	7	87.6
63/2008	10	7	70	3	30	0	0	10	100
62/2007	9	6	66.7	3	33.3	0	0	9	100

C—conformity

N/C—non-conformity

Index of Coherence : $EU-I_A = (a+d-m)/(a+d+s) \times 100$.

Where: a is the number of UN votes in which all of the EUMS voted uniformly; d is the number of divergent UN votes, EU (absolute) majority; m is the number of UN votes in which state A did not vote with the EU majority and finally s is the number of 3-way splits (the lack of an EU absolute majority).