NORMATIVE POWER TURKEY? ASSESSING TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS THE SYRIAN CIVIL WAR

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ABSTRACT

NORMATIVE POWER TURKEY? ASSESSING TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS THE SYRIAN CIVIL WAR

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In this thesis, I aim to assess the normative dimension of Turkish foreign policy toward the Syrian Civil War, between the years 2011 and 2016, when Ahmet Davutoğlu resigned from his position. Turkey's involvement with the Syrian Civil War, and her enthusiastic support for the Syrian opposition cannot be understood without reference to her normative goals in Syria and the Middle East. Syria had been the most successful product of Turkey's "zero problem with neighbors" policy until the eruption of the civil war. This thesis will aim to identify foreign policy traditions in Turkey, and hypothesize that increasing idealism and activism in Turkish foreign policy during the early 2010s can be attributed to the empowerment of a specific foreign policy tradition, namely an Islamic brand of idealism, commonly referred to as neo-Ottomanism. The thesis will trace the change of mood among Turkish policy makers toward Syria and investigate the normative elements in Turkey's approach toward the Syrian civil war. The thesis will conclude by assessing the degree of normativity in TFP, using the framework offered by Natalie Tocci.

Keywords: Turkish foreign policy, Syria, normativism

ÖZ

NORMATİF GÜÇ TÜRKİYE? SURİYE İÇ SAVAŞINA YÖNELİK TÜRK DIŞ POLİTİKASININ DEĞERLENDİRİLMESİ

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Bu tezde, 2011'den Ahmet Davutoğlu'nun görevinden istifa ettiği 2016 yılına kadar Suriye İç Savaşı'na yönelik Türk Dış Politikası'ndaki normatif yönü incelemeyi amaçlıyorum. Türkiye'nin Suriye İç Savaşı'na dahli, ve Suriye muhalefetine istekli desteği Suriye ve Ortadoğu'daki normatif hedeflerine referans vermeden anlaşılamaz. Suriye, iç savaşın başlangıcına kadar Türkiye'nin "komşularla sıfır sorun" politikasının en başarılı ürünüydü. Bu tez, Türkiye'deki dış politika geleneklerini tanımlamayı ve 2010'ların başında Türk dış politikasında yükselen normativizmin ve aktivizmin arkasında genelde yeni-Osmanlıcılık olarak tanımlanan idealizmin İslami bir çeşidi olarak tanımlanan yeni-Osmanlıcılık akımının olduğunu tespit etmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu tez Türk siyasa yapıcıları arasında Suriye'ye yönelik ruh hali değişiminin izini sürecek ve Suriye İç Savaşı'na yönelik Türk Dış Politikası'ndaki normatif unsurları araştıracaktır. Tez, Natalie Tocci'nin kurduğu çerçeveyi kullanarak Türk Dış Politikası'ndaki normatiflik seviyesini tespit ederek sonuçlanacaktır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Türk dış politikası, Suriye, normativizm

To my family and my dear Yağmur, who have always supported me

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CHAPTER 1

1. INTRODUCTION

In this thesis, I aim to assess the normative dimension of Turkish foreign policy toward the Syrian Civil War. Turkey's involvement with the Syrian Civil War, and her enthusiastic support for the Syrian opposition cannot be understood without reference to her normative goals in Syria and the Middle East. This thesis will defend that Turkey had normative goals in the Syrian Civil War, intermingled with its milieu goals, and often contradicting its short-term material interests. By normative goals, I will primarily refer to Nathalie Tocci's definition of the term. Tocci (2008) explains that in order for a country's foreign policy to be evaluated as normative, it should have normative means, goals and impact. Thus, according to her, a country needs to have normative goals and means, and the impact of its policy needs to be normative, for its foreign policy to be considered normative. I use Tocci's conceptualization of normativism, as I believe she offers a definition that is easier to operationalize. She offers a clear criterion to assess whether a country's foreign policy is normative or not. Therefore, specifically for this reason, I will use her definition of normativism as a reference point. Nevertheless, I will analyze and introduce alternative definitions of normative foreign policy and different subcategories of it. The thesis will conclude by arguing that Turkish foreign policy toward the Syrian civil war cannot be classified as normative because of the impact it led to, despite normative goals and intentions.

Turkey's normative goals cannot be taken for granted, the AKP's attitude did not remain the same over time. Turkish attitude toward the Middle East had been mostly an indifferent realism prior to the rise of the AKP. Turkish foreign policy was mostly dictated by neo-traditionalist ideas prior to the AKP, which demanded non-interference in Middle Eastern affairs. The AKP abandoned this policy in favor of warmer relations with the Middle Eastern countries, attracting criticisms from both its Western partners and conservative followers that they are appeasing dictatorships. The turning point can be said to be the Arab spring. Syria had been the most successful product of Turkey's "zero problem with neighbors" policy

until the eruption of the civil war. Turkey preferred developing bilateral relations, as well as regional integration in the Middle East with the existing regimes until that point. With the beginning of the Arab spring, Turkey changed its pro-status quo position and started advocating for regime change and democratization in the region. This thesis will analyze the conditions behind the normative shift in Turkish foreign policy toward the Middle East, specifically toward Syria.

This thesis will trace the change of mood among Turkish policy makers toward Syria and investigate the reasons for the reversal in policies. The thesis will aim to identify foreign policy traditions in Turkey, and hypothesize that increasing idealism and activism in Turkish foreign policy during the early 2010s can be attributed to the empowerment of a specific foreign policy tradition, namely an Islamic brand of idealism, commonly referred to as neo-Ottomanism.

Methodically, the thesis will use primary sources such as speeches and written materials by policy makers, as well as official statements. The thesis will benefit from two strands of literature as secondary sources. The first strand is International Relations literature regarding normativism, idealism and democracy promotion, as well as studies on classification of role identifications in foreign policy. The second strand will be regarding Turkey's aims, perceptions and intentions toward Syria and the Syrian Civil War. Process tracing methods will be employed as well, specifically to trace the shift of mood among Turkish policy makers, from zero problems with the neighbors to assuming the role of protector of pious conservative masses against their oppressive secular overlords.

Organization of the thesis will be as follows. The first part will be attributed to a literature review of normativism in foreign policy. In this part, I will prepare a theoretical framework by identifying the necessary pillars of a normative foreign policy. I will define alternative definitions and explanations of idealism and normativism in foreign policy. I will also explore specific subcategories of them, namely democracy promotion, Wilsonianism, neo-Wilsonianism, and neoconservatism. I will define and discuss what democracy promotion is, mainly with reference to Daniela Huber (2015). Regarding Wilsonianism, neo-Wilsonianism, and neoconservatism, there is a vast literature, and I will try to introduce the main tenets of each of these approaches, as well as the mostly Realist criticisms directed at them. Despite using Tocci's definition for assessment, I will occasionally refer to alternative definitions of normative foreign policy, bridging different theories and frameworks. I will aim to form similarities between certain considerations of Turkish policy makers and the

teachings of normative schools such as Wilsonianism, neo-Wilsonianism and neoconservatism.

In the second part, I will introduce attempts at mapping Turkish foreign policy traditions, referring primarily to Meliha Altunışık (2009) and Ömer Taşpınar (2011). After introducing various role conceptions in Turkish foreign policy, I will discuss the change in AKP's approach toward the Middle East in the early 2010s. I will analyze the views and statements of key foreign policy actors at the time, namely Ahmet Davutoğlu, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and İbrahim Kalın, as well as the institutions such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Turkish Agency for Cooperation and Development (TİKA). I will apply the framework I have developed earlier on the case of the Syrian Civil War, and discuss whether AKP's approach toward Syria can be categorized as a normative foreign policy.

In the third part, I will briefly summarize the timeline and major events of the Syrian civil war, and Turkey's involvement in it. I will employ process tracing methods here to analyze the major breaking points in the timeline. I will introduce and compare literature on how to classify the AKP's behavior in the civil war, whether it was acting in an imperial manner, a realist manner, or in a neo-Wilsonian manner.

In the fourth and final part, I will ask the question of whether Turkish foreign policy vis a vis the Syrian civil war was normative. I will introduce the dimensions of the Turkish foreign policy, how they interact with each other, and how they are affected by the conditioning factors. Overall, I will claim that Turkey had normative goals, and partially normative means. Turkey's goals were aiming at promoting democracy in a foreign country, promoting human rights and removing a dictatorship from power. These goals were mostly pursued in a legal and multilateral way. Turkey extensively used legal grounds such as the UN and the Arab League to isolate and sanction its rival, the Syrian regime. Turkey was also cautious enough to not act alone on the issue, at least between the timeframe of 2011-2016. Turkey was willing to act in accordance with its partners the US and the EU. Thus it meets the legality and multilateralism conditions. Yet, Turkey was also involved in dubious activities of arming, training and hosting several Syrian rebel groups. The presence of such military means makes it difficult to argue that the means employed by Turkey at the time was normative overall. In terms of the impact, it is very difficult to argue that Turkey's normativism created a positive impact on the region. Despite not being responsible for the beginning of the civil war, Turkey was certainly responsible for the escalation and prolongement of the war, for rejecting dialogue with the Syrian regime after some point and dismissing any diplomatic solution.

Due to these reasons, I will claim that Turkish foreign policy toward the Syrian Civil War cannot be characterized as normative overall from Tocci's framework. The use of non-normative means and the non-normative impact prevents us from stating the opposite.

CHAPTER 2

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Idealism

Idealism as a doctrine is optimistic in its outlook. It aims to transform international anarchy, by creating a more cosmopolitan and harmonious world order (Wilson, 2011). Idealism is often used as an umbrella term for numerous approaches in IR, such as cosmopolitanism, internationalism and liberalism. Idealists believe in the transformative strength of human reason, and its ability to transform the world into a better place. The superficial conflict of interests among nations can be removed by international bodies, such as the League of Nations and the UN. Idealists argued that the unchecked power of nation states, and the anarchy it causes, should be limited by these international institutions.

Policy makers in the post-cold war era claim to infuse their policies that go beyond, or redefine the national interests. A normative, idealist, or ethical type of foreign policy is on the rise (Chandler & Heins, 2006). Chandler and Heins offer a supply-side argument for this phenomenon. They argue that increasing sensitivities among the Western public, as well as the quest for meaning in the post-cold war era have caused the rise. The demise of the legitimacy of political regimes led to the understanding of conflicts taking place between the evil and the good. Siding with the victim in an apolitical way has become the new trend. A new understanding emerged, which blames the Western states for inaction against human sufferings all around the world. States should not only refrain from causing harm, but also have obligations to provide security on a transnational basis (Chandler & Heins, 2006, p. 10). They argue that the proliferation of post-national ethics can be attributed to the weakening of the national political community. Ethical foreign policy sidelines concerns about portraying the world as composed of blacks and whites, especially in regions where policy makers do not know much about.

Such developments have been considered controversial by IR scholars. The relationship

between ethics and politics would not be controversial if it was limited to national boundaries and to people that are bound to each other by mutual obligations. Yet, in the current era of globalization, it is argued that communities are no longer bound by arbitrary national boundaries. Communitarians and realists argue that the state should only be ethically responsible within its national boundaries, whereas cosmopolitan liberals and idealists believe that the development of globalism requires us to prioritize humanity rather than our community.

Crawford (2005) argues that idealism and realism are fundamentally at odds with each other, and basically irreconcilable.The former prefers to look past the so-called realities of international politics and emphasize imagination as a positive and necessary feature of progress. Idealists represent the willingness to change and challenge the existing realities. The latter, contrarily, aims to analyze international politics as truly what it is, without idealization and sentimentality.

Idealism always had a strength and appeal in foreign policy. None of the countries are completely void of norms and ideals, and so are their foreign policies. In the discipline of International Relations, however, idealism increasingly became subjected to criticism. The realist critique of idealism grew strong during the interwar period, and became the predominant strand in International Relations. The Realist criticism of idealism mainly focused on utopianism of the latter. Wilson (2011) writes that Realists accused idealists of underestimating the role of power in international relations while overestimating the role of law and morality. Carr (1939) wrote that power remains as the main force in politics, and any attempt at ignoring it will result in failure. Chandler and Heins (2006) summarize the realist critique of ethical foreign policy under four propositions: 1) it is ineffective or apathetic to political realities, 2) it is harmful to national interests, 3) it is a way to hide the realist agenda, 4) it is a part of the problem that Idealists aspire to solve, because it creates immoral behavior.

Toal (2017) makes a distinction between thick and thin geopolitics, where the latter more or less represents the idealist position. Toal defines thin geopolitics as thinking in abstract universal terms. Its primary mode of representation is moral dichotomization. It perceives the world through a frame of aggressors and the aggressed. Foreign policy is driven more by cultural axioms than strategic calculations. Thick geopolitics, contrarily, highlights the importance of spatial relations and an in-depth knowledge of places and peoples. It recognizes the importance of local conditions. The worldly skepticism and the sense of limits

in thick geopolitics is at odds with the normativism of thin geopolitics.

2.2. Normative Foreign Policy

Normativism is another term that is used in a similar manner in International Relations. In explaining what normativism entails, Tocci (2008) writes that each nation has its own conception of normative. Whereas old democracies highlight the importance of democracy and liberties, emerging powers often give weight to anti-colonialism and non-interference. Each country would appeal to different foreign policy paradigms in different periods and environments. Historically all states have based their foreign policies on certain norms, and none of them were purely pragmatic in this sense.

Normative can have neutral and non-neutral meanings (Tocci, 2008). It may refer to what is normal in foreign policy (Manners, 2002, p. 32). In this meaning, it highlights standardization and non-deviance. Such normativism would not be an ethical normativism, as norms and standards are closely associated with power, and thus, mostly determined by major international powers. The second meaning would be a non-neutral one. Tocci warns about the dangers of associating this position with the concepts of "good" and "ethical". Attributing objective and universal meanings to it would pave the ground for a moral imperialism (Tocci, 2008, p. 4). She recommends questioning the normative nature of foreign policy, as it is shaped by time, place and power.

In terms of normative goals, Tocci (2008) makes a distinction between national interests and values. Such a distinction is criticized by realists such as Hans Morgenthau (1982), who argues that the real distinction should be about "one set of principles divorced from political reality and another set of principles derived from political reality". Another problem with this distinction is that normative values can be applied by different actors in different periods, and those values may contradict each other. Power and interests often determine the priority and hierarchy among different values. Normative goals are also used to cover strategic goals. Tocci suggests referring to Wolfers' (1962) milieu goals to define the character of normative goals.

According to Wolfers, milieu goals are those that aim to shape the wider international environment in favor of the nation, rather than possessive goals that are direct national interests in limited supply. Milieu goals are often a means to possessive goals. It is to ensure a peaceful environment for the possession. Yet, there is often a competition between demands for possessive and milieu goals, which is settled by political debate. Milieu goals

are not against national interests, it is an attempt to find shared interests among nations. Yet, milieu goals often have long-term scopes and might contradict national interests in the short term. Wolfers (1962) also make a distinction between traditional national goals, and ideological and revolutionary goals. In ideological goals, national leaders use national resources for the promotion of a transnational cause. He defines the policy the US has engaged in spreading democracy abroad as an ideological goal. Yet, even among such ideological and revolutionary leaders, national interests prevail to some degree.

Tocci (2008) argues that being a normative power would entail using normative means to reach normative goals. This often means pursuing economic, diplomatic, cultural means as opposed to military ones. Several scholars (Duchene, 1973; Whitman, 1998) argue that the lack of military means in the EU's foreign policy is its particular strength. Tocci (2008) claims that how certain foreign policy means are used is more relevant to normativism than which means are used. Positive incentives are seen as more normative compared to negative incentives. But she also argues that either form of conditionalities may represent an exercise of hard power depending on context. Consequently, she limits the normative means to legal foreign policy means.

The impact of a normative foreign policy is as important as its intent. A focus on the impact reveals what the actual objectives of a foreign policy were. It would also show the ability of a foreign power to exercise a normative policy.

No country uses normative or realist policies all the time. Tocci (2008) argues that the EU, contrary to its claim, is not always a normative power. Other powers who do not have such a claim may act as normative powers occasionally. Yet, the EU has been often described as a normative power. Manners (2002) argues that the EU is a normative power, as in promoting its own norms. Democracy, rule of law and human rights are important aspects of the EU's foreign identity. Manners argues that the EU does act to change the norms in international society, and that it should act to change the norms in international society. In doing so, the EU does not hesitate to infringe on national sovereignty, intervene in support of individuals. What makes the EU a normative power is its sui generis character.

Employing different approaches to normative goals and means, Tocci (2008) reaches four distinct types of foreign policy. A normative foreign policy is one that is normative in both its goals and means. A foreign power uses normative means to reach milieu goals. On the opposite end, a realpolitik foreign policy is neither normative in its goals and ends. A foreign

power employs all policy instruments to reach possessive and milieu goals. *An imperial foreign policy claims to pursue normative goals, although not through normative means*. Tocci (2008) argues that in normative and imperialistic foreign policy preferences, either possessive and milieu goals overlap, or there are no strong possessive goals working against the norms. It does not bound itself with international law and does not conform to multilateral frameworks. Finally, a status quo actor conforms to international law and multilateralism, but not for normative goals. Tocci also adds the intention dimension, as every four outcomes in this framework might be intended or unintended.

Tocci (2008) also introduces three conditioning factors that might influence the likelihood that a government would pursue a normative foreign policy. The first one concerns the domestic political order. This condition investigates the foreign policy positions and interests of domestic political actors. It focuses on whether domestic actors prioritize possessive or milieu goals.

The second factor is related to the internal capabilities of a state. The availability of certain means is investigated for this condition. The third factor is about the external environment. It investigates how a foreign policy interacts with the domestic context of the target country, or with other foreign actors in the target country, or with the wider international context regarding the target country.

2.3. Democracy Promotion

Daniela Huber (2015) states that the main dilemma of democracy promotion is that it is often not pursued when it endangers other interests. Democracy promotion is defined as all activities that aim at fostering or consolidating democracy in other states (Huber, 2015, p. 23). Democracy has a subjective meaning here, it is defined by the promoter. This implies that promotion of any regime type can be branded as democracy promotion. Leininger (2019, p. 448) defines democratization as " a nonlinear, complex, and open-ended process of political transformation that results from the interaction between domestic and international or transnational factors". Robinson (1996, p. 616), on the other hand, states that democracy promotion can be conceived as "a new form of transnational control… accompanying the rise of global capitalism", with the aim of replacing coercive social control with consensual social control.

Democracy promotion can be coercive, utilitarian and identitive (Huber, 2015). Coercive democracy promotion happens through use of force, or the threat of use of force. Yet, this is problematic because it often aims at regime change, not democratization. Utilitarian democracy promotion is a manipulation of the target country by conditionalities and democracy assistance. Identitive democracy promotion is based on convincing the target country.

Bermeo (2010) argues that armed interventions may democratize target countries. Military intervention might be required to remove authoritarian political institutions that function against popular will (Stephan, 1988). Military interventions might also contribute to democratization by ousting autocratic leaders and forming new elite formations that favor democracy (Dogan & Higley, 1998).

Realists view democracy promotion as either dangerous if sincere, or insincere. According to them, democracy promotion would lead to dangerous interventions abroad and cause strategic overextension (Layne, 1994, p.329). Hyde-Price (2008) argues that democracy promotion as a second-order normative concern can only survive if it does not clash with vital interests. Thus, Realists typically have a cynical view toward democracy promotion, either portraying these efforts as impractical, self-defeating or as a means to realist goals.

Leininger (2019) admits that there is a dilemma between democracy and stability. Democracy promotion might lead to a decline in political stability and a rise in political violence in the recipient country (Leininger, 2019). Ziaja (2013) argues that democracy promotion fosters political violence in the cases of transformation from full autocracy to semi-democracy, where risk of a civil war is high.

Defining nation-building as "the use of armed force in the aftermath of a conflict to underpin an enduring transition to democracy" Dobbins (2003, p. 218), advances the point that the US has done the best where it has done the least. American nation-building attempts have often failed, the successful outliers such as Germany and Japan had substantial democratic experience and political infrastructure (Brownlee, 2007).

Huber (2015) contests the traditional realist view, arguing that democracy promotion is a security policy that lowers threats and fosters stability. It is rational in realist terms for democracies to promote democracy in the long term. Democracies are portrayed as

transparent security seekers, thus causing trust in foreign countries. Thus, promoting democracy in the long term is beneficial for democracy. The dilemma is, democracy promotion might create friction with allied autocracies in the short run. This would cause instability in the target country, risking the security of the home country. States would not pursue democracy promotion in malign and conflictual atmospheres. Democracies do not necessarily create the ideal outcomes for the intervening country, thus, they might prefer to work with autocrats (Downes & Monten, 2013). Leininger (2019) also makes a distinction between different intentions in democracy promotion, arguing that there are two notions of democracy promotion. Democracy can be promoted as an intrinsic value, or it can be promoted as an instrumental value for other ends. Smith and Light (2001) write that intervening countries may promote democracy because it is a good system. Or they may promote it for self-interested motives. They think that it is easier to deal with democracies, or that democracies are more peaceful. They might also think that democracy is a precondition for economic reform, which would improve their economic interests in the target country.

Nevertheless, there have been concerns about democracy promotion going too far, or causing overstretch. It is questionable whether democratic institutions can be imposed by foreign intervention. Various studies have concluded that foreign interventions either have no effect, or have negative effect on recipient countries' democratic transitions (de Mesquita & Downs, 2006; Pickering & Peceny, 2006; Goldsmith, 2008). Mearsheimer (2005) argues that foreign interventions would provoke nationalist reactions against imposed democratic institutions, therefore they are destined to fail. Foreign interventions might hurt democratization by weakening domestic institutions and creating foreign dependencies, or they would fail because of a lack of knowledge regarding the local population and conditions (Fukuyama, 2014).

Downes and Monten (2013) argue that decapitating the head of the target state is a quick and low cost way to initiate democratization, but it is often insufficient. Initiator countries need to involve in more expensive and long-lasting reforms to implement democracy in a more sustainable way, but that could only succeed in recipient countries where a favorable internal environment is present. These attempts often fail because democratic interveners often have no incentive to build a full-fledged democracy in target states (de Mesquita & Downs, 2006). The level of effort they put for democratization is often insufficient (Dobbins, 2003).

The definition of despotism and terrorism as the main threats, caused foreign intervention to

be seen as the long-term solution (Brownlee, 2007). This was an excessive version of democracy promotion, in which democracy was forced rather than promoted (Carothers, 1993; Ikenberry, 2000).

Another highlighted variable is domestic conditions in the target state. Attempts at imposing democracy at ethnically and religiously heterogeneous countries are likely to fail (Enterline & Greig, 2008). Downes and Monten (2013) argue that apart from ethnic homogeneity, high levels of wealth and previous experience with democracy are also positively correlated with the success of foreign initiated regime changes.

2.4. Wilsonianism and neo-Wilsonianism

A strand of progressive imperialism has been present in the US since the late 19th century. McDougall (1997) argues that this has been in fact the dominant strand in the US foreign policy since the year 1898. It was a progressive imperialism that was shaped by Americans' sense of progressive and religious mission. What was new about progressive imperialism was that it was an attempt to change the world. Progressive foreign policy at the time was defined as a pursuit to remake the American system of states. Surely, this became an option when the US started to feel powerful enough as a nation (McDougall, 1997).

Beginning with his presidency, this strand was named after one of its most ardent supporters, Woodrow Wilson. Wilsonians believe that America has a moral obligation and a national interest in exporting its values and political system (Mead, 2013). Wilsonianism rests on the belief that the US should not only concern itself with the international affairs of foreign countries, but with their domestic policies as well. This tradition partially owes its existence to the increasing influence of the missionaries in the US, who aimed to transform American foreign policy to a more humanitarian and democratizing one (Mead, 2013, p. 150). According to Mead (2013) Wilsonian grand strategy rests on a set of premises. The first is that democracies make better partners and nonrepresentational governments are less reliable. Nonrepresentational governments are unpredictable, and suffer from royal caprice, since the public opinion is imperfectly represented in the government. Democracy prevents military domination of the states, who would have an interest in war. The second objective of Wilsonianism is the prevention of war. Hamilton (2008) adds the United States having a sui generis character, and a moral obligation to spread its principles across the world, as another premise. Whereas Smith (2017) defines four fundamental elements of Wilsonianism; 1) democracy, 2) free trade and economic openness, 3) collective security and 4) American

leadership. Nevertheless, Smith believes that democracy promotion is the main force here. Wolfers (1962) categorize the aims of Wilsonianism under ideological and revolutionary goals in foreign policy. In these goals, national leaders use national resources for the promotion of a transnational cause. He argues that just like communist and anti-colonialist countries, under Woodrow Wilson, the US has engaged in spreading an idea, democracy, abroad.

Yet, Wilson didn't believe that democracy was fit for every nation, he argued that democracy was the product of a very specific trail of historical development, and that it was unlikely to flourish in countries who did not follow a similar route. He nevertheless believed that democracy would eventually spread. Smith (2017) argues that it is not fair to label him as a democratic imperialist, as he fought to preserve the democratic world, rather than expanding it, although there were some modest attempts of exporting democracy. Wilson preferred multilateralism rather than imperialism to promote democracy, especially after 1914 (Smith, 2017). His main goal was establishing a long-lasting peace, and making the world safe for democracies. Hendrickson and Tucker (2005) advance the same point, arguing that Wilson was not a neo-Wilsonian, as he did not attempt to change the rules governing the relations of states, he did not have a vision of a global democratic takeover, and he was not willing to use force to prevent aggression. Thus, there has been a wide gap between Wilsonianism and neo-Wilsonianism. Starting with Reagan, noe-Wilsonians aimed to support democratization not only for defense reasons, but also to "overturn that part of the status quo regarded as illegitimate" (Hendrickson & Tucker, 2005, p. 16). This was a rejection of the traditional bases of international order. The pillar of power of the Bush Doctrine, which is neo-Wilsonian according to Smith (2008), was American military supremacy. This is hard to reconcile with Wilsonianism, as Wilson favored military disarmament and multilateralism. Wilson preferred joint action with other democracies and the partial transfer of sovereignty to international institutions. His was a more prudent vision.

According to Bacevich (2005), left liberals who promote humanitarian values and right wing neoconservatives that urge to use the American power to promote American values both belong to the same idealist strand of foreign policy, Wilsonianism, which represents a dangerous distraction from national interests.

Neo-Wilsonianism emerged as a merger of neoliberal and neoconservative ideas. According to Wilson (2017), it rested on three theories; democratic peace theory (DPT), democratic

transition theory (DTT), and the responsibility to protect (R2P). DTT assured that democratic transition was not that hard to imagine anymore. Comparative politics simplified the democratization process and highlighted political factors. Political scientists such as Larry Diamond (1994), encouraged democratic governments to adopt spreading democracy as the main objective in foreign policy. Diamond lacked the caution of Wilsonians preceding him. After a while, prerequisites for democratization were completely abolished by neo-Wilsonianism, and the only condition remaining was the effort put in by the intervening force. DPT and DTT paved the way for R2P, as R2P would never exist without the legitimization of those. With the invention of the R2P doctrine, overthrowing governments that were guilty of human rights violations was justified. If DTT was correct, decapitating the oppressive head of a government would be sufficient to foster democracy in a foreign country. With the affirmation of these ideas, national sovereignty was no longer absolute. Smith (2017) argues that the main difference between Wilsonianism and neo-Wilsonianism is the latter being incautious, over-confident and over-optimistic.

Merry (2005) states that George H.W. Bush was the first neo-Wilsonian, who deployed thousands of troops in Somalia purely for humanitarian reasons, where no American interests were at stake. As Gourevitch (2006) argues, neo-Wilsonianism borrows its authority from protecting the interests of the other, rather than directly protecting the interests of the constituents. However, even though it claims to be about others, neo-Wilsonianism serves the self by fostering narcissism (Robin, 2004, p. 122), by creating respect for ourselves at home (Berkowitz, 1999), or by remoralizing the home (Kagan & Kristol, 1996). Gourevitch agrees, stating that neo-Wilsonianism is an idea that instrumentalizes the other for the self, and thus is not truly ethical. Another criticism is that good intentions in foreign policy rarely lead to good outcomes, and often cause more bloodshed. This is associated with the problem of dehumanizing the adversaries in humanitarian justifications (Gourevitch, 2006).

Knock (2008) and Slaughter (2008) argue that multilateralism is the most important element of Wilsonianism, leading to the conclusion that the Bush Doctrine is not Wilsonian. While acknowledging that neoliberals and neoconservatives might have a misguided faith in international interventions that might do more harm than good, Slaughter (2008) believes that multilateralism eases this problem. The belief that conflicts are based on political and economic microfoundations of individual societies is deeply Wilsonian, and the question of whether it is justified to intervene in a foreign country merits debate. Yet, completely downplaying international interventions in an era when most threats are sourced from

international affairs would be a mistake (Slaughter, 2008). Slaughter (2008, p. 110) writes that twenty-first-century Wilsonianism has three main principles. 1) States derive their legitimacy from the protection they provide for their citizens, 2) human progress in any society must be a bottom up process, and that international actors can only assist this process, 3) decisions to use force in the international system must be made collectively.

Thompson (2010) argues that there is a dilemma between different objectives of Wilsonianism. Wilsonianism had two edges, the first being democracy promotion, and the second being international law and collective security. Yet there is a risk of conflict between democracy promotion and participating in a collective security system. A system of comprehensive collective security requires peaceful coexistence with regimes of all types, whereas democracy promotion requires the US to put pressure on other states to meet its universal standards.

Another important aspect of Wilsonianism is its emphasis on sovereignty of all nations, and sovereignty based on popular will, making him the champion of national self-determination. This is also based on the belief that self-governed nations are more peaceful (Thompson, 2010). In fact, national self-determination represented a higher goal than democracy promotion for Wilson, as he acknowledged that democracy is "none of my business…if they don't want it" (Thompson, 2010, p. 35).

Nevertheless, Smith (2008) rebukes claims about neoconservatism of the Bush Doctrine being not related to Wilsonianism. He argues that the pillar of purpose of the doctrine can be linked to Wilsonianism. According to this, the purpose of American power must be spreading freedom and democracy globally. This was assumed to enhance American security. Smith (2008) finds the intellectual origins of these ideas in Wilsonianism. Wilson called for liberal democracies, free market economies, multilateral institutions to safeguard global peace, also adding that American leadership is a vital element of this formula. Bush Doctrine shared all of these aspects, with the exception of multilateral institutions.

Rhodes (2003) also argues that Bush's foreign policy resembles Wilsonianism. Its objective is the transformation of world politics, and using American power to build liberal societies (Rhodes, 2003, p. 133). This imperial logic believes that the only obstacle standing between peoples and freedoms are the dictators in between. If the dictators are removed, people would be free to choose freedom over dominance. Rhodes (2003) claims that this view is misleading as people may not be as willing to choose the option that is served by the US.

The threat to liberal values is not only rooted in regimes, but also in peoples.

2.5. Neoconservatism

Neoconservatism emerged out of the discontent for liberal modernity (Schmidt & Williams, 2005). In practice, it was a response to the countercultural movement in the 1960s, during the Vietnam War (Grondin, 2005). Increasing atomization, individualism and materialism were thought to be endangering society, by stripping it from its purpose. Defining interests in strictly material terms causes nihilism, which would eventually lead to the collapse of the society. Thus, individual and group interests should be in line with the public interest. Public interest consists of republican values, constitutionalism and political virtues. Referring to the concept of interest as the foundation of social order is a dangerous idea, since it would cause decadence in the society, which is the greatest threat for neoconservatives (Williams, 2005; Schmidt & Williams, 2005). A society that is organized solely on the principle of material interests would have little incentive for social solidarity and commitment to institutions of the state. Nationalist and patriotic ideas to mobilize citizens are required.

The "expansive, interventionist, democracy-promoting position" (Fukuyama, 2006) of the neo-conservative movement was shaped in the 1990s, mainly by writers such as William Kristol and Robert Kagan. They advocated a neo-Reaganite benevolent hegemony strategy for the US. This strategy included resisting hostile dictators and ideologies, as well as "providing assistance to those struggling against the more extreme manifestations of human evil" (Kagan & Kristol, 2000, p.12). This strategy was defined as Wilsonian, but Fukuyama (2006) adds that it was Wilsonian without international institutions. It replaced international institutions with military superiority and American-led alliances. Regime change was proposed as the main component of this strategy. They believed that encouraging tyrannical regimes to comply with the international institutions was a mistake, and that only regime change could cause convergence of interests. For them, the idea that America can do business with every regime is morally and strategically dubious. Relationships with tyrannical regimes are unsustainable (Kaplan & Kristol, 2003). Neoconservatives perceive the world in moral categories of black and white, and claim to have the moral high ground (Halper & Clarke, 2004).

What distinguishes neoconservatives from other strands of conservative ideology is their firm commitment to democracy (Wolfson, 2004). Traditions are important for them but liberal democratic values are even more important. Traditions and customs are insufficient in protecting democracy from its vices. A general characteristic of the movement was dislike

for intellectuals and claiming to speak for ordinary Americans (Grondin, 2005). Singh (2009) argues that a distinction should be made between more traditional nationalists, and neoconservatives here. Traditional assertive nationalists are keen to display American military power abroad to combat threats, but reluctant to remake the world in America's image (Daalder & Lindsay, 2003). Conservative nationalists and neoconservatives depart on issues like values, ideas, humanitarian intervention, peace-keeping, democracy promotion and nation-building. Neoconservatives see these as part of American national interest, whereas nationalists perceive them as distraction from, or harm to national interests. Their shared characteristic was suspicion toward Wilsonian commitment to international law and institutions, and prioritization of diplomacy over military force (Singh, 2009).

Neoconservatives perceive domestic and foreign as two facets of the same policy, of the same objective. Kagan (1996), for instance, writes that "remoralization of America at home ultimately requires the remoralization of American foreign policy".

On the international level, neoconservatism was both a response to the cynical and amoral foreign policy of Nixon, and to the defeatist view that perceives American decline as inevitable and fears any change in the status quo (Kristol & Kagan, 1996). It grew out of a criticism of Kissinger's detente diplomacy and his deidologization of American foreign policy. Detente was a conservative strategy that "sacrificed domestic reforms for the sake of international stability" (Drolet, 2010, p. 93). It was a result of American decline in global affairs. Reagan was perceived to have successfully challenged this situation. He championed American exceptionalism, rejected the constraints on American foreign policy and restored morality. For neoconservatives, America was exceptional and it needs to remain like that. Its vision can and should be shared by all nations. This leads to promotion of democracy. An international order of values is good for everyone. Americans should know that their moral goals and national interests are always in harmony (Bennett, 2000; Schmidt & Williams, 2005).

They argued that it is a mistake to define national interest in narrowly materialistic terms. Foreign actions of the US are directly linked with its domestic social order. National interest should be about political principles. It is a healthy domestic social order and a strong and consistent foreign policy (Schmidt & Williams, 2005). They criticized the narrow definition of national interests as a negation of the ideological basis of the nation. More generally neoconservatives accused realists of underestimating the role of foreign policy in redefining national identity. Separating morals and foreign policy damages articulating a vision for

America. This also fosters pessimism and cynicism among the American population, which endangers American hegemony. Neoconservatives believe that moral and religious passions might be irrational, but they nevertheless play a critical role in international politics. Thus, it is false to define national interest in strictly material terms (Drolet, 2010).

Neoconservative doctrine asserts that the US is the sole superpower, and must preserve this position indefinitely. Neoconservatives perceive American hegemony as the only way of global peace and order. Any rival to American power must be prevented. They have little appetite for balance of power politics. A hegemonic American order, that is benevolent by its nature, is preferred (Kristol, 1996). They see balance of power politics as an obstacle before American interests (Schmidt & Williams, 2008). Drolet (2010) argues that neoconservative foreign policy has little resemblance with liberalism, as it instrumentalizes liberal practices for the end goal of an expansionist state.

In his highly influential article, prominent neoconservative Kristol argued that American hegemony is uncontested and vibrant (Kristol, 1996). America's allies are aware of this fact, they know that they would be better off as American allies, and they want American hegemony to continue. Dominance of the US is caused by Ronald Reagan's foreign policy of military supremacy and moral confidence. He writes that the US needs to spend more on the defense budget, to meet America's responsibilities and protect world peace. He argued that there needs to be moral clarity in foreign policy. Moral goals and national interests are always in harmony. American principles are universal, and they need to be actively promoted. Kristol claims that the US should not do business with every country, regardless of their regime.

Neoconservatives think that realism based on realpolitik, is unrealistic (Schmidt & Williams, 2005). Realism is unrealistic, because it fails to connect with the values of American people. People need a sense of mission, and realists can't give it with their cold rational style. It would lack the support of the public and the necessary resources. Neoconservatives criticize realists for having the wrong assumptions about the nature of states in the first place. Although they agree that foreign policy reflects the urges of man's nature, neoconservatives believe that the natural impulses of nations are motivated by history and culture. This ideological basis causes neoconservatives to reject the realist idea of assessing countries by their power; they should be assessed by their ideologies (Drolet, 2010), or domestic politics (Singh, 2009) instead. Befriending powerful regimes who have an interest in undermining American hegemony in the long run is self-defeating. Thus, realism cannot be sustainable

(Drolet, 2010)

According to neoconservatives, instead of contributing to the security of the US, realism causes the decay of it (Drolet, 2010). Many actions of realists abroad, erode political virtues at home. Dividing morality and foreign policy causes a similar trend domestically and at individual level. It is ineffective internationally and destructive domestically. A moral foreign policy would reinforce virtues and values at domestic level. Realists harm the concept of national interest in this sense (Schmidt & Williams, 2005).

Neoconservatives such as Kaplan and Kristol (2003), define Bush's foreign policy position as a distinct American internationalism that draws elements from both liberalism and Realism. This position is grounded on American exceptionalism, the belief that the US offers a model for the world. Kaplan and Kristol (2003, p. 131) argue that both liberalism and Realism have been constraining factors before the exercise of American power since the 1970s. They believe that their foreign policy ideals were practiced during the administrations of Ronald Reagan and George W. Bush. One of the main elements of the Bush Doctrine is regime change, with the ultimate goal of liberal democracy. Bush states in his Cincinnati speech that "Free societies do not intimidate through cruelty and conquest, and open societies do not threaten the world with mass murder" (Kaplan & Kristol, 2003, p. 186). Kaplan and Kristol name the criticisms toward this approach, mostly hovering around concerns for stability and security in the region, as well as rising anti-Americanism. Kaplan and Kristol (2003) accuse these criticisms of prioritizing stability over liberty. For them, it is hard to say that a fragmented Iraq would be worse than the persistence of Saddam.

After 9/11, and during the Iraq War, neoconservatives also gained support from some liberals. These liberal hawks were in favor of democracy promotion through military interventions. They believed that Islamism was a descendant of totalitarianism, and the West had to defend its political values. Both leftists and rightists wanted to remoralize American foreign policy. Liberal hawks were fighting Democrat doves and neoconservatives were fighting isolationists, realists being the common enemy (Gewen, 2007).

Mearsheimer defines both neoconservatives and liberal imperialists as imperialism advocates, as they believe that they have the right to interfere in the politics of other countries (Mearsheimer, 2011). Mearsheimer states that both approaches share the goal of performing social engineering in a foreign country. Neoconservatives and liberal imperialists think that it is sufficient to topple a regime to allow democracy to take hold. Mearsheimer

argues that imposing democracy abroad is not impossible, but the host country needs to have some preconditions. He lists them as high ethnic and religious homogeneity, a strong central state, a reasonable level of prosperity and some experience with democracy (Mearsheimer, 2011, p.29).

It is doubtful whether the Bush administration was sincerely committed to the democratization agenda in the Middle East. Strategic countries such as Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Pakistan are seemingly exempted from the agenda. Hendrickson and Tucker (2005) argue that the US has vital interests in these countries which they cannot endanger by pushing democratization. They write that the main lesson learned from the failure of Bush Doctrine is that one cannot make the delegitimization of a regime a declared objective, and then hope to demand cooperation from them on vital issues. Security arrangements need to be made with existing regimes (Hendrickson & Tucker, 2005).

CHAPTER 2

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Idealism

Idealism as a doctrine is optimistic in its outlook. It aims to transform international anarchy, by creating a more cosmopolitan and harmonious world order (Wilson, 2011). Idealism is often used as an umbrella term for numerous approaches in IR, such as cosmopolitanism, internationalism and liberalism. Idealists believe in the transformative strength of human reason, and its ability to transform the world into a better place. The superficial conflict of interests among nations can be removed by international bodies, such as the League of Nations and the UN. Idealists argued that the unchecked power of nation states, and the anarchy it causes, should be limited by these international institutions.

Policy makers in the post-cold war era claim to infuse their policies that go beyond, or redefine the national interests. A normative, idealist, or ethical type of foreign policy is on the rise (Chandler & Heins, 2006). Chandler and Heins offer a supply-side argument for this phenomenon. They argue that increasing sensitivities among the Western public, as well as the quest for meaning in the post-cold war era have caused the rise. The demise of the legitimacy of political regimes led to the understanding of conflicts taking place between the evil and the good. Siding with the victim in an apolitical way has become the new trend. A new understanding emerged, which blames the Western states for inaction against human sufferings all around the world. States should not only refrain from causing harm, but also have obligations to provide security on a transnational basis (Chandler & Heins, 2006, p. 10). They argue that the proliferation of post-national ethics can be attributed to the weakening of the national political community. Ethical foreign policy sidelines concerns about portraying the world as composed of blacks and whites, especially in regions where policy makers do not know much about.

Such developments have been considered controversial by IR scholars. The relationship

Kemalism opts for modesty and caution in the Middle East. It prefers rigid measures against Islamic influence and multiculturalism. It is increasingly resentful of the EU and the US. Taşpınar (2011) states that Kemalist foreign policy was once extremely Western oriented, which is debatable, yet this position has been reversed nevertheless. AKP's pro-Westernism surprised Kemalists, claiming that they were practicing taqiyya, an Islamic practice of hiding one's own intent. They accused AKP of using the EU membership process to weaken the Turkish army. The Turkish military was already skeptical about the EU due to their human rights agenda for the Kurdish cause, this was supplemented with their endorsement of the AKP. Hardliners within the secular-nationalist camp increasingly sought an alignment with Russia and China. Nowadays, a Kemalist foreign policy would emphasize full sovereignty and independence from the West.

According to them, Turkey's national interests have diverged significantly with American interests. They accuse the US of trying to reshape the map of the region, thus being a revisionist power. The 2003 Iraq War has divided the neo-traditionalists (Altunışık, 2009). Some, mainly the army, were in favor of intervening in Iraq alongside the US to clean the Northern regions from the PKK. Others were in favor of non-intervention as they were skeptical of the US aims. CHP offered a unilateral intervention. After 2003, threat perception emanating from Iraq increased. Neo-traditionalists favored a hard line against the KRG. CHP and MHP continued advocating for a military campaign in Northern Iraq.

3.1.2.Neo-ottomanism

This position is composed of alternative perspectives which entail liberal and constructivist, but also imperialist and expansionist ideas. This position criticizes neo-traditionalism as being unfit and flawed for the region. Alternative approaches criticized neo-traditionalists for being too isolationist and passive, advocating for a more proactive policy. Altunışık (2009) claims that neo-ottomanism is common to all alternative approaches. AKP sought to engage more in the Middle East by developing a rival identity for Turkey: a muslim democracy that is fundamentally part of the Islamic world, but in accordance with the West.

Özal was perhaps the first neo-Ottomanist. His liberal policy toward the Middle East aimed at increasing economic links and dependencies (Canan, 2009). Between his presidency and İsmail Cem's foreign ministry, Turkish approach toward the Middle East was highly security based as it was unilateral and confrontational. Cem adopted Özal's rhetoric, highlighting the cultural and historical ties between Turkey and Middle Eastern countries, aiming for a

reconciliation (Terzi, 2016).

This policy was continued under AKP, who aimed to further deepen Turkey's relationship with the region by developing economic ties and solving political problems. Turkey adopted a role vis a vis the Middle East that was similar to the EU's policies of fostering long-term stability in its region by promoting regional integration (Huber, 2015).

Politics of greatness always had a place in AKP's foreign policy. Dating as back as 1992, Abdullah Gül (1993) proposed a foreign policy of greatness that would both provide national unity within Turkey's boundaries, and a new conception that would embrace our kinfolk "from Bosnia all the way to China". He makes a distinction between inward looking nationalists and their position, who are conceptualized as neo-traditionalists in this thesis. Gül, in fact portrays their own vision as a realist one and accuses the secular nationalists of ignoring historical, religious and cultural realities (Mufti, 2014).

Erdoğan (1993) as well claims that the rigid unitarist outlook of the nationalists caused the decline of Turkey, and that the national unity would never be secured by a racist ideology that ignores different ethnicities in Turkey. Mufti (2014) argues that the higher end of Erdoğan's argument is the relative position of his proposed Islamic polity compared to the rest of the world. Erdoğan (1993) believed that Turkey has the power to sustain an imperial policy, and if this is what it takes to become a prestigious member of the international community, it is what should be pursued.

AKP's neo-Ottoman foreign policy has been based on Ahmet Davutoğlu's strategic depth doctrine (Taşpınar, 2011). Davutoğlu (2007) proposes that the most fundamental historical contradiction in Turkish foreign policy is the historical break between Turkey being the imperial center of its civilizational environment to its current structure of a nation state. Under the leadership of these nationalists, Turkey disengaged from its civilizational geography and only sought to protect its national borders. Yet, neo-Ottomanism always remained as an unclaimed, unofficial position of the AKP, as such remarks received complicated responses from neighboring countries. Yet, analysts continued to define AKP as neo-Ottomanist (Atmaca & Torun, 2022).

Neo-ottomanism was instrumentalized to support Muslims all around the world. Turkey was depicted as the leader and model of the Islamic world. Yet, this was neither Islamist, nor similar to Necmettin Erbakan's foreign policy. Erbakan aimed to forge an Islamic alliance

alternative to the West, whereas Davutoğlu's vision was to form an Islamic alliance that was complementary to the Western alliance. Taşpınar (2011) claims that AKP's neo-ottomanism was rather based on Özal's legacy. Instead of Islamizing Turkish foreign policy, this vision aimed to broaden the geostrategic horizon of Turkey. Jeong (2021) defines the goal of strategic depth as creating a pan-civilizational political geography.

Taşpınar (2012) argues that neo-ottomanism is not a form of Turkish imperialism, but rather a more activist foreign policy in the Middle East. However, it builds on Turkey's imperial legacy. Neo-ottomanism does not seek a revival of the Ottoman Empire, but rather coming to terms with Turkey's Ottoman heritage, favoring a more activist stance in foreign policy and a more moderate secularism at home. Ankara aims to expand its influence in its former territories through soft power.

This neo-ottoman mindset has various policy implications. Firstly due to the multinational imperial legacy of the Ottomans, it favors a more multicultural vision for Turkey, as opposed to the assimilationist nationalism of Kemalism. It is more tolerant toward Kurdish demands for cultural rights. It uses Islam as a way to build a shared identity with other peoples in the region (Taşpınar, 2011). The second characteristic is a sense of grandeur and self-confidence in foreign policy. It perceives Turkey as a regional superpower. Such a perception requires being in peace with multiple identities. AKP's deep engagement with the Middle East and the Arab Spring displayed a sharp contrast with the Kemalist policy of avoidance (Taş, 2022).

3.1.3.Pan-Islamism

Pan-Islamism is often defined as complementary to neo-Ottomanism, or there is significant overlap between each other in terms of their perceived meanings. Yet, neo-Ottomanism is not necessarily Islamist, as non-Islamist figures such as Cem and Özal were arguably neo-Ottomanists. Pan-Islamism also does not limit itself to the boundaries of the Ottoman Empire, and appeals to all Muslims around the world.

Özkan (2014b) defines Ottomanism, in the late Ottoman era, as an idea aimed at preserving the empire through two methods, by Westernization and integrating non-Muslim minorities by abolishing the dominant status of Muslims. Thus, according to its original meaning, Davutoğlu is not an Ottomanist, as he opposes both of these methods. He instead energizes the idea of Islamism that would preserve the privileged position of the Muslims. Yavuz

(2016) on the other hand, claims that the AKP formed its own version of Ottomanism, which is an Islamist, anti-Western, adventurist, and ideological one. He argues that neo-Ottomanism is about constructing a new national identity that is not nationalist. This new identity is geographically not bound to the current borders of Turkey. Thus, it is a multicultural project. Barchard (1985) on the other hand, defines neo-Ottomanism as consciousness of the imperial Ottoman past, predicting that this will be a strong option for the identity of Turkey in the future.

In the 1990s, Davutoğlu predicted that the secular regimes of Assad, Mubarak, Saddam Hussein and Gaddafi would not survive (Özkan, 2014b). He suggested that Ankara should wait for conditions to favor Islamist parties over Arab nationalists and act when the time is right. Davutoğlu assumed that the right time arrived with the Arab spring.

After consolidating power at home by 2011, AKP was able to "afford the luxury of its Islamist ideals, aspirations and dreams" (Başkan & Taşpınar, 2021, p.75) . Idealist and ideological foreign policy only became available realistically by then. The external environment in the Middle East also favored political Islamism by that time. The toppling of autocratic regimes seemed to allow Islamist parties to gain power in several countries. Due to the popular support and institutional preparedness they have, Islamism went hand in hand with democratization in these countries. AKP perceived that once Islamists take over in Egypt and Tunisia, they would look up to Turkey as a model. Başkan and Taşpınar (2021) argue that this policy was not merely based on ideals and ideology, but it had realpolitik connotations as well.

AKP's pan-Islamism had revolutionary tones too. AKP rebranded its foreign policy as the representative of the oppressed majority, similar to its domestic policy (Kirdiş, 2015). AKP situated itself not only as the leading party of Turkey, but also as the transnational vanguard party of the Islamic world. It replaced the defensive territorial geopolitics of old Turkey, with an assertive and cultural form of geopolitics. AKP aimed to portray itself as the representative of a community that goes beyond the national borders of Turkey.

In terms of their shared pan-Islamist ideals, many have pointed to ideological affinities between AKP and Ikhwan, some even claiming AKP to be its Turkey branch (T24, 2014). Erbakan's National Outlook movement had an even closer affinity. AKP maintained these ties through Hamas and the Freedom and Justice party of Egypt. Ikhwan did not welcome AKP's secularism at first. The rapprochement started with the Arab Spring, as Ikhwan

portrayed AKP's Turkey as a model (Taş, 2022).

Özkan (2014b) argues that Turkish foreign policy has been unsuccessful during the Arab spring, as the idea of pan-Islamism was ill-suited to the realities of the present Middle East. They predicted Islamist ideas to prevail over both Arab nationalism and socialism. Davutoğlu aimed to instrumentalize Islamism as an expansionist ideology, whereas it was originally intended to be a defensive one against Western imperialism.

3.1.4.Defensive and Offensive Geopolitics

Yeşiltaş (2013) argues that there are two geopolitical visions of TFP, protectionism and exceptionalism. The former helped establish defensive foreign policy practices, while the latter ended up bolstering a discourse shaped by Turkey's territorial and civilizational anxiety. The combination of these two led to a defensive geopolitical culture. Yeşiltaş (2013) states that there is a shift in the borders of geopolitical discourse, from nationally and territorially defined locations to wider cultural regions, such as the Islamic world. This led to the decline of the defensive geopolitical culture.

Defensive geopolitics has been built as part of the realpolitik tradition in TFP. The neutrality of this approach vis a vis regional affairs came as a result of perceived threats from the outside. The most important feature of this culture is the emphasis on nation-state. This foreign policy discourse sought to reproduce the Westphalian polity on the basis of a secular and national order.

The abandonment of defensive geopolitics dates back to the end of the Cold War. Özal shaped a new economics based liberal discourse, which aimed to overcome the anxieties of defensive geopolitics. Özal perceived neo-Ottomanism as an idea that can enable Turkey to expand its influence in former Ottoman territories (Atmaca & Torun, 2022). Ismail Cem also abandoned defensive geopolitical discourse, emphasizing the importance of cultural and historical legacy (Yeşiltaş, 2013). Cem's vision was adopted by the AKP to assert a more assertive and transnational discourse.

The abandonment of metaphors like "bridge country" or "frontier country" was a central feature of transition from defensive geopolitical discourse. The, what can be called, offensive geopolitical discourse adopted a civilizational overview and emphasized Turkey's need to reconcile with its civilizational basin to become a central country in its region.

Post-2002 framing of foreign policy is civilizational geopolitics. Culture, religion and civilization are the main determinants of world politics. AKP viewed its EU accession prospect in the framework of alliance of civilizations. Turkey is portrayed as a central country regarding representativeness of the Islamic world, rather than being a bridge or a frontier country. AKP had been in favor of inter-civilizational interactions rather than the Western-led unipolar cultural order, and criticized the Western centered global order (Yeşiltaş, 2013).They rather put the emphasis on evolution to a multipolar order. They rejected the Huntingtonian concept of inevitable civilizational conflict and adopted normative values of Islam as a transformative power in international politics. They opted for transformation of the meaning of nation-state from a territorial one to a transnational meaning, and the revitalization of the ummah (Yeşiltaş, 2013).

3.2.AKP's Approach to the Middle East

The Middle East always had a central point in the foreign policy of the AKP. Even when the AKP was preoccupied with the prospects of becoming an EU member in its early years, they paid special attention toward the region. Increasing trade volume, encouraging societal exchange and desecuritizing bilateral relations were the prior goals of the AKP in the Middle East.

With their rise to power in 2002, the AKP emphasized the novelties in its foreign policy and tried to connect them to their conservative democrat domestic agenda (Altunışık & Martin, 2023). However, their approach to the EU accession process and to the Middle East was not really different from its predecessor. Turkey was already a candidate member to the EU since the Helsinki Summit in 1999. Turkey's bilateral relations with its Middle Eastern neighbors were also on a developing trend, especially with Syria after the Adana Agreement in 1998, where Syrian officials promised to expel the PKK from their country.

The AKP eventually started to diverge with previous governments by placing more emphasis on the Middle East. This led to debates on an axis shift in Turkish foreign policy, in which analysts started to discuss whether Turkey was turning away from the West and toward the Middle East. There was a general shift to the region, symbolized in Davutoğlu's "zero problems with the neighbors" strategy. Altunışık and Martin (2023) argue that Turkey decided to change its direction to the Middle East after it was disappointed with the progress in its EU membership process. The Middle East was seen as a source of influence and trade by the Turkish leadership.

According to Dal (2012), predecessors of the AKP were acting ideologically, as they were ignoring Turkey's Eastern/Islamic identity. AKP aimed to redefine Turkish national identity by using a new civilizational discourse.

Davutoğlu's civilizational self-perception concept plays a key role here. According to Davutoğlu (1997), Turkey failed to create a Western based civilizational self perception for itself. The moralistic propositions of the AKP leaders eventually caused Turkish foreign policy to focus on the Middle East, and become the regional hegemon of the region. AKP leaders wanted to end Turkey's inaction in the region, and wanted to act more independently, independent from the tutelage of its Western allies.

This appeal was received positively in the region. Turkey's refusal of the US forces during the Iraq War, and the Davos incident, increased AKP's popularity among the Islamic world (Atmaca & Torun, 2022). Public polls in various Arab countries documented the increasing attractiveness of Turkey.

The US withdrawal from the Middle East encouraged many regional powers to maximize their strategic autonomy. Such developments transformed Turkey's grand strategy from a pro-status quo calculated pacifism to regional activism. Turkey engaged more in the region, portraying itself as a model. In the post-unipolar system it pursued a maximalist and regional hegemony seeking behavior (Taş, 2022).

With the ascent of Davutoğlu in Turkish foreign policy, Turkey's approach towards its neighbors was determined as "zero problems with neighbors". This policy aimed to desecuritize Turkey's relations with its neighbors and to increase civilian ties between the countries. Turkish strategy in the Middle East was based on cooperation with the existing regimes. This entailed creating economic interdependencies and political ties based on Islamic identity, which Bilgin and Bilgiç (2011) calls "civilizational geopolitics".

Öniş (2012) argues that AKP's policy was not based on democracy promotion, and that they acted within a Westphalian logic of respecting national sovereignty. He claims that AKP was perhaps expecting a gradual easing of authoritarian regimes through trade and economic interdependence. Turkish policy makers expected authoritarian Arab regimes to persist in the foreseeable future. Whereas Huber (2015) claims that democracy promoting until the Arab Spring remained much more cautious and identitive, as Turkey relied on communicative means to convince its partners to make democratic reforms. Beginning with the Arab Spring,

Turkey's democracy promotion took a more confrontational turn, hurting its "zero problems with neighbors" policy.

The zero problems policy started to be criticized, especially with the beginning of the Arab spring. Its critics claimed that zero problems with the neighbors policy turned into zero problems with dictators policy (Akyol, 2011a), or into zero problems with regimes policy (Barkey, 2012). This contradicted AKP's self-identification as a democratic party. The contradiction intensified with the Arab Spring and Ankara was left in a difficult position, where they can be accused of cynicism for promoting democracy while appeasing dictators. Turkey eventually weighed behind the Arab spring and liberal Islam (Akyol, 2011a). Turkey reconsidered the strategic depth doctrine with the Arab spring, especially the "zero problems with neighbors" part of it. Due to favorable conditions, they believed that they could pursue a more ambitious foreign policy. Ankara aimed to become the leader of the Arab democratization wave, yet, overestimating its capabilities in doing so (D'Alema, 2017).

Zero problems with the neighbors implied a tolerance of their regime, and a willingness to cooperate regardless of the nature of that regime. Turkey eventually ditched its commitment to the zero problems policy, as well as its aim of becoming a neutral mediator who talks to everyone in the region. While the zero problems with neighbors principle was dissipated in Syria, Turkey's claims of being a neutral mediator was discredited in Egypt, as Turkey's partisan support for the Muslim Brotherhood was too obvious. This became an evidence for claims that Turkey was following a sectarian foreign policy (Ayata, 2015).

Davutoğlu's zero problems with the neighbors can be interpreted as a sign of a reversal of the normative agenda, but despite such criticisms, Futak-Campbell and Nolting (2022) argue that it can be understood as a normative practice as it challenged Western norms on inter-state relations. According to them, the fundamental goal of this policy was to blur the boundaries between countries and increase regional economic interdependence.

Aras (2014) argued that Davutoğlu's zero problems with the neighbors policy stagnated with the Arab spring, and that Turkey started acting over confident during that phase. He believes that Turkey's proactive stance during the Arab spring jeopardized its achievements in the previous zero problems with the neighbors policy.

Mufti (2014) states that a decisive shift from realpolitik to liberal integrationism took place in Turkish foreign policy between 2008 and 2011. After 2011, AKP's foreign and domestic

politics started to converge. Davutoğlu states that Turkey's resources empower them to "determine the fate of the future, to be the vanguard of a new idea, a new regional order" and that his government intends to direct the transformation wave in the Middle East (Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2012). In 2013 Davutoğlu made a call to reject nationalist ideologies that divide Muslims and instead proposed a new regional order that restores the older conception of millet, that identifies all Muslims regardless of their nationalities. He argues that working together would erase "artificially drawn maps" (Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2013).

3.2.3.TFP Toward the Arab Spring

The Arab spring caused a major change in Turkish foreign policy, as Turkey used the events to assert itself as a regional leader. Ankara abandoned its previous role of communicating with every actor and being a mediator between them, and opted for leading the transformation of the Arab world (Altunışık & Martin, 2023). Turkey actively supported Muslim Brotherhood in Syria, Egypt and Tunisia, in addition to some other Islamist groups.

Since the beginning of the Arab Spring, Turkey portrayed itself as a model democracy and aspired to play a leading role. Despite suffering considerable economic losses due to uprisings, Turkey viewed the Arab Spring as a correction toward more accountable and democratic governance. AKP was pleased that moderate Islamist and Muslim Brotherhood tied organizations were gaining strength (Taşpınar, 2012). Ankara calculated that the autocracies in the region would collapse as a result of the Arab Spring, and aimed to prey on the possible takeover of Ikhwan offshoot as a result of the democratization wave. Turkey and Qatar backed Ikhwan, whereas Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Egypt and Bahrain banned it. This turned into a regional ideological battle, framed as "moderates vs Islamists" by the Gulf states, and "competitive democracy vs authoritarian monarchy" by Ankara (Taş, 2022).

Turkey aimed for a new Middle East with Ikhwan-led and Turkey-allied Sunni governments. Turkey had little to fear about Ikhwan uprisings, as it did not have vested economic interests in Egypt and Tunisia, unlike the Arab Quartet. Whereas in Libya, where Turkey had severe economic interests, AKP was more cautious against Gaddafi. Syria was similar to Libya for Turkey. Turkey only gave its full support to Islamists after its appeals for reform proved to be unsuccessful. One element was common in all cases, Turkey calling the regimes to implement the popularly demanded reforms (Başkan & Taşpınar, 2021).

Öniş (2012) argues that Turkish foreign policy toward the Arab world since 2012 followed four stages. In the awakening of uprisings, Turkey cautiously welcomed democratic protests, without explicitly backing them. Turkey was reluctant to push for regime change and criticized NATO for doing so. In the second phase, Turkey reluctantly joins multilateral attempts at supporting regime change, with the fear of losing the support of Arab reformers. In the third phase, after the 2011 elections in Turkey, Turkish leaders engaged in unilateralist activism toward the Arab world. The Syrian leadership was criticized more openly. In the fourth phase, Turkey returns to a more cautious approach, due to economic costs and political uncertainty in Syria. Turkey also returns to a more multilateralist stance, joining EU sanctions toward Syria.

Supporting authoritarian regimes that suppressed domestic opposition created a dilemma between Turkish self interests and ethics even before the Arab upheavals. The Arab spring has intensified these tensions between normative and realpolitik dimensions of Turkish foreign policy, and forced Turkish policy makers to make a choice between encouraging existing regimes for reform, or supporting opposition movements. Turkey had serious economic interests nested in Syria and Libya, for instance, and would get hurt if political instability prevailed in these countries. Öniş (2012) makes a distinction between an ethical or norm based policy, which needs to follow a single minded support for democratization, and an interest-based policy which promotes a gradual change without jeopardizing initial interests. Later, Öniş (2014) asserts that continuing to side with the regimes would harm Turkey's ambitions of becoming a regional leader and constituting a model for the peoples of the region. There was a tension between Davutoğlu's grand vision which oversaw Turkey playing a leading role in the region, carrying neo-Ottoman overtones, and a more cautious and pragmatic approach that admits Turkey's shortcomings for becoming a regional hegemon (Öniş, 2014). Turkish foreign policy lacked coherence during the upheavals, mainly due to this dilemma.

Erdoğan's statement of "Syria is Turkey's internal issue" reflects the change of mood among Turkish policy makers, abandoning the Westphalian understanding of the previous phase. Turkey's stance toward Syria was driven both by ethical considerations and realpolitik (Öniş, 2014).

Tocci (2011) argues that Turkey promoted democracy in cases where ideals and interests did not clash. In cases where they clashed, she argues that Turkey refrained from idealistic foreign policy. After a while, Turkey's primary focus has shifted from zero problems with

neighbors to finding a balance between security and democracy. Turkish policy makers prioritized their normative goals initially, but with the growing costs of doing so, they were forced to shift their attention to the growing security risks. Turkey miscalculated both the resilience of the Baathist establishment, its leverage on Assad and the reluctance of the international community to intervene in Syria.

Bağcı and Açıkalın (2015) formulate this dilemma as the interest-morality dilemma, arguing that it put Turkey in a difficult position. They claim that Turkey jeopardized its national interests for its moral foreign policy. Specifically in Syria, Turkey had considerable economic interests due to a decade long political normalization and economic integration. Öniş (2014) also claims that Turkey's over-interventionist stance vis a vis Syria is open to criticism as it brought little material benefits while damaging Turkey's neutral image. Turkey's intervention led to the undermining of both its interests and image.

After the initial phase when Turkey was too optimistic about a rapid and easy regime change in Syria, its priority shifted to restoring stability and security in Syria, argues Ayata (2015). Turkey feared that protests in Syria might have had a spillover effect in Turkey, as well as strengthening the PKK. Such fears were justified. After failing to curb Turkish support for the opposition despite passing some reforms, Assad decided to use the Kurdish conflict against Turkey. Assad exempted Kurdish opposition from military oppositions and allowed them to form enclaves near the Turkish border. Ayata (2015) claims that this caused Turkey to shift its attention from democratization to security.

3.2.4.How AKP Perceives the Issue

Turkish foreign policy had been under a transformation since the end of the Cold War. Various political groups advocated for the abandonment of the traditional security oriented Kemalist foreign policy, and opted for a more open and liberal one. Another aspect of this new policy would be increasing engagement with countries that Turkey has cultural proximity. Kemalist foreign policy was criticized for neglecting Turkey's cultural influence zone, which primarily refers to the core regions of the Ottoman Empire. Often known as neo-Ottomanism, this approach had supporters ranging from the Islamic right to the liberal left.

AKP inherited and adopted the neo-Ottoman transformation. AKP perceived Balkans, Middle East and Caucasia as the natural hinterlands of Turkey, and claimed that Turkey

cannot remain indifferent to these regions, as it is at the center of it (Erdoğan, 2010).

Neo-Ottomanism reached its maturity with the strategic depth doctrine of Ahmet Davutoğlu. Davutoğlu, who can be referred as the primary theorist of the AKP's foreign policy, was in favor of expanding Turkey's power and influence using its historical heritage (Murinson, 2006). AKP leaders believed that Turkey is suitable for taking a leading role in the Middle East, and that the local population is willing to accept this role. Without debating its suitability, Davutoğlu (2010b) argues that Turkey has responsibilities towards peoples that were previous subjects of the Ottoman Empire. As such, the AKP's civilizational discourse portrays Turkey as the vanguard of its region and civilization (Duran, 2013). Kalın (2009) claims that Turkey emerges as a new center of gravity in the Middle East, where Arabs look up to. Davutoğlu (2010b) uses the same words; these peoples still look up to Turkey for the resolution of their problems. In another piece, Kalın, who is an advisor of Erdoğan, writes that Turkey represents the pivotal point of the Ottoman heritage that brings people together from the Middle East, Balkans, Caucasia and Central Asia (Kalın, 2011). Yet, he warns, this should not be perceived as an imperial ambition. This is rather a process in which people can reconcile with their historical heritage.

AKP leaders have consistently stated that nation-states in the Middle East are artificially imposed creatures by the West, or that they should demolish the artificial walls between Turkey and the Middle East. They quote the hadith by Prophet Muhammad "he is not a believer whose stomach is
full while his neighbor is hungry" (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, 2015), giving an ethical aspect to their foreign policy revisionism. Davutoğlu criticized the "artificial" boundaries that divided the peoples of the Middle East, and which were erected by the imperialist powers without considering local conditions (Murinson, 2006). Erdoğan (2010) too calls these borders and walls artificial, stating that Turkey is working to remove them between peoples in the Middle East.

These are the critical elements of Davutoğlu's geopolitics, although Erşen (2014) argues that his vision is primarily a traditional one. He argues that the main reason Davutoğlu criticizes the present borders is because they represent a detachment of the region from Turkey, rather than being against artificial borders in principle. Erşen (2014) defines three main themes in Davutoğlu's geopolitics. First, his belief that the current borders prevent further economic and political integration in the region. Davutoğlu believes that the artificial character of borders is the main reason for many conflicts, and he proposes redrawing borders for a

sustainable peace. He argues that political, economic and social integration is the best way to overcome the borders. Second is the "earthquake" metaphor that refers to transformations taking place in the region. According to Davutoğlu, the most recent earthquake that took place was the financial crisis of 2008 and the Arab spring. He welcomes the Arab spring and defines it as a normalization of Arab societies, which would also end Turkey's detachment from the region (Davutoğlu, 2013). Third is Turkey's leader position. Davutoğlu believes that Turkey has a historical responsibility to unite and protect its historical compatriots in the Middle East. Davutoğlu even views this compatriotship as a stronger bond than national citizenship (Erşen, 2014, p. 96) and claims that Turkey's leadership role is based on the perceptions of Middle Eastern communities (Güney & Mandacı, 2013).

More generally, Davutoğlu was critical of the nation-state structures. Murinson (2006, p. 949) argues that "Davutoğlu elevates the unity of Muslim global umma to the status of ideal geopolitical structure", while undermining the role of nation states. Kalın (2009) writes that Arabs were divided into 22 nation-states each of which questions the legitimacy of the others. Arab nation-states did not meet the expectations and failed to deliver the desired results. Now, post-nationalist thinkers in the Arab world are aiming to get past nation states (Kalın, 2009). In 2008, he wrote;

> "The future of the nation-state depends on its ability to adjust itself to the new realities of a very complex and sophisticated process of simultaneous globalization and regionalization. Not surprisingly, as Turkey eyes a post-nation-state strategic outlook, it comes back to its past experiences, dreams and aspiration in its greater hinterland. Turkey's post-modernity seems to be embedded in its Ottoman past" (Kalın, 2008).

Criticism of the nation-states occasionally turns into a more total criticism of the Westphalian system. Davutoğlu (2013c) refers to the Westphalian system as a system that prioritizes interests over values. He criticizes this system for giving birth to slavery, exploitation and world wars. He calls the dominant view of the Westphalian system an "absolute realism". Mufti (2014) claims that AKP's fight against authoritarian secular nationalism cannot be thought independently from its plan of a post-national Middle Eastern regional order.

Kalın considers the classical realist definition of national interest as too narrow, and argues that a cautious idealism permeates both domestic and international politics (Kalın, 2012). He argues that a nation's national interest is shaped by their priorities and how that nation defines its identity. He states that even classical definitions of national interest began to

include value-based elements, making a resemblance to neoconservative definitions of national interest. He defines three new principles in TFP; political and economic justice, balance between security and freedom, and trade and economic development as means to solidify bilateral relations. The balance between security and freedom is a central concept, which the AKP uses to claim a middle ground between realpolitik and idealism. This conception comes in different forms, such as a balance between political realities and ethical values (Kalın, 2012), or as acting with a sense of realpolitik as well as an idealpolitik (Erdoğan, 2009).

Davutoğlu (2010) names the first operational principle of Turkish foreign policy as finding a balance between security and democracy. He argues that "The legitimacy of any political regime comes from its ability to provide security and freedom together to its citizens; this security should not be at the expense of freedoms and human rights in the country" (Davutoğlu, 2010). Kalın (2012) argues that balancing security and liberties is based on a values-based approach. He claims that while doing so, Turkey adopted a noninterventionist approach toward its neighbors.

He asserts that this policy of promoting democracy and advocating for civil rights became especially relevant during the Arab Spring. Kalın (2012) points out that one of the main instruments of TFP is supporting democratic processes. Turkey has respected the results of democratic elections in the region, even that of Hamas, which is considered as a terrorist organization by the EU and the US. Kalın basically agrees that Turkey has normative goals like democracy promotion and the protection of human rights, but such normative goals are not used to infringe on sovereignty of other nations and that Turkey complies with the principle of nonintervention. Davutoğlu goes one step further, stating that there is a legitimacy gap between the governors and the governed in the Middle East, which needs to be urgently eliminated (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2012).

With regards to the Arab Spring, Davutoğlu (2013a) expresses that Turkey decided to be on the side of democratic change in the Middle East, and stood against countries that suppressed their citizens' demand for democratic change. Later, he claims that the Cold War conditions did not end in the Middle East, and those who question Turkey's stance against autocratic regimes in the region are the ones who want to keep the Cold War conditions. Davutoğlu (2013a) argues that if you take a position that is compatible with the flow of history, your position will not disappoint you, a theme that he frequently uses. He argues that the flow of history is on the side of masses that demand a democratic change. Democratic change in the

Middle East has been delayed by major powers who favored the status quo. What is happening with the Arab spring is history turning back to its natural course.

Davutoğlu (2013a) declares that Turkey aimed to oversee a peaceful change of power in the region. But when autocrats forced Turkey to make a choice between themselves and their peoples, Turkey chose the peoples, because leaders are temporary whereas peoples are eternal. He agrees that they took the risk when siding with the revolutions, and states that politics is the art of taking risks at the right time. This way, Turkey was able to run in front of history, rather than running behind it, another theme he likes to use as a demonstration of Turkey's active foreign policy. In another piece, he (2013b) states that there are three options vis a vis the flow of history, you either defend the status quo, or be passive thinking that you lack the power to affect the course of changes, or you become an active player. Davutoğlu claims that Turkey followed the third path in the last decade. Or, for a policy paper a year before, he writes that Turkey refuses to be reactive and aspires to be an active power (Davutoğlu, 2012). He claims that Turkey aimed to be on the right side of history when the protests first broke out, and defends this position as it was a "risky but courageous decision". He has a strong orientation about being an active country that takes risks and leads events.

While aiming to transform the region, Davutoğlu (2012) says that they opposed foreign interventions. They claim that the region's future must be determined by its own peoples. He later states that while Turkey rejected international interventions on paper, it declared its willingness to work with the international community against oppression by autocratic leaders. Which translates into supporting foreign interventions, as Turkey actually did support and actively call for Western intervention into Syria (Peerzade, 2015). Turkey was willing to see a NATO intervention in Syria to topple Assad, just like the one in Libya, but the US was not eager to do so. American priorities in Syria started to differ with Turkey's starting with the emergence of ISIS, which eventually led to a major divergence and deterioration of bilateral relations. Turkey insisted that the priority should remain as toppling Assad, whereas for the US, it quickly turned into fighting ISIS.

Final aspect of the AKP's foreign policy would be its humanitarian diplomacy. Davutoğlu (2013b) writes that one of the key principles of Turkish foreign policy is humanitarian diplomacy. He states that humanitarian diplomacy emerges from Turkey's determination to become an active player. It refers to something more than humanitarian aid, it appeals to human conscience. Davutoğlu (2013b) criticizes organizations that were supposed to represent idealism, such as the League of Nations and the UN, for failing to appeal to the

conscience of humanity. Alternatively, he offers a human oriented diplomacy, which moves beyond the idealist-realist dichotomy. This would be based on a balance between power and conscience, similar to the democracy and security balance.

AKP leaders use humanitarian aid to expand the geographic scope of their foreign policy. They often connect their faith to the faith of the whole ummah, implying that they are the protectors of the ummah (Çelik & İşeri, 2016). Davutoğlu even claimed that Turkey "is the last castle of resistance" against Western imperialism, portraying themselves as the savior of the oppressed (Anadolu Ajansı, 2016).

According to Davutoğlu (2013b), Turkey's humanitarian diplomacy has multiple dimensions. The first one concerns the Turkish citizens. The second one is Turkey's attitude towards peoples in crisis zones. Davutoğlu once again states that Turkey does not consider the artificial boundaries drawn between them and neighbors when extending its humanitarian diplomacy. Turkey respects the official borders, but feels obligated to extend a hand for humanitarian assistance. He writes that Turkey does not make a distinction between its own people and the people that they share a common history with in the conduct of humanitarian diplomacy, upholding a cosmopolitan position.

Çelik and İşeri (2016) show that Islamically oriented HNGOs support Turkey's foreign policy activism, and the politics of grandeur, due to the perceived role of Turks as the protector of Islam and ummah. They argue that Turkey's Islamically oriented foreign policy is not only ideationally motivated, there are rational material considerations as well. Turkey uses the Islamic discourse to increase its leverage among Islamic populations and consequently elevate Turkey in the international hierarchy. AKP governments enabled and encouraged HNGO activities in foreign countries to boost Turkey's soft power. HNGO leaders highlight the historical responsibility of Turks and Turkey as the successor of the Ottoman Empire, protecting and leading the ummah. This perception is shared by the AKP leaders (Çelik & İşeri, 2016).

3.2.5.Democracy Promotion

Turkey's advocacy of democracy in the Middle East dates back to the early years of the AKP. Erdoğan's speech at the fifth Jeddah Economic Forum in Saudi Arabia in January 2004 where he criticized the segregation of women, and his speech at Harvard University in January 2004 where he criticized the idea of the Muslim world being exceptional, stating

that democratic values are universal. The Turkish MFA also contributed closely with the US on developing new democratization projects regarding the Middle East. Turkey was a close partner in George Bush's Broader Middle East and North Africa initiative (Kirişçi, 2010).

Turkey officially did not have a democracy promotion policy, as reflected by former president Süleyman Demirel's remark; "Turkey should not intervene" in the internal problems of neighboring countries and instead "lead them, advise them when help is needed" (Kirişçi, 2010). This ironically eased the fears of Turkish interference in their domestic affairs among Middle Eastern countries. Turkish democracy being a work in progress offered an engagement to Arab regimes that is thought to be less hierarchical than the ones offered by Western countries. This also caused Turkish democracy promotion to not be seen as a wider agenda of regime change. Kirişçi (2010) argues that neither the Turkish government nor NGOs perceive democratization as their main objectives but rather a side effect of their policies. This can be visible in the careful discourse used against countries like Azerbaijan and Central Asian republics. The Turkish government also tried to maintain good relations with autocratic regimes like Iran, Sudan and Azerbaijan, while trying to limit criticisms against them as well. Some noted the double standards of the AKP government (Kirişçi, 2010).

Due to its own Sevres syndrome, Turkey does not want to be seen as interfering in another country's domestic affairs, and tries to encourage reforms through indirect ways and highlighting the local ownership of these reforms. Kirişçi (2010) states that Turkey does not have a democracy industry and uses a much more sincere and direct language when initiating reforms, causing Turkey to have higher legitimacy and social capital in target countries.

AKP promoted democracy in Middle Eastern countries precisely for the reason the US has abandoned it for. AKP understood that democracy would favor Islamist parties in the region, which would form better relations with Turkey. As early as 1994, Davutoğlu (1994) claimed that democratic systems in the Muslim world might create Islamic regimes that could contradict the West. To prevent democratization, Western countries have been in cooperation with dictators in Muslim countries.

AKP leaders liked to form parallels between the pre-AKP Turkey and the secular Arab dictatorships. Both cases were similar in the sense that an alienated secular elite ruled over these societies at the expense of the silent conservative Muslim majority. Muslims were persecuted by the elite, who were nothing but puppets of the West. AKP believed that

minimizing the obstacles before the popular will in these countries would always elevate pious Muslims to the government. Because the secular elite, and their supporters, were just a minority.

Since this is precisely what happened in Turkey, AKP leaders believed that this formula would work in other Muslim societies as well. They believed that the Arab spring highlighted Turkey's democratization in the Middle East and that Turkey's democratic system was seen as an inspiration in the region (Kalın, 2011). Turkey's democracy was utilized as a soft power tool which would appeal to the streets of Arab countries.

Democracy promotion is not institutionalized and set as an explicit goal in Turkish foreign policy (Huber, 2015). TIKA's policy of assistance with administrative and civil infrastructure resembles an implicit form of democracy assistance. The Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs also states that disseminating democracy and human rights is one of the principles of Turkish foreign policy.

Since the early 2000s, Turkey has used democracy assistance, identitive democracy promotion and political conditionalities as means to democracy promotion. Turkish leaders favor portraying Turkey as a model or inspiration country to its partners. The 2002-2006 period is especially rich in terms of speeches that highlight this point. Turkish leaders often used multilateral meetings to identitive democracy promotion, as they attempted to convince partners for political reform. AKP governments have abandoned this discourse in the 2007-2011 period (Alessandri & Altunışık, 2013, p.5).

Turkey did not use democratic conditionalities until the Arab Spring, raising the question of whether Turkey actually was a democracy promoter. After the Arab Spring, Turkey started favoring democratic frontrunners in its aid disbursement. Countries that received the largest sums of aid from Turkey became Syria, Egypt and Tunisia. After the coup in Egypt, Turkey downgraded its diplomatic relations with Cairo. Turkey also suspended all agreements with Syria, after its attempts to convince Assad to carry out democratic reforms had failed. Turkey's negative conditionalities toward these countries were falsely accused of sectarianism, according to Huber (2015, p.159), yet she argues that Turkey's stance was a principled one that aimed democratization and political change.

Neo-Ottomanism emerged as an imperial doctrine that highlights Turkey's role to lead the Islamic world. AKP's attempt to portray Turkey as a model country for the Muslim world

implied that the latter was backward and inferior to Turkey. This was similar to the Kemalist paradigm, but instead of turning away from the Muslim world, AKP aimed to transform it. With the increasing popularity of Turkey in Spring countries, especially among the supporter base of Muslim Brotherhood parties, Turkey's democratic role identity was reactivated. Turkey not only promoted itself as a democratic model, but also as the leader of a regional democratic wave (Huber, 2015).

But Turkey's attempts toward democracy promotion also provoked suspicion and disbelief, as Turkey itself was an electoral democracy at best (Kirişçi, 2010). Kirişçi argues that despite its lack of experience in democracy promotion and deficiencies of its own democracy, Turkey is involved in a modest degree of democracy diffusion.

CHAPTER 4

4. THE CASE OF SYRIA

Syria was the poster child of Turkey's zero problems with the neighbors policy. Once a bitter foe that Turkey almost fought in the late 1990s over Öcalan's residency in Damascus, Syria became a close partner of Turkey after the Adana Accords, and especially with the rise of the AKP. Starting in 2002, the AKP government started a diplomatic offensive toward Syria. In 2003, the two countries signed a number of agreements regarding visas, trade and tourism as part of the Sixth Turkish-Syrian Protocol. In 2004, Bashar Assad became the first Syrian president to visit Turkey in 57 years. Syria acknowledged Turkey's territorial integrity and two countries agreed on working together against shared threats, such as the PKK. At a time when Syria was under heavy American and European pressure to remove its troops from Lebanon, Turkish president Sezer visited Damascus, at the cost of attracting anger from the US. After solving the urgent security disagreements, Turkish-Syrian bilateral relations developed rapidly. Trade levels increased and visa free travel between two countries was enacted. Following reciprocal visits by the leaders of the two countries, a "High Level Strategic Cooperation Council" was founded (Arsu, 2009). Turkey and Syria suddenly became best friends (Philipps, 2018).

After the eruption of uprisings in Syria, Turkey first tried to convince Assad to carry out reforms to cool down the protests. Turkish leaders believed that they had the power to convince the Syrian leadership to carry out reforms. They believed that Bashar Assad had liberal tendencies unlike his father, so that he could be persuaded to liberalize his country (D'Alema, 2017). Turkey worked together with the US and the EU to pressure the Syrian government for reforms. Öniş (2012) argues that initial expectation vis a vis Turkey was to act as a mediator in Syria, and encourage the regime for gradual reforms. Yet, the EU and the US pushed Turkey to have a more aggressive and activist stance.

Starting from July 2011, the US changed its position, stating that Assad cannot stay in power anymore. Turkey joined this position in August, issuing an ultimatum to the Syrian

government and started openly targeting the regime in Syria. Turkey froze its diplomatic relations with Syria and determined its main aim as toppling Bashar Assad. Both Erdoğan and Davutoğlu called Assad an outlaw and called him to step down, announcing that Turkey will not settle for anything less. Ankara decided to portray the Syrian government as a blood thirsty (Milliyet, 2011) oppressive regime that deprives its citizens of democracy and basic human rights. Erdoğan stated that they see the struggle of Syrian people as very important, and that they consider that they have a historical and ethical responsibility to support the Syrian opposition against the Assad regime (Milliyet, 2012a).

Turkey adopted a more risk acceptant strategy by allowing the Syrian opposition to organize inside Turkey, and leading the foundation of Syrian National Council. Turkey started to host Syrian opposition meetings and became the key backer of the revolution.

Ankara encouraged the international community to isolate Syria and impose stricter sanctions. Turkey aimed to assemble a large coalition against the Syrian regime named Friends of Syria, that questions the legitimacy and sovereignty of the Syrian government. In these meetings, Davutoğlu stated that Turkey recognizes the opposition as the legitimate government of Syria. Eventually, Turkey convinced the other members of the Friends of Syria to recognize the Syrian National Council as the legitimate government of Syria, and to give arms to them (Çakmak, 2015).

In the aftermath of Gouta, where the regime used chemical weapons in 2013, Turkey aimed to convince the US and the EU for a more muscular humanitarian policy, although with little success. Turkey demanded a Kosovo-like intervention in Syria (Hurriyet Daily News, 2013), rejecting the diplomatic option. Turkey appealed for a humanitarian corridor, arming the rebels, and a no-fly zone. Turkey never considered acting alone in Syria, it always aimed to attract the support of its Western allies. Ankara immediately backed Obama's calls for a strike, issuing an official statement that declares that a chemical attack cannot go unanswered (Tocci, 2014). However, none of the European countries as well as the US were eager to pursue a military intervention in Syria. In the Geneva II Conference, Davutoğlu insisted that Assad and his regime have lost their legitimacy by committing crimes against humanity, and therefore they could not stay in power (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2014). Turkey consistently aimed to internationalize the issue by stating that the protection of Syrian people is a responsibility of the international community. Turkish officials argued that the inaction of the UN encourages the Syrian regime to commit more atrocities, and that collective action is absolutely necessary. Such hopes of foreign enforced regime change

were shattered when the US adopted the Russian proposal on chemical weapons deal (Ayata, 2015). This caused Turkey to intensify its support for the Muslim Brotherhood in Syria, and to be accused of following a sectarian foreign policy.

After the emergence of ISIS, the table has changed considerably in Syria. Turkey continued to prioritize ousting Assad for a while, while the West prioritized combating ISIS. This led to a major divergence between the two sides. Ankara continued to support the Syrian National Council and the Syrian National Army, who gradually lost ground to regime forces, who were backed by Russian, Iranian and Hezbollah forces. The US and the EU, on the other hand, got increasingly dissatisfied from the SNC due to their ineffectiveness and lack of credibility. After some SNC factions joined ISIS, and some factions sold weapons to them, the US removed its support from the SNC and gathered a new alliance, with the PKK-related PYD as the leading party. This step provoked a major friction with Turkey, which continues today.

Given Turkey's gains from liberalized political and economic relations with Syria, Demir (2017) argues that the prospect theory, which predicts that countries would adopt risk-averse strategies after gains, does not fit in the Turkish case. Turkey took risk-seeking behavior in Syria despite significant economic and political gains from liberalized bilateral relations. He states that any country in Turkey's position should have opted for preserving the status quo. Returning to a security discourse also jeopardized the achievements of the previous decade. Demir (2017) states that Turkey should have estimated that antagonizing the Syrian regime would revive their support for the PKK. The level of the intensity of protests in Syria did not justify sacrificing the achievements of the previous decade.

After the first wave of the Arab spring, Turkey claimed ownership of the revolutions and became overconfident with its capabilities. Witnessing the removal of Bin Ali, Gaddafi and Mubarak, Turkish policy makers considered the removal of Assad as a safe bet, while the previous events were not representative analogies and that the fall of Assad was not certain at all (Demir, 2017). Erdoğan and Davutoğlu made overconfident statements regarding Assad's fate being similar to those of Bin Ali, Gaddafi and Mubarak. Erdoğan even vowed to pray in the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus soon (Hurriyet Daily News, 2012).

The overconfidence continued in the belief that a new geostrategic order was about to be born in the Middle East, and that Turkey will be the leader and pioneer of this new order. In this atmosphere, Turkey wanted to install an ideologically affiliated government in Syria,

and lead a "Muslim Brotherhood" belt (Demir, 2017). Despite good bilateral relations, Turkey viewed Syria as a client state of Iran, therefore, a bulwark against its ambitions in the region. Ankara's rivalry with Tehran could be visible through how they interpreted the events. AKP positioned itself as the champion of liberal democratic values, as opposed to Iran, who framed the uprisings as an Islamic awakening (Dalay & Friedman, 2013). Turkey pressured Assad to recognize Muslim Brotherhood, but was rejected.

Turkish policymakers overestimated the probability of an international intervention in Syria, similar to what happened in Libya. Turkey hoped that the international community would be willing to intervene once an alternative to the Assad rule was present. On the contrary, the US denounced Syrian National Council as the legitimate voice of Syria, as they accused the SNC of being ineffective, unrepresentative of Syrian people, and possible extremists. Turkey misinterpreted negative comments of American policymakers on Assad, and overlooked the Obama Doctrine, which asserted that the US would only intervene where American interests are directly threatened.

Tocci (2014) argues that the reason why Turkey, traditionally a staunch supporter of national sovereignty, was so eager for an international intervention in Syria, was because it was desperate to alter the balance of power in Syria. The Syrian regime gained the upper hand with support from its allies, and Ankara hoped that they could limit Assad's progress with an international intervention. Whereas Western countries were afraid that a limited intervention could turn into a substantial occupation, for Turkey, this was an opportunity.

Ankara fervently opposed a political solution, as they feared that it would leave Assad in his seat. Consequently, Assad would eradicate Turkey-backed jihadist groups, and the Muslim Brotherhood, similar to what happened in Egypt. Therefore, Turkey only considered political resolution as an option once the Syrian government gained the upper-hand (Tocci, 2014).

Ankara's inaction against Islamist fighters using its territory as a transit point and its support for fringe radical members of the Syrian opposition severely damaged its reputation. Turkey was portrayed as being in cooperation with ISIS (Philipps, 2016), or as being inactive against the terrorist group (Denselow, 2014). In the 2014 MIT scandal, trucks heading to Syria containing weapons and ammunition were discovered. The government claimed that trucks were carrying aid to Syrian Turkmens. After it was revealed that they were carrying weapons, AKP MP Yasin Aktay claimed that the weapons were going to the moderate FSA rebels, instead of Al Qaeda or ISIS (odatv4.com, 2015). Despite Turkey being one of the

countries that designated ISIS as a terrorist organization, joined the US coalition against them, and fought them on the ground, its reputation was damaged from such accusations.
D'Alema (2017) argues that the strengthening of PYD represents another strategic disaster for Turkey. Turkey considers PYD as the Syrian offshoot of the PKK, a terrorist insurgent group Turkey has been fighting for decades. PYD emerged as a winner from the power vacuum in Syria after the beginning of the civil war, as they de facto controlled most of northeast Syria. This resulted in Turkey neighboring an administration that is claimed to be directly linked to the PKK. The PYD was also necessarily active against ISIS, as the latter started an offensive against them in late 2014. This allowed PYD to receive international support and reception, and even formal support by the US.

The third factor that affected Turkey's security was the massive influx of refugees into Turkish soil. Turkey hosts the highest number of refugees that were relocated during the Syrian Civil War. As of 2023, there are officially 3.6 million Syrians residing in Turkey, which means that Turkey hosts the largest number of refugees in the world. The sudden increase in refugee numbers created economic and social difficulties for the country, ranging from the increase in real estate prices to tensions between Syrians and Turks.

The fourth factor was Turkey's deteriorating relations with Russia and Iran. Turkey underestimated the willingness of Russia to protect the regime, and the lack of willingness of the US to change the regime (Ayata, 2015). Consequently, Turkey's hard line position in Syria not only deteriorated its relations with Russia and Iran, but also with the US. Turkey eventually had to reach a consensus with Russia after several incidents. A Russian jet was downed by the Turkish Armed Forces in 2015 and the Russian ambassador was assassinated in Ankara in 2016. On the other hand Russian jets, together with Syrian jets, conducted airstrikes against Turkish military personnel in 2017 and 2020. Turkey eventually co-sponsored Astana Talks with Russia and Iran, which excluded its NATO allies.

On the domestic front, the opposition blamed Erdoğan for intensifying the security problem by hosting Syrian refugees and supporting the Syrian opposition. They argued that the government was actively contributing to the ongoing security threat (Ayata, 2015). CHP leader Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu even accused the government of sending terrorists to Syria, and of being responsible for the deaths of Turkish citizens in Reyhanlı bombings (Çandar, 2013).

The policy also drew criticism from domestic opposition as some risks of the post-Assad

Syria became clear. The main fear was disintegration of Syria into a Shia, a Sunni, and a Kurdish statelets (Ülgen, 2012). Turkey had always supported the territorial integrity of its neighbors and the AKP's Syria policy was criticized for being a dangerous deviation from this.

4.1.Turkish Neoconservatism or Neo-Wilsonianism

There are conflicting rationalist and ideationalist explanations of AKP's behavior during the Syrian Civil War. Rationalists believe that Turkey acted in accordance with its political and economic interests, and did not direct its foreign policy solely on ideological grounds. These explanations highlight the realist, or imperial elements in Turkish foreign policy, and often claim that ideological and normative goals are just adornments of material national interests, which can be summarized as forming Turkish hegemony in the Middle East. Ideationalists claim that the AKP had normative and idealist goals with regards to its foreign policy toward the Middle East, and occasionally sacrificed Turkish national interests for the sake of these normative and ideological goals.

As early as 2006, Murinson (2006) states that Davutoğlu's thinking had been compared to that of American neoconservatives. Davutoğlu himself rejects this comparison, questioning the validity of theories neoconservatives produce about the Middle East (Han, 2004). Yet, apart from criticizing American neoconservatives, Davutoğlu does not reject the general principles of a neoconservative foreign policy.

4.1.1.An Imperial Vision?

Davutoğlu insists that theirs is not an imperial vision, but Turkey has a responsibility toward the region, such as maintaining the peace and being a role model (Atmaca & Torun, 2022). Nevertheless, there have been accusations of imperialism toward Davutoğlu's vision.

In a paper where he discusses the main driver of TFP during the Arab spring, Cornell (2012) argues that the diverging approaches Turkey took against different authoritarian regimes imply that the main sensitivity in play is not democracy. Turkey did not lend support to the Islamist regimes of Iran, Sudan, and Hamas, who are suppressing the opposition. Instead, Turkey sided with authoritarian countries where Islamists are in power, and called regime change in countries where they are in opposition. Pro-government commentators in Turkey draw similarities between what was happening in North Africa and what had happened in

Turkey, conservative Muslim masses uprising against secular authoritarian regimes.
Özkan (2014) argues that Davutoğlu's foreign policy is pan-Islamist rather than neo-Ottomanist. Davutoğlu criticizes the nation-state based order in the Middle East, claiming that it is a colonial legacy. He argued that Turkey should adopt an expansionist foreign policy in the region. To expand its lebensraum, Turkey should get rid of its defensive stance and obsession with the nation-state. For him, further integration with the Islamic world, and ending the separation of nation-states is the sole way of expanding Turkey's lebensraum (Özkan, 2014).

Özkan (2014) argues that Davutoğlu's main concern is not values but power. Since the 1990s, Davutoğlu has been warning that Middle Eastern regimes that did not have popular support would collapse. He thinks that there are two growing trends, Islamism and nationalism. Increasing nationalism would be against Turkey's national interests. Islamic movements would be the enablers of the expansion of Turkish influence. Until the Arab Spring, Davutoğlu's policy toward the Middle East resembled that of Germany's Ostpolitik, increasing economic ties without questioning the legitimacy of the political regimes. Davutoğlu believed that Turkey did not have the power to openly challenge the existing regimes. He also believed that such regimes would not survive in the long term. After the beginning of the revolts, Özkan (2014) claims that Turkey sheltered fundamentalists and embraced a Sunni sectarian foreign policy.

Özkan (2014) implies that Davutoğlu's vision is an imperial one that instrumentalized pan-Islamism as that is the most suitable ideology for Turkish expansion in its lebensraum. Consequently, the AKP was not sincerely interested in promoting democratization in the Middle East, but rather they believed democratization would enable Islamists to gain power in these countries, which would pave the way for expanding Turkish influence in the region. The Arab nationalism of the secular dictatorships in the Middle East were not compatible with the long term goals of the AKP's foreign policy. So the AKP, despite developing amicable relations with them in the first place, was aware that this friendly atmosphere cannot last long.

4.1.2.Realism?

Kösebalaban (2011) believes that AKP's foreign policy toward the Middle East has both realist and liberal elements. Yet, he argues that it is mostly shaped by realist concerns, rather than ideational ones. For him, the AKP's policy toward the region has been realist as it

ignored internal characteristics of regimes, and liberal as it emphasized the importance of trade and economic integration. Kösebalaban (2011) agrees that the Arab Spring caused a rupture in this policy, as Turkey emerged as the champion of democratic transformation in the region. Yet, he reads this development as a realist mindset that aims to prevent the expansion of Iran's regional hegemony. More generally, he claims that the most important factor in Turkey's policy toward the Middle East is the emergence of Iran's hegemony.

Ankara's threat perception is not only caused by the Islamist regime in Tehran, but also from the long lasting rivalry between the two countries. Increasing Iranian influence in Iraq and Syria alarmed Ankara (Kösebalaban, 2011). Ankara followed an integrationist policy with Iran to not antagonize them, as they were crucial for the stability of Iraq. Nevertheless, bilateral relations deteriorated with the Arab spring, as Iran views the Assad regime in Syria as a strategic asset.

Despite using an extensively pro-democracy discourse, Kösebalaban (2011) thinks that Turkey is instrumentalizing this language. He cites Kalın, who says a democratic and prosperous Arab world will reinforce Turkey's power in the region. For him, Turkey's liberal foreign policy is still based on realpolitik, not idealism.

Karşıyaka and Karşıyaka (2017) write that Davutoğlu's strategic vision contains elements from realism, liberalism and constructivism. Davutoğlu's insistence on soft-power and his belief that increasing economic interdependence would lead to improvements in political relations, reveals the influence of liberalism on his ideas. Davutoğlu is also severely influenced by constructivist ideas. His "zero problems with the neighbors" policy can be interpreted as an attempt to introduce a new norm in the region. His extensive coverage of common values and identities across the region can be revealed as constructivist as well.

They (2017) argue that the element of normativism was abandoned in Turkish foreign policy after the eruption of the Arab spring, as Turkey gave up on expanding its soft power and started to rely on hard power, and adopting a much more partisan behavior rather than aiming to be an intermediary in the region. They interpret this transformation as a shift from normativism to realism. I believe that this view extensively focuses on the employed means and ignores Turkey's normative aims in the region. Turkey explicitly attempted regime change based on political and humanitarian reasons, and armed the opposition groups to further this goal. The means employed were not normative, yet the ends were much more normative than the pre-2011 period. I do not believe that Turkish foreign policy during the

Arab spring was dictated by realist goals and national interests, as the policy makers back then seem to be prioritizing civilizational interests while sacrificing Turkish national interests. They actually do admit that, by saying that Turkey had a principled foreign policy that did not tolerate authoritarian leaders that point guns at their own people, that Turkey opened its borders to mass influx of refugees and that Turkey voiced its opposition to the violation of humanitarian law. This hardly seems like a realist position at all. They do have a point where they say Turkey used the humanitarian discourse in a more discriminative manner, ignoring countries like Bahrain or Oman. This implies that Turkey's actions were interest driven.

4.1.3.Turkish neo-Wilsonianism?

Ahmet Davutoğlu is generally seen as the architect of normativism in Turkish foreign policy. Normative aspects of his foreign policy were pronounced under the name of civilization and culture. Davutoğlu's extensive reliance on ideational and cultural factors on determining the physical world. Tuğtan (2016) believes that Davutoğlu skews toward the idealist pole on the idealist-realist axis defined by E.H. Carr. He argues that Davutoğlu's ambition of creating a Turkey-centered Islamic civilization is purely idealistic. Davutoğlu believes that this ambition is good and desirable for both the Islamic civilization and humanity as a whole. The guidance of a vanguard elite who realizes this would be sufficient to realize this ideal. Nevertheless, as Carr (1939) warns utopians, both the harmony of interests assumption, and the expectation that all actors would act in a harmonious way, are problematic, causing Davutoğlu's vision to suffer from utopianism (Tuğtan, 2016). Davutoğlu's foreign policy vis a vis Syria, more specifically, is very much based on liberal principles and normative values (Kardaş, 2012).

Aras and Görener (2010) argue that the AKP's activities in the Middle East are guided by a normative and multilateral approach that resembles the EU foreign policy. Traditional republican national role conceptions began to lose their appeal with Turgut Özal, who aspired for a more activist foreign policy. Özal's foreign policy suggests two national role conceptions: regional leader and bridge (Aras & Görener, 2010). AKP, on the other hand, kept the regional leader role and synthesized it with regional protector and global system collaborator roles. Regional protector role implies a more active regional involvement than regional leader, with an additional duty of instituting order and introducing norms (Holsti, 1970). Erdoğan's and Davutoğlu's statements regarding Turkey's responsibilities of order and security toward the Middle East imply the adoption of this new role (Aras & Görener,

2010).

Oğuzlu (2012) argues that Turkey upgraded its zero problems with neighbors policy with the Arab spring, as its normative and humanitarian aspects became more salient. Turkey's approach has become gradually more "liberal, assertive, normative and humanitarian". Turkey was willing to adopt the changing definition of international legitimacy, in which responsibilities toward people are more important than the principle of non-intervention.

Using an approach that is similar that is employed in this thesis, Dal (2013) states that 2011 was a juncture point in TFP, when Turkish leaders added a normative dimension to their value-driven and ideational foreign policy in the region. Although normative foreign policy often refers to the EU, it is not limited to them and regional powers can also play a role in promoting their own values. Dal (2013), with reference to Tocci's (2008) framework, argues that what distinguishes a normative foreign policy from realpolitik is its compliance with existing legal norms, and the achievement of normative results. Dal (2013) claims that the main characteristic of Turkey's normative foreign policy is spreading EU norms as well as its own norms, while promoting its interests. Turkey not only followed a normative policy in its neighborhood, but also with regards to global governance, as the protector of the people of the Middle East, which can be categorized as regional leader or regional protector under Holsti's (1970) framework.

Dal (2013) argues that the goals advanced and the means employed by Turkey in Egypt and Tunisia were normative. In Syria, Dal (2013) argues that Turkey first followed a status quo policy until August 2011, later turning into a normative-intended policy. She claims that Turkey's adherence to the EU and the US sanctions toward Syria imply a concern for using normative means. Turkey did that at the expense of its booming commercial relations with Syria. Turkey continued to use normative means by pushing a diplomatic and peaceful solution at Geneva Conferences, as well as at regional organizations such as the Arab League, the Gulf Cooperation Council and the OIC. Davutoğlu's statements also indicate that Turkey was hopeful of a diplomatic solution at Geneva (Hurriyet Daily News, May 25, 2013).

Bertrand (2013) interprets the developments in Turkish foreign policy between 2002 and 2013 as a transformation from realpolitik to a liberal one. Turkish foreign policy was desecuritized and the emphasis was put on diplomacy and trade. Davutoğlu's foreign policy was primarily liberal, as it emphasized trade, conflict resolution and civilizational dialogue.

Dalay and Friedman (2013) agree on this point. They argue that Erdoğan and Davutoğlu gave support to Syrian uprisings from a liberal point of view. They claimed that the legitimacy of uprisings rests in the people's voice and human rights. This was contrary to Iran's portrayal of the events as an "Islamic awakening". This was also contrary to the ideological predecessors of the AKP, the National Outlook movement. The National Outlook movement, and Turkish political Islam more generally, had little to do with democratic politics in their international relations. They were rather concerned with creating an Islamic bloc against the West, as well as defending the rights of Muslims all around the world. Liberal foreign policy of the AKP should be read as a novelty in this tradition.

Demirtas-Bagdonas (2014) criticizes the rationalist approaches for taking the pre-given interests as granted, instead of questioning how interest perceptions were constructed under AKP governments. Instead she offers an ideational account, in which identities and foreign policy are co-constitutive. She argues that AKP used the portrayal of Syria as an oppressive and authoritarian regime for the portrayal of itself as the opposite, and points to the AKP leaders emphasizing the selfless support they gave to the Syrian opposition. In a speech, Erdoğan states that they view every crisis in the world not through the lens of interests, but based on humanitarian principles (Milliyet, 2012b). In doing so, Turkey aimed at turning the war into an ethical issue and delegitimizing other actors based on their inaction. Later, when PYD started to gain ground in Northern Syria and a Turkish jet was downed, Ankara asserted that it could give the strongest response to its challengers, but did not due to its self-restraint and ethical foreign policy. Ankara coupled this with a great power identity that has ethical responsibilities and does not overreact (Demirtaş-Bagdonas, 2014).

Ayata (2015) argues that realist explanations regarding why Turkey switched to a more militaristic and defensive position cannot explain why Turkey continued to support regime change in Syria, while other actors such as the US have abandoned this quest (Huber, 2014). Realist explanations also fail to address why Turkey jeopardizes its economic interests in Egypt and Libya. Ideational factors need to be incorporated to understand the AKP's insistence on regime change. Turkey not only emphasized its shared history and culture with other countries in the region, but also their shared experience of military dictatorships (Özkan & Korkut, 2013). AKP portrayed the Camp David arrangements in the Middle East as similar to the military tutelage at home. When they saw the uprisings, they interpreted them as replications of their struggle against the military legacy in Turkey. Ayata (2015) argues that this was the main speardriver of Turkey's proactive foreign policy. Election of like-minded parties in Arab countries strengthened Turkey's value-based foreign policy. In

Egypt, Turkey shifted from democracy promoter to the guardian of a lost revolution, after the fall of Morsi. Turkey ignored democratic shortfalls in the Morsi administration, and popular protests against this government. Turkey's commitment to a democracy that is beyond the ballot-box was questioned, which undermined the credibility of Turkey's normative foreign policy.

In another paper, Dal (2015) analyzes the shift in Turkish foreign policy from a cosmopolitanism-communitarianism divide. She writes that by the time the DSP-ANAP-MHP coalition was replaced by the AKP in 2002,communitarian and cosmopolitan values were coexistent in Turkish foreign policy. AKP introduced an increasingly normative foreign policy, and such concerns played a role in Turkey's decision to avoid the war in Iraq. In AKP's second term, normative concerns became more central in policy making. Such changes were mostly brought by Davutoğlu's strategic depth doctrine. Turkey adopted a more ethical approach to world affairs. Turkey's increasing development assistance to Africa can be understood under this light. Turkey's involvement with the Syrian Civil War also reflects this normative foreign policy. Turkey supported the opposition forces despite substantial risks of compromising Turkish national interests.

Using Frost's (1996) terms, Dal (2015) argues that AKP's position vis a vis the Syrian crisis has been adoption of thick ethics, meaning the belief in global overarching ethical consensus. Turkey cut its ties with Assad after his disapproval of democratic elections, and aimed to find a diplomatic solution to the crisis. Such attempts run counter to the communitarian position, as the prolongement of war harmed Turkey's economy. Turkey is also hosting millions of refugees due to the prolongement of the war, another indication of its cosmopolitan position in the war.

Turkey also displayed greater interest in the ideals of international justice. Cosmopolitans argue that egalitarian principles of justice should apply on a global basis. Since the beginning of the war, Ankara lobbied for egalitarian justice for all Syrians. Such principles were also applied globally, as Turkey became increasingly critical of the unjust global order. Turkey called on world leaders for their responsibility to protect in Syria. Davutoğlu consistently blamed world leaders for their indifference and called on the UN for action in Syria. Turkey's quest for further global justice transformed into criticism of the global order. Davutoğlu, in an article co-authored with the Bosnian foreign minister, wrote that ''If the responsibility to protect does not apply to Syria, where does it apply?'' (Davutoğlu & Lagumdzija, 2013).

Dal (2015) argues that even though Turkey has not acted entirely in accordance with cosmopolitan ideals, its normative rhetoric and cosmopolitan positioning caused greater expectations from Turkey regarding its global duties toward human rights. Yet, this cosmopolitan positioning was criticized as well, as Turkey's efforts toward the regime and its open border policies jeopardized its own security (Dal, 2015).

Çakmak (2015) claims that Turkish foreign policy has been overwhelmingly normative in Syria. He argues that one aspect of Turkey's policy is undisputable: Turkey focused on whether the Syrian government fulfilled its responsibility in international law vis a vis its own people or not. Turkey did not frame the issue from a national security perspective, not even after its jet was downed or after the Reyhanlı Massacre, of which the Syrian government is believed to be responsible.

Turkey associated the legitimacy of a regime to whether they fulfill international legal responsibilities or not. Instead of securitizing the arrival of hundreds of thousands of Syrian refugees, Turkish officials indicated that it was the responsibility of the Syrian regime to create a safe environment for the return of their citizens. Turkey actually used the arrival of Syrian refugees as a proof of the Syrian regime persecuting its own people. Turkey used international organizations such as the UN and the Arab League to justify its position and to encourage stronger international measures against Syria. Meanwhile Turkey harshly criticized the UN Security Council, arguing that it fails to supervise international stability and peace (Çakmak, 2015).

Ankara adopted a language of "democratization" after its peaceful transformation attempts had failed (Şeyşana & Çelik, 2015). Turkey emerged as an upholder of R2P, which is related to the increasing emphasis of normative values in TFP. Before the outbreak of the Arab spring, Turkish foreign policy toward its neighbors was purely pragmatic. After the Arab uprisings, Turkey gradually adopted a normative discourse. They were trying to find a balance between realpolitik and normative concerns. Davutoğlu (2012) stated that Turkey upholds universal norms, as well as local values.

Despite being a laggard in endorsing it, Turkey adopted R2P in 2009. In the beginning, Turkey was very cautious to not infringe on the sovereignty of other nations, and insisted that the main goal of R2P was to ensure that states do their jobs. Consequently Turkey abandoned its caution and began highlighting the responsibility of the international community to take stricter measures. Şeyşane and Çelik (2015) argue that the reason for this

change is TFP toward Syria. Turkey also transformed from being a silent supporter of R2P to an ardent upholder.

Şeyşane and Çelik (2015) argue that Turkey used a mixture of R2P and non-R2P means in this stage. Backing the FSA was not compatible with R2P, whereas rallying support for an international intervention clearly was. The authors argue that Turkey's strict fixation on regime change and support for the military opposition creates an R2P situation in Syria, therefore is not compatible with the philosophy of it. R2P should entail ceasing arms sales to both sides, as doing otherwise would only worsen the situation (Ignatieff, 2013). On the other hand, Turkey's humanitarian refugee policy is compatible with it.

Sezal (2016) argues that Davutoğlu's expression of Turkey's commitment to values such as promotion of democracy, human rights and liberties display a value-based or an idealistic foreign policy. This idealism implies revisionism in Turkish foreign policy. Yet, Sezal points to the fact that this idealistic foreign policy was only in use for countries like Syria and Egypt, but not for Saudi Arabia or Iran for instance. Ayata (2015) agrees with this point, claiming that Turkish democracy promotion was not a coherent policy, as it was only pursued in cases where it aligned with the ideological interests of the AKP. Thus, it is safe to concur that even if Turkey followed an idealist foreign policy, it did so on a selective basis. Realist balance of power calculations were not entirely ousted, as Turkey did not want to directly intervene in more powerful countries.

Kılınç (2016) advances the point that governments only act ideologically on the international arena when they are constrained by neither domestic nor foreign factors. They preserve the status quo when constrained on both fronts, and display activism when constrained on only one. Kılınç (2016) argues that AKP's foreign policy between 2011-2015 is an example of the ideological foreign policy. He claims that the Arab spring and the increasing instability in the Middle East helped to remove the foreign constraints in AKP's foreign policy. AKP calculated that the Arab spring will cause Islamists to ascend to power in many Middle Eastern countries. After 2013, the instability in Syria and Iraq, and the rise of ISIS caused the US and the EU to act in accordance with Turkey, allowing Turkish foreign policy to become even more ideological. Turkey supported Syrian opposition together with the Western countries. The difference is, while Western countries remained more cautious as they did not want to strengthen the radical factions among the opposition, countries like Turkey and Saudi Arabia gave military support.

Keyman (2017) also characterizes the Davutoğlu period in Turkish foreign policy under idealism, or what he calls civilizational or moral realism. He states that this "realism" is not to be confused with the traditional definition of realism, but does not make a clear explanation of how it qualifies to be realist. He defines moral realism as a combination of: "hard power-based military assertiveness and humanitarian norms" (Keyman, 2017, p. 56). As military assertiveness is not a fundamental element of realism, this barely justifies defining Davutoğlu's vision as realist. Thus, we can concur that Keyman actually also implies that Davutoğlu's foreign policy is based on idealism.

Yükselen (2020) argues that soon after the eruption of the Arab spring, Turkish foreign policy started to be dictated by normativism. Upon facing the dilemma of interests and ethics in the Arab spring, Yükselen (2020) writes that Turkish policy makers perceived democratic values as their most important source of power. Refraining from supporting democratic movements would seriously hurt Turkey's soft power. Thus, Turkey preferred peoples to governments and decided to back the opposition movements. However, after years of stalemate in Syria, Turkey returned to a more realpolitik position.

Futak-Campbell and Nolting (2022) criticize previous assessments of Dal (2013) and Oktav & Çelikaksoy (2015), who argue that Turkish foreign policy fails to be accounted as normative. They regard these statements as being Eurocentric. They write that Dal and Oktav & Çeliksoy fail to acknowledge the internal political struggles, the strategic depth doctrine of Davutoğlu, Turkey's Ottoman history and its effects of how foreign policy is practiced, as well as the lack of comparison of norms employed by Turkey and the EU. They claim that while Turkey aspired to be a normative power, this claim was not sufficiently recognized in target countries like Egypt and Syria. They argue that Turkey can nevertheless be considered as either cosmopolitan or an imperialist normative power. Using De Zutter's (2010) distinction between civilian and normative power, in which normative power exports its norms while a civilian power protects the status quo, they argue that Turkey attempted to be a normative power rather than a civilian power. Accordingly, Turkey did not use hard power to spread its norms, thus it cannot be considered a despotic normative power. Yet, although Turkey did not use hard power directly, it did so indirectly through its proxies in Syria (Futak-Campbell & Nolting, 2022).

Using Holsti's (1970) national role conceptions, Özdamar, Halistoprak and Sula (2014) argue that between 2002 and 2011, six of the roles came into prominence regarding Turkey; "mediator", "defender of regional peace and stability", "regional subsystem collaborator",

"good neighbor", "bridge across civilizations" and "trading state". All of these roles are built on soft power instruments. With the beginning of the uprisings, roles like "mediator", "defender of regional peace and security", "regional subsystem collaborator" and "good neighbor" have declined, and more emphasis has been placed on roles like "central/pivotal country", "active independent country", "developer", "protector of the oppressed" and "model/example country". Unlike the previous roles, the new roles require strong material capabilities rather than soft power.

I argue that especially after the initial stage of the Arab spring, and before the reprioritization of security and order, Turkish foreign policy reached a level of extreme activism, the "bastion of revolution/liberator" role that Holsti (1970) defines as the most activist one. The governments that adopt this role feel that they have a responsibility to organize or lead various revolutionary movements abroad. They feel that one of their main responsibilities is to act as a beacon of revolution that can provide physical and moral support to foreign revolutionaries. Turkish foreign policy during the mid-stages of the Arab spring certainly resembles, if not completely fits this role conception. Turkey portrayed itself as the champion of the Arab spring in this stage (Ayata, 2015). Turkey armed and actively supported numerous revolutionary organizations in multiple countries, to the degree of antagonizing relations with the protector countries of status quo in these battlegrounds.

CHAPTER 5

5. WAS TFP NORMATIVE?

Using Tocci's framework, I will assess whether TFP in Syria was normative. The normativity in question here would be the non-neutral, that is, the ethical variant of it. According to Tocci (2008), in order for a country's foreign policy to be normative, its goals and means should be normative, as well as the impact it leads to. Thus, I will analyze TFP under three different dimensions; its means, goals and impact.

5.1.The Dimensions of TFP

5.1.1.Goals

Tocci's definition of normative goals refers to the milieu goals defined by Wolfers (1962). Milieu goals are concerned with the structure of the wider international environment which indirectly relates to the interests of a specific actor. Possession goals, on the other hand, are the goals that are directly related to the national interests of an actor.

What distinguishes normative goals from non-normative goals is not the distinction between values and interests (Tocci, 2008). The definition of values are interpreted subjectively by different actors, and are influenced by material interests. Pursuit of different values may contradict each other as well. Thus, the configuration of the hierarchy between different interests and values in each case must be investigated thoroughly.

In the Turkish case, the contradiction appears to be between security and democracy/freedom in the region. Turkish policy makers aimed to promote democracy and spread civil liberties in Syria, but they were also aware of the security threats this might provoke. Another contradiction was related to Turkey's vested interests in Syria. Turkey's economic relations were gradually improving with Syria prior to the civil war, and the two countries enjoyed friendly relations. Consequently, Turkey's value-based goals in Syria conflicted both with its economic and security interests.

After criticizing a variety of definitions for normative goals, Tocci refers to Wolfers' (1962) milieu goals to define normative goals. Milieu goals are the goals that are not directly related to the defense or expansion of possessions, but rather about shaping the environment and conditions beyond national borders. Tocci (2008) defines normative goals as goals that aim to shape the milieu through international regimes and laws. She highlights law and lawfulness as important aspects of normativity, since without reference to international laws, normative goals would lack objectivity and credibility.

Turkey's milieu goals toward the Middle East can be summed up as promoting democracy, encouraging trade and weakening borders. Despite developing relations with the regimes in the region, Turkish policy makers continued to have normative goals. Democratization and liberalization in the Middle East always remained a goal in the AKP's foreign policy, these goals were only pronounced more loudly with the outbreak of the Arab spring. In the case of Syria, despite having excellent bilateral relations and the increasing trade volume, Turkey decided to push the Syrian regime to carry out reforms. When Syria refused, Turkey sacrificed its possession goals for its milieu goals and decided to openly support the armed opposition. Apparently Turkish policy makers did not trust the Syrian regime, which had even closer ties to Iran, and were not content with the status quo. Turkey needed a transformation in Syria and in its wider environment to expand its possession goals in a more assertive way.

Turkey was faced with major setbacks as a result of this decision. It lost an important market and a destination of further economic expansion in the region. The Syrian branch of the PKK, the PYD, emerged as a power in the Civil War and became Turkey's neighbor by controlling lands and forming an autonomous region in Northern Syria. The rise of the PYD strengthened the PKK, which eventually opted out of the peace process with Turkey and started its terrorist attacks once again. ISIS also emerged as a serious threat out of the power vacuum, carrying out several terrorist attacks in Turkey, causing deaths of hundreds of civilians. Finally, the destabilization and humanitarian crisis in Syria caused millions of Syrians to flee their country. Syrians aimed to seek refuge in Europe. However their arrival in mass numbers caused a surge in the far-right votes and Islamophobia, alarming the European establishment (Sakib & Ishraque Osman, 2020). The EU negotiated with Turkey for them to keep the Syrian refugees in return for visa-free travel for Turkish citizens and payments to the Turkish government. Turkey was assigned the role of keeping Syrian refugees in Turkey and not letting them pass to the EU. This eventually created a refugee crisis in Turkey, as Turkey became the country with the highest number of refugees hosted

in the world.

Overall, it is safe to argue that Turkish national interests were severely harmed after Turkey's intervention in the Syrian civil war. Directly breaching the sovereignty of a neighboring country for normative goals proved to be disastrous. Values and morals did play a role in Turkey's policy, humanitarian and democratic rhetoric had a major role in the AKP's narrative toward Syria. However, as per Tocci (2008), assessing the normativity of a foreign policy based on its relationship with values would be misleading. Values are often intertwined with material interests. The interaction between values and interests must be investigated in every different context.

In this case, values and morals of Turkish policy makers were intertwined with longer-term, milieu goals of Turkey. Turkey aspired to be a regional leader, a regional hegemon, and sought like minded regimes in the region to make this happen. Despite certain improvements in the bilateral relations, relatively secular Arab nationalist regimes were not compatible with the AKP's regional ambitions. Even before the uprisings, Turkey advocated for the Muslim Brotherhood in these countries for their legalization. Turkey was competing with different regional outlooks offered by Iran, and later Saudi Arabia, and could not rely on existing regimes against them.

Hence, Turkey had interests crystallized in its milieu goals, but these long term goals were too risky and proven to be harmful to the shorter term possessive goals. Turkey aimed for an ambitious restructuring of its environment, but faced serious economic and security setbacks. While doing so, Turkey aimed to remain within a legal and multilateral framework, at least within the scope of this work. Turkey acted as an eager NATO member and called for multilateral action against Syria. Turkey charged Syria based on international legal grounds, accusing them of not being able to protect their citizens and losing their international legitimacy. Turkey used the UN actively as a platform to provoke consciousness and gather support against the Syrian regime. Thus, we can say that Turkish foreign policy meets the lawfulness and multilateralism criterion of Tocci (2008), and that it had normative goals vis a vis Syria.

5.1.2.Means

Tocci (2008) argues that pursuing goals through wars unauthorized by the international law could hardly be justified as normative. She argues that in order for a policy to be normative, it must be pursued through normative means. This often entails economic, social, cultural

and diplomatic means as opposed to wars. But she warns against attributing normativity solely based on the instrument employed, as economic or diplomatic means might be used in a non-normative way as well. Thus, it should be about how instruments are used, rather than which ones are used.

Referring to Nye (2004), she forms a contradiction between co-optation and coercion. There is a continuum of foreign policy means, ranging from the most persuasive ones to the most conflictual ones (Tocci, 2008). Yet, she questions the validity of these frameworks. She questions whether cooperation with autocratic regimes could be viewed as a normative instrument, and claims that persuasion based instruments often overlook the power relations. She also talks about positive conditionalities as they would be less intrusive and less harmful to the target country. However, even positive conditionalities can be interpreted as a form of coercion, so the context and the ways these instruments are used matter.

In conclusion, Tocci (2008) draws attention to the challenges of defining normative means and states that normative means are those that are confined within the law. Legality here concerns both national and international laws. Laws ensure that foreign policy is not guided by crude material interests but refined by the lawfully permissible acts.

Turkey preferred to use normative means in Syria, at least within the temporal scope of this thesis. Turkey was not directly involved in any major unilateral military action in Syria, until Operation Euphrates Shield in November 2016. There was a limited operation in February 2015 to relocate the tomb of Suleyman Shah, who is known to be the grandfather of Osman I, the founder of the Ottoman Empire. In July 2015, Turkish air forces raided PYD and ISIS bases. The first large-scale land operation, Operation Euphrates Shield, took place in August 2016, a few months after the resignation of Ahmet Davutoğlu from prime ministry. Thus, during the Davutoğlu governments, Turkey did not carry out any unilateral operations in Syria unauthorized by international law.

However, Davutoğlu's foreign policy does not meet the cooptative means criteria. It is true that Turkey relied solely on economic, diplomatic and cultural means regarding its relationship with the Syrian leadership. So before the outbreak of the Arab spring, Turkish-Syrian relationship was almost entirely based on normative and cooptative means. Aside from the means used, they were used to promote liberalization in Syria and regional integration in the Middle East. This can be labeled as appeasing an autocracy, but the aim of Turkey was easing the regime.

During the early days of the Arab spring in Syria, Turkey tried to persuade the Syrian regime to listen to the protestors, not go hard against them, and intensify liberalization efforts. These suggestions were perceived as meddling in their internal matters by Syrian authorities, and they started repressing the opposition. After its persuasion efforts failed, Turkey decided to employ coercive methods against its neighbor by arming the opposition and advocating for an international multilateral intervention in Syria. Turkey's insistence on multilateral action, its efforts in the UN and the Arab League to isolate the Syrian regime, signifies an attempt to stay within the international legal framework.

5.1.3.Impact

Checking the impact of a foreign policy is a useful guide to measure the normativity of it. The results it creates might differ dramatically that the ones intended. This would also be in line with consequentialist ethics (Manners, 2006), as a normative foreign policy should be effective in fulfilling its desired goals.

It is difficult to call Turkish foreign policy normative by looking at the impact it created in Syria. Hundreds of thousands of Syrians were killed during the civil war, millions of them were replaced and forced to leave their country, terrorist organizations were empowered, and regional security was severely diminished. Attributing all of these to Turkish involvement would be unfair, after all, Turkey did not provoke the events in the first place. Yet, Turkey certainly did play a role in the escalation of tensions between the parties in the civil war. Turkey also definitely contributed to the prolongement of the war, by refusing to negotiate with the Syrian regime. This refusal was partially due to humanitarian concerns, as Turkish governments severely criticized the Syrian regime for using chemical weapons on its own citizens. Nevertheless, the prolongement of the war created a humanitarian disaster itself.

Thus, despite having normative goals and arguably normative means, Turkish foreign policy did not have a normative impact toward the Syrian civil war.

5.1.4.Intent?

Tocci (2008) does not include intent among the three dimensions of a normative foreign policy, as intentions are difficult to understand. She prefers to focus on the impact, or whether the said intentions are realized. I believe that intent is nevertheless important in assessing the normativity of a foreign policy, as intentions do not always realize. Even if a country's foreign policy does not realize its normative goals, thus, is not normative

according to Tocci's framework, we should still acknowledge the normative intent behind it. Despite failing to create a normative impact, the intent behind Turkey's actions were normative. Turkey's aim was to create a more representative and democratic regime in Syria. The AKP leadership believed that a secular Arab nationalist, who also belongs to the unorthodox Alawite denomination in this case, ruling over a conservative Sunni Muslim majority is undesirable and that Syria needs to have a more majoritarian and representative democracy like Turkey has.

On the other hand, Turkey's aims were not free from material interest calculations. Turkey aspired to become the regional hegemon by subjugating its former subjects in the region. Thus, it aimed to reduce the influence of rival actors, such as Iran, Russia and Saudi Arabia. Since Assad was a loyal ally to Iran and Russia, more loyal than he was to Erdoğan, Turkey did not see his regime as a long term ally and sought to topple him at the first opportunity.

Some also accuse Turkey of following a sectarian pro-Sunni foreign policy in Syria (Özkan, 2014; Ayata, 2015). According to that, Turkey's declared intentions of promoting democracy and toppling dictators in the Middle East are just whitewashing its aims of creating a Sunni bloc. They argue that Turkey was only instrumentally democratic, as democratic elections provided the Sunni majorities with political power.

5.2.The interplay between three dimensions: the profiles

Tocci (2008) makes a 2x2 matrix table based on the interaction between foreign policy goals and means. According to the table, only a foreign policy with normative goals and normative means is considered normative. This is a foreign policy that seeks to strengthen and promote international law.

A foreign policy with normative goals but non-normative means is considered imperial. This type claims to have normative goals, but it does so without reference to international laws and norms. It rather aims to introduce its own norms, to the point of violating international laws.

Among foreign policies with non-normative goals, those that use normative means are defined as status quo, and those that use non-normative means are defined as realpolitik.

She then adds the third dimension, impact. In order for a foreign policy to be defined as it

claims, its impact must be intended. Accordingly, a type which has normative goals and employs normative means, but fails to deliver normative results, would be defined as normative unintended, and therefore, non-normative according to Tocci (2008).

We can argue that Turkish foreign policy had normative goals and mostly normative means, thus it falls somewhere in between normative and imperial. Yet, Turkish policy failed to deliver the impact it promised, making it difficult to be counted as normative overall.

5.3.Conditioning Factors

Each country often adopts a variety of these profiles in different contexts; there is no fixed profile for any foreign policy in the real world. This is caused by varying composition of interests, capabilities and actors in every different case. Tocci (2008) defines three conditioning factors that might influence the foreign policy type of a country.

5.3.1.The Internal Political Context

Foreign policy goals are often articulated as a result of internal deliberation. This process is a result of interactions between the government, the bureaucracy, the opposition and the media. Internal constituencies that push for the adoption of an agenda might be effective in cases where the government was not considering doing so. Or, contrarily, a government may push foreign policy agendas as an extension of its domestic policy, despite domestic backlash. Internal constituencies might prefer pursuing possession or milieu goals.

In our case, the AKP portrayed its foreign policy toward Syria, and the Arab world more generally, as an expansion of its domestic political agenda. AKP framed the Arab spring as the uprising of conservative Muslim masses against secular Western-backed autocrats, the same narrative that they use in Turkish domestic context. They believed that conservative Muslims constituted a majority in every Muslim-majority country, and thus democratization, but one that is heavily electoral and lacking proper checks and balances, would benefit them and the AKP's political agenda.

The Islamic NGOs were the primary backers of the AKP's policy toward the Arab spring. These NGOs, often having an Islamic humanitarian outlook, emphasized the atrocities of the Assad regime and consistently organized aid campaigns for the suffering Syrian population. These NGOs also worked to host Syrian refugees that have fled Syria.

The opposition, on the other hand, have been critical of the AKP's Syria policy since the beginning. CHP, adopting a neo-traditionalist outlook, often criticized the government for meddling in the internal affairs of a foreign country and accused them of dragging Turkey into the "Middle Eastern swamp" (Armstrong, 2015). Erdoğan criticized Kılıçdaroğlu for siding with Assad in the civil war, claiming that he will be embarrassed for this decision (Hurriyet Daily News, 2012). Kılıçdaroğlu rejected this accusation, stating that CHP also criticizes the use of force toward civilians by the Syrian regime, and their priority is to end the bloodshed in Syria. Kılıçdaroğlu also said that training foreign fighters in Turkey is unconstitutional (Cumhuriyet, 2012). CHP warned the government to not provide money and weapons to Islamist fighters in Syria. CHP leader Kılıçdaroğlu declared that they know Turkey is providing protection and training to Syrian fighters on Turkish soil, and that it needs to end (*CHP Leader Accuses Gov't of 'Protecting' ISIL, Laying Ground for Ankara Massacre - Türkiye News*, 2015).

MHP at the time were concerned with the territorial integrity of Syria, as well as growing power of terrorists on the Turkish border. Bahçeli declared that Turkey's interests lay in the territorial integrity of Syria, whereas Erdoğan was only concerned with supporting the Syrian opposition. He proposed a unilateral operation in Northern Syria to safeguard Turkish borders, which was later realized (Sputnik Türkiye, 2015). Bahçeli stated that training the Syrian opposition in Turkey would mean dragging Turkey into a de facto war with Syria. Bahçeli criticized this step, arguing that the foremost duty of the government must be protecting the national interests of Turkey (Yeni Çağrı Gazetesi, 2014). Ümit Özdağ, MHP MP at the time, declared that MHP will negotiate with Assad once they rise to power (Ensonhaber, 2015).

HDP did not comment much on the general character of Turkish involvement in the Syrian civil war, but mostly on Turkey's relations with PYD and ISIS. HDP accused the government of allowing the ISIS fighters to cross the Turkish border and attack the town of Kobani/Ayn-al Arab (Zaman, 2014).

5.3.2.Internal Capabilities

Tocci (2008) talks about internal capabilities as capabilities to employ non-normative means. Only a handful of countries that have superior military capabilities could employ non-normative means and hope to get away with it. Middle powers and weaker countries often do not have the option of employing non-normative means, they need to stick within the

international norms and laws. On the other hand, this is also a matter of bilateral dependency. A country might still employ non-normative means toward another country if it has substantial leverage over them, even if they are not a significant power.

Looking at the Turkish case, we can clearly say that Turkey could and did employ non-normative means. As a middle power with growing autonomy, and a military with decades long combat experience, Turkey was ready to employ military means since the early days of the Syrian civil war. As early as October 2012, there were border clashes between the Turkish army and the Syrian army, causing casualties on both sides. Turkey later carried out airstrikes against ISIS in 2014. Starting from August 2016, outside the scope of this thesis, Turkish armed forces, together with Syrian rebel groups, carried out armed operations in Northern Syria, resulting in the occupation of the region by Turkey.

In our case, Turkey's internal capabilities were sufficient to employ non-normative means, yet Turkey did not rely entirely on such means and tried to use normative means as well.

5.3.3.The External Environment

Tocci (2008) offers three levels of analysis in identifying the international environment. The first one regards the interaction between the foreign policy and the domestic context of the targeted state. Internal dynamics of the targeted country might not be matured to realize the desired goals, and the cooperation of domestic actors is often required.

The second level is about how foreign policy interacts with the foreign policies of other powers. The intervention of a third actor in the target country may significantly change the playing field.

The third level is how the foreign policy is located within the wider international context. International pressures, trends, developments and the system plays a major role here. Middle powers might gain higher autonomy and freedom of action under multipolar systems. The influence and orientation of international organizations are also crucial here.

Regarding the first level, after witnessing what happened in Libya and Egypt, Turkey decided that the dynamics of Syria must have matured enough for a regime change as well. Turkey had ties with the Syrian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood and were confident in their ability to organize a successful regime change in Syria. Turkey offered its support to

them and rallied its Western allies to support the Free Syrian Army as well. The opposition forces seemed competent at first, capturing major cities such as Aleppo, Idlib and Raqqa. Yet eventually, especially with the rise of ISIS, the US started to question the competence of the Free Syrian Army in fighting against the Assad forces and ISIS forces. The US was alarmed by the rapid rise of ISIS and had to reorient their priorities. Therefore they shifted their support to the PYD, whom they thought would be more effective in fighting ISIS.

The major game changer for Turkey and the Syrian opposition was the Russian intervention in the Syrian civil war. Russian intervention, together with increasing support from Iran and Hezbollah allowed Syrian government forces to start a new offensive and recapture some of the rebel controlled towns. Thus, lower American interest and higher Russian interest in the civil war eventually caused the collapse of Turkey's regime change policy in Syria.

On a systemic level, these events happened at a period of declining American hegemony. The US was no longer the unipolar power due to the rise of powers such as China and Russia, and arguably the EU. Due to the geographical gravity center of the emerging rivalry between the US and China, the US did not consider the Middle East as a priority anymore, starting to focus on the Asia-Pacific region instead. The growing unpopularity of costly wars in the Middle East was another reason for American hesitancy to intervene in Syria. American voters were tired of foreign wars, especially in the aftermath of the costly Iraq War, and were demanding a rather isolationist foreign policy. Obama rose to power by promising to not fight foreign wars, and won against Bush who was facing electoral fatigue. In order not to upset his constituencies, he had to stitch with his promises. Obama also promised an American intervention if the Syrian regime used chemical weapons on its citizens, yet he did not realize that promise.

CHAPTER 6

6. CONCLUSION

In this thesis, I discussed whether Turkish foreign policy vis a vis the Syrian civil war can be assessed as normative. I started by introducing International Relations literature on normative foreign policy. I summarized the theoretical background under five subtitles. In the first part, I introduced what idealism in foreign policy is. In the second part, I discussed how normativism is separated from idealism, and what it entails. I introduced Natalie Tocci's (2008) definition of normative foreign policy. I wrote about the democracy promotion aspect of normative foreign policy in the third part, which became an essential element of it in the Western context. In the fourth part I discussed what Wilsonianism and neo-Wilsonianism entail, and how they differ from each other. In the fifth part I summarized the literature on neoconservatism and questioned whether it can be categorized under normative foreign policy doctrines.

In the second part of the thesis, I wrote about the foreign policy context in Turkey. I introduced the main approaches in Turkish foreign policy making, and discussed how they differ from each other. I then summarized how the AKP governments approached the Middle East, and what were some major ruptures in its appeal to the region. I tried to explain how the AKP policy makers, most importantly Erdoğan, Davutoğlu and Kalın, perceive the issues of neo-Ottomanism, national interest, nationalism and the Westphalian order. I aimed to show that they have a revisionist and expansionist mindset, challenging the orthodoxies of traditional Turkish foreign policy.

In the third part, I briefly introduced the Syrian Civil War and discussed why it is important for Turkish foreign policy. After briefly describing the timeline of the civil war, I asked the question of whether Turkish foreign policy in this context can be characterized as normative. I presented two schools of thoughts here, one which argues that Turkey generally followed a realist policy in Syria, and one which rather claims that Turkey's actions were dictated by idealism.

In the fourth and final part, I used Tocci's (2008) framework to assess whether Turkish policy can be indeed characterized as normative. I have used Tocci's framework for the assessment, rather than the alternative frameworks examined in this thesis, as I believe Tocci's framework is easier to operationalize, as it has a clear set of criteria for defining what a normative foreign policy is. That being said, this preference does not imply that I find Tocci's definition superior to alternative definitions of normativism. I use and occasionally form connections between Tocci's framework and alternative definitions.

I discussed the goals, means, impact and intent of Turkey in the Syrian civil war. Despite having normative goals, somehow normative means, and normative intent, I argue that it is difficult to define Turkish foreign policy as normative due to the non-normative impact it caused in Syria. Turkey had mostly normative goals, as these goals often complied to the lawfulness criteria of Tocci. Turkey's goals of spreading democracy in a foreign country, guarding human rights and advocating regime change were classical examples of a democracy promoter. Turkey can also be defined as a Wilsonian power, as it perceived that its longer term milieu goals were in parallel with a democratic environment. Thus, the idea was that democratizing its neighborhood would better enable Turkey to promote and protect its interests in the region. One can also argue that the transformation in Turkish foreign policy in 2011 had a neo-Wilsonian character, as Turkey became much more confident and optimistic in its pursuit of democracy promotion. Prior to 2011, Turkey preferred an evolutionary and gradual democratization in its region, in cooperation with the regimes. Whereas between 2011-2016, Turkey adopted a revolutionary and ideological foreign policy, that would repeatedly overpass and violate the sovereignty of foreign regimes while openly supporting rebel opposition groups based on their ideological tendencies. Turkish foreign policy in this period also resembles a neoconservative one, as one of the main concerns of Turkish policy makers was the domestic scene. I argued that the AKP leaders perceived the foreign and domestic policy as two sides of the same coin, supplementing and strengthening each other. They used foreign policy to consolidate the conservative-moderate Islamist transformation of the Turkish domestic context. The AKP's definition of national interest is of key interest here. The AKP leaders did not perceive Turkey's national interests as the interests of the Turkish people, but rather, they had a much more cosmopolitan understanding in which the object of the national interest were Muslims, or the global ummah.

According to Tocci's (2008) framework, such a foreign policy would fall in between a normative and imperial foreign policy. This refers to a foreign policy type which has normative goals and employs normative means, but fails to deliver normative results, which

would be defined as normative unintended, and therefore, non-normative. I concluded by debating the internal and external context that might have affected Turkish foreign policy.

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APPENDICES

A. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET

Bu tezde, Türk dış politikasının Suriye İç Savaşı'na yönelik normatif boyutunu değerlendirmeyi hedefliyorum. Türkiye'nin Suriye İç Savaşı'na müdahil olması ve Suriye muhalefetine coşkulu desteği, Suriye ve Orta Doğu'daki normatif hedeflerine atıfta bulunulmadan anlaşılamaz. Ancak, Türkiye'nin normatif hedefleri hafife alınamaz. Türkiye'nin Ortadoğu'ya yönelik tutumu, AKP'nin yükselişinden önce çoğunlukla kayıtsız bir realizmdi. AKP, Ortadoğu ülkeleriyle daha sıcak ilişkiler lehine bu politikadan vazgeçti.

AKP'nin tavrı da aynı kalmadı, dönüm noktasının Arap baharı olduğu iddia edilebilir. Suriye, iç savaşın patlak vermesine kadar Türkiye'nin "komşularla sıfır sorun" politikasının en başarılı ürünüydü. Türkiye bu noktaya kadar Ortadoğu'da mevcut rejimlerle bölgesel entegrasyonun yanı sıra ikili ilişkilerin geliştirilmesini tercih etmiştir. Arap Baharı'nın başlamasıyla birlikte Türkiye statükocu tavrını değiştirmiş ve bölgede rejim değişikliği ve demokratikleşmeyi savunmaya başlamıştır. Bu tez, Türk Dış Politikası'ndaki Orta Doğu'ya, özellikle de Suriye'ye yönelik normatif değişimin arkasındaki koşulları analiz edecektir.

Bu tez, Türk politika yapıcılarının Suriye'ye yönelik ruh halindeki değişimin izini sürecek ve politikalardaki geri dönüşün nedenlerini araştıracaktır. Tez, Türkiye'deki dış politika geleneklerini belirlemeyi amaçlayacak ve 2010'ların başlarında Türk Dış Politikası'nda artan idealizm ve aktivizmin, genellikle neo-Osmanlıcılık olarak adlandırılan dış politika geleneğinin güçlenmesine atfedilebileceğini varsayacaktır.

Tez, Türk dış politikasının normatifliğini Natalie Tocci (2009) tarafından geliştirilen çerçeveye göre değerlendirecektir. Suriye İç Savaşı karşısında Türk Dış Politikası'nın amaçlarını, araçlarını, etkisini ve niyetini analiz edecektir. Tez, normatif amaç ve niyetlere rağmen, Suriye İç Savaşı'na yönelik Türk Dış Politikası'nın yol açtığı etki nedeniyle normatif olarak sınıflandırılamayacağını savunarak sona erecektir.

Tezin teorik çerçevesi; idealizm, normatif dış politika, demokrasi teşviki, Wilsonculuk ve yeni Wilsonculuk, ve yeni muhafazakarlık olmak üzere beş alt başlık altında incelenmiştir.

Bir doktrin olarak idealizm, iyimser bir bakış açısına sahiptir. Daha kozmopolit ve uyumlu bir dünya düzeni yaratarak uluslararası anarşiyi dönüştürmeyi amaçlar (Wilson, 2011). İdealizm, uluslararası ilişkilerde kozmopolitanizm, enternasyonalizm ve liberalizm gibi çeşitli yaklaşımlar için genellikle bir şemsiye terim olarak kullanılır. İdealistler, insan aklının dönüştürücü gücüne ve dünyayı daha iyi bir yere dönüştürme yeteneğine inanırlar. Uluslar arasındaki yüzeysel çıkar çatışması, Milletler Cemiyeti ve BM gibi uluslararası kuruluşlar tarafından ortadan kaldırılabilir. İdealistler, ulus devletlerin kontrolsüz gücünün ve neden olduğu anarşinin bu uluslararası kurumlar tarafından sınırlandırılması gerektiğini savunur.

İdealizmin dış politikada her zaman bir gücü ve çekiciliği olmuştur. Hiçbir ülke normlardan ve ideallerden tamamen yoksun değildir, dış politikaları da öyle. Ancak Uluslararası İlişkiler disiplininde idealizm giderek daha fazla eleştiriye konu oldu. İdealizmin realist eleştirisi, savaşlar arası dönemde güçlendi ve Uluslararası İlişkilerde baskın kol haline geldi. İdealizmin Realist eleştirisi, esas olarak idealizmin ütopyacılığına odaklandı. Wilson (2011), Realistlerin idealistleri uluslararası ilişkilerde gücün rolünü hafife alırken hukukun ve ahlakın rolünü abartmakla suçladığını yazar. Carr (1939), gücün siyasette ana güç olmaya devam ettiğini ve onu görmezden gelmeye yönelik herhangi bir girişimin başarısızlıkla sonuçlanacağını yazdı. Chandler ve Heins (2006), etik dış politikanın realist eleştirisini dört önerme altında özetlemektedir: 1) etkisizdir veya siyasi gerçeklere ilgisizdir, 2) ulusal çıkarlara zararlıdır, 3) gerçekçi gündemi gizlemenin bir yoludur, 4) ahlaksız davranışlar yarattığı için İdealistlerin çözmeye can attığı sorunun bir parçasıdır.

Normativizm, Uluslararası İlişkilerde benzer şekilde kullanılan başka bir terimdir. Tocci (2008), normativizmin neyi gerektirdiğini açıklarken, her ulusun kendi normatif anlayışına sahip olduğunu yazar. Eski demokrasiler demokrasi ve özgürlüklerin önemini vurgularken, yükselen güçler genellikle sömürgecilik karşıtlığına ve müdahale etmemeye ağırlık veriyor. Her ülke farklı dönemlerde ve ortamlarda farklı dış politika paradigmalarına hitap edecektir. Tarihsel olarak tüm devletler dış politikalarını belirli normlara dayandırmışlardır ve hiçbiri bu anlamda tamamen pragmatik değildir.

Normatif, nötr ve nötr olmayan anlamlara sahip olabilir (Tocci, 2008). Dış politikada normal olana atıfta bulunabilir (Manners, 2002, s. 32). Bu anlamda standardizasyona vurgu yapmaktadır. Normlar ve standartlar güçle yakından ilişkili olduğundan ve bu nedenle

çoğunlukla büyük uluslararası güçler tarafından belirlendiğinden, bu tür bir normativizm etik bir normativizm olmayacaktır. İkinci anlamı, nötr olmayan bir anlam olacaktır. Tocci, bu konumu "iyi" ve "etik" kavramlarıyla ilişkilendirmenin tehlikeleri konusunda uyarıda bulunuyor. Ona nesnel ve evrensel anlamlar yüklemek, ahlaki bir emperyalizmin zeminini hazırlayacaktır (Tocci, 2008, s. 4). Tocci; zaman, yer ve güç tarafından şekillendirilen dış politikanın normatif doğasının sorgulanmasını öneriyor.

Normatif hedefler açısından, Tocci (2008) ulusal çıkarlar ve değerler arasında bir ayrım yapar. Böyle bir ayrım, gerçek ayrımın "siyasi gerçeklikten ayrı bir dizi ilke ve siyasi gerçeklikten türetilen başka bir dizi ilke" hakkında olması gerektiğini savunan Hans Morgenthau (1982) gibi realistler tarafından eleştirilir. Bu ayrımın bir başka sorunu da normatif değerlerin farklı aktörler tarafından farklı dönemlerde uygulanabilmesi ve bu değerlerin birbiriyle çelişebilmesidir. Güç ve çıkarlar genellikle farklı değerler arasındaki önceliği ve hiyerarşiyi belirler. Normatif hedefler, stratejik hedefleri kapsamak için de kullanılır. Tocci, normatif hedeflerin karakterini tanımlamak için Wolfers'ın (1962) çevre hedeflerine atıfta bulunmayı önerir.

Tocci (2008), normatif bir güç olmanın, normatif hedeflere ulaşmak için normatif araçların kullanılmasını gerektireceğini savunur. Bu genellikle askeri yolların aksine ekonomik, diplomatik, kültürel yolların izlenmesi anlamına gelir. Bazı akademisyenler (Duchene, 1973; Whitman, 1998), AB'nin dış politikasındaki askeri araçların eksikliğinin AB'nin özel gücü olduğunu öne sürüyor. Tocci (2008), belirli dış politika araçlarının nasıl kullanıldığı normativizm için hangi araçların kullanıldığından daha alakalı olduğunu iddia eder. Olumlu teşvikler, olumsuz teşviklere kıyasla daha normatif olarak görülmektedir. Ancak, her iki koşulluluğun da bağlama bağlı olarak bir sert güç uygulamasını temsil edebileceğini savunuyor. Sonuç olarak, normatif araçları yasal dış politika araçlarıyla sınırlar.

Hiçbir ülke her zaman normatif veya gerçekçi politikalar kullanmaz. Tocci (2008), AB'nin iddiasının aksine her zaman normatif bir güç olmadığını savunur. Böyle bir iddiası olmayan diğer güçler, zaman zaman normatif güçler olarak hareket edebilirler. Yine de, AB genellikle normatif bir güç olarak tanımlanmıştır. Manners (2002), AB'nin kendi normlarını teşvik etmede olduğu gibi normatif bir güç olduğunu savunur. Demokrasi, hukukun üstünlüğü ve insan hakları AB'nin yabancı kimliğinin önemli yönleridir.

Tocci (2008) normatif araçların ve amaçların farklı kombinasyonlarını kullanarak dört farklı dış politika türüne ulaşır. Normatif bir dış politika, hem amaçları hem de araçları bakımından

normatif olan bir dış politikadır. Ülke, çevre hedeflerine ulaşmak için normatif araçlar kullanır. Öte yandan, realpolitik bir dış politika ne amaçlarında ne de amaçlarında normatiftir. Ülke, sahiplenme ve ortam hedeflerine ulaşmak için tüm politika araçlarını kullanır. Emperyal bir dış politika, normatif araçlarla olmasa da, normatif hedefler peşinde koşma iddiasındadır. Tocci (2008), normatif ve emperyalist dış politika tercihlerinde, ya sahiplenici ve çevreci hedeflerin örtüştüğünü ya da normlara karşı işleyen güçlü sahiplenici hedeflerin olmadığını savunur. Kendini uluslararası hukukla sınırlamaz ve çok taraflı çerçevelere uymaz. Son olarak, bir statüko aktörü uluslararası hukuka ve çok taraflılığa uygundur, ancak normatif amaçlar için değildir. Bu çerçevedeki her dört sonuç kasıtlı veya kasıtsız olabileceğinden, Tocci ayrıca niyet boyutunu da ekler.

Tocci (2008) ayrıca bir hükümetin normatif bir dış politika izlemesi olasılığını etkileyebilecek üç şartlandırma faktörü sunar. Birincisi, iç siyasi düzen ile ilgilidir. Bu koşul, iç siyasi aktörlerin dış politika pozisyonlarını ve çıkarlarını araştırır. Yerel aktörlerin sahiplenici mi yoksa çevreci hedeflere mi öncelik verdiğine odaklanır. İkinci faktör, bir devletin iç yetenekleriyle ilgilidir. Bu durum için belirli araçların mevcudiyeti araştırılır. Üçüncü faktör ise dış çevre ile ilgilidir. Bir dış politikanın, hedef ülkenin yerel bağlamıyla veya hedef ülkedeki diğer dış aktörlerle veya hedef ülkeye ilişkin daha geniş uluslararası bağlamla nasıl etkileşime girdiğini araştırır.

Demokrasi teşviki burada incelenen bir başka temadır. Daniela Huber (2015), demokrasi teşvikinin ana ikileminin, diğer çıkarlar ile çeliştiğinde gözden düşmesi olduğunu iddia eder. Demokrasi teşviki, diğer ülkelerde demokrasiyi geliştirmeyi veya sağlamlaştırmayı amaçlayan tüm faaliyetler olarak tanımlanır (Huber, 2015, s. 23). Burada demokrasinin sübjektif bir anlamı vardır, destekleyen tarafından tanımlanır. Bu, herhangi bir rejim türünün teşvikinin demokrasi teşviki olarak damgalanabileceği anlamına gelir.

Teorik çerçevede incelenen dördüncü tema Wilsonculuk ve yeni-Wilsonculuktur. Wilsoncular, Amerika'nın değerlerini ve siyasi sistemini ihraç etmede ahlaki bir yükümlülüğü ve ulusal çıkarı olduğuna inanırlar (Mead, 2013). Wilsonculuk, ABD'nin yalnızca yabancı ülkelerin uluslararası meseleleriyle değil, aynı zamanda iç politikalarıyla da ilgilenmesi gerektiği inancına dayanır. Mead'e (2013) göre, Wilson'ın büyük stratejisi bir dizi önermeye dayanmaktadır. Birincisi, demokrasiler daha iyi ortaklar oluşturur ve temsili olmayan hükümetler daha az güvenilirdir. Temsili olmayan hükümetler öngörülemezdir ve kamuoyu hükümette kusurlu bir şekilde temsil edildiğinden kraliyet kaprisinden muzdariptir. Demokrasi, savaştan çıkarı olacak devletlerin askeri egemenliğini engeller.

Yen Wilsonculuk ise, neoliberal ve neo-muhafazakar fikirlerin birleşmesi olarak ortaya çıktı. Wilson'a (2017) göre, üç teoriye dayanıyordu; demokratik barış teorisi (DPT), demokratik geçiş teorisi (DTT) ve koruma sorumluluğu (R2P). DTT, demokratik geçişi artık hayal etmenin o kadar da zor olmadığını garanti etti. Larry Diamond (1994) gibi siyaset bilimciler, demokratik hükümetleri, demokrasiyi yaygınlaştırmayı dış politikada ana hedef olarak benimsemeye teşvik ettiler. Diamond, kendisinden önceki Wilsoncuların ihtiyatından yoksundu. Bir süre sonra yeni Wilsonculuk demokratikleşmenin önkoşullarını tamamen ortadan kaldırmış, geriye kalan tek koşul araya giren gücün ortaya koyduğu çaba olmuştur.

Neo-muhafazakârlık ise, liberal moderniteye duyulan hoşnutsuzluktan doğdu (Schmidt & Williams, 2005). Çıkar kavramını toplumsal düzenin temeli olarak kabul etmek, neo-muhafazakarlar için en büyük tehdit olan toplumda yozlaşmaya neden olacağı için tehlikeli bir fikirdir (Williams, 2005; Schmidt ve Williams, 2005). Yalnızca maddi çıkarlar ilkesine göre örgütlenmiş bir toplum, sosyal dayanışma ve devlet kurumlarına bağlılık için çok az teşvike sahip olacaktır. Yurttaşları harekete geçirmek için milliyetçi ve vatansever fikirlere ihtiyaç vardır.

Dış politikadaki rol anlayışları, bir ülkenin uluslararası arenada sergilemesi için uygun görülen roller olarak tanımlanabilir. Bu roller, bir uluslararası aktör için uygun görülen eylem ve davranışlardan oluşmaktadır (Başer, 2015).

Altunışık (2009), Türkiye'nin Ortadoğu ile ilişkisinde iki konumu olduğunu iddia etmektedir. İlki, dış politikada gerçekçi varsayımlara sahip olan Kemalizm ile sıklıkla iç içe geçen neo-gelenekselciliktir. Kemalist dış politikanın temel özelliklerinden biri, yabancı ülkelerin ulusal egemenliklerine saygı duymak olmuştur. Atatürk'ün "yurtta sulh cihanda sulh" sözü Kemalistler için yol gösterici bir ilke olarak yorumlanabilir. Ortadoğu meselelerine karışmamak bir diğer önemli ilke olarak adlandırılabilir. Cumhuriyet tarihi boyunca Türkiye, AKP'nin yükselişine kadar Ortadoğu siyasetine nadiren müdahale etti. Üçüncü bir ilke, Soğuk Savaş sonrası dönemde terk edilmeseydi, Batıcılık olurdu. Batı ile bütünleşme ve Avrupalılaşma, Türk dış politikasında rakip pozisyonları birleştiren ana temalar olmuştur. Batılı milletlerin bir parçası olmak ve onların gelişmişlik seviyelerine ulaşmak milli hedeflerdi. Bu tür temalar, Soğuk Savaş sonrası dönemde neo-gelenekçiler tarafından yavaş yavaş terk edildi.

Neo-Osmanlıcılık ise, liberal ve konstrüktivist ama aynı zamanda emperyalist ve yayılmacı fikirleri de içeren alternatif perspektiflerden oluşur. Bu pozisyon, neo-gelenekçiliği bölge için uygunsuz ve kusurlu olmakla eleştiriyor. Alternatif yaklaşımlar, neo-gelenekçileri fazla

izolasyoncu ve pasif olmakla eleştirdi ve daha proaktif bir politikayı savundu. Altunışık (2009), neo-osmanlıcılığın tüm alternatif yaklaşımlarda ortak olduğunu iddia etmektedir. AKP, Türkiye için rakip bir kimlik geliştirerek Ortadoğu ile daha fazla ilgilenmeye çalıştı: temelde İslam dünyasının bir parçası olan, ancak Batı'ya uygun bir Müslüman demokrasi.

Pan-İslamizm genellikle neo-Osmanlıcılığın tamamlayıcısı olarak tanımlanır veya algılanan anlamlar açısından birbirleri arasında önemli örtüşmeler vardır. Yine de, Cem ve Özal gibi İslamcı olmayan şahsiyetlerin muhtemelen neo-Osmanlıcı olduklarından, neo-Osmanlıcılık mutlaka İslamcı değildir. Pan-İslamcılık da kendisini Osmanlı İmparatorluğu sınırlarıyla sınırlamaz ve dünyadaki tüm Müslümanlara hitap eder.

Yeşiltaş (2013), Türk dış politikasının korunmacılık ve istisnacılık olmak üzere iki jeopolitik vizyonu olduğunu öne sürer. İlki, savunmacı dış politika uygulamalarının oluşturulmasına yardımcı olurken, ikincisi, Türkiye'nin toprak ve medeniyet kaygısıyla şekillenen bir söylemi destekledi. Bu ikisinin kombinasyonu, savunmacı bir jeopolitik kültüre yol açtı. Yeşiltaş (2013), jeopolitik söylemin sınırlarında ulusal ve bölgesel olarak tanımlanmış yerlerden İslam dünyası gibi daha geniş kültürel bölgelere doğru bir kayma olduğunu belirtir. Bu, savunmacı jeopolitik kültürün gerilemesine yol açtı.

Savunma jeopolitiği, Türk dış politikasındaki reelpolitik geleneğin bir parçası olarak inşa edilmiştir. Bu yaklaşımın bölgesel meseleler karşısındaki tarafsızlığı, dışarıdan algılanan tehditlerin bir sonucuydu. Bu kültürün en önemli özelliği ulus-devlet vurgusudur. Bu dış politika söylemi, Vestfalya siyasasını laik ve ulusal bir düzen temelinde yeniden üretmeye çalıştı.

Ortadoğu, AKP'nin dış politikasında her zaman merkezi bir nokta olmuştur. AKP, ilk yıllarında AB üyeliği ile meşgulken bile bölgeye özel bir ilgi gösterdi. Ticaret hacmini artırmak, toplumlar arası etkileşimi teşvik etmek ve ikili ilişkileri güvenlileştirilmekten çıkarmak AKP'nin Ortadoğu'daki öncelikli hedefleriydi.

AKP, Ortadoğu'ya daha fazla ağırlık vererek zamanla önceki hükümetlerden uzaklaşmaya başladı. Bu, analistlerin Türkiye'nin Batı'dan uzaklaşıp Ortadoğu'ya dönüp dönmediğini tartışmaya başladığı Türk dış politikasında eksen kayması tartışmalarına yol açtı. Davutoğlu'nun "komşularla sıfır sorun" stratejisinde sembolize edilen bölgeye genel bir kayma yaşandı. Altunışık ve Martin (2023), Türkiye'nin AB üyelik sürecindeki ilerlemeden hayal kırıklığına uğramasının ardından yönünü Ortadoğu'ya çevirme kararı aldığını öne

sürüyor. Orta Doğu, Türk liderliği tarafından bir nüfuz ve ticaret kaynağı olarak görülüyordu.

Öniş (2012), AKP'nin politikasının demokrasi teşviki üzerine kurulu olmadığını ve ulusal egemenliğe saygı gösteren Vestfalyacı bir mantıkla hareket ettiğini ileri sürer. AKP'nin belki de ticari ve ekonomik karşılıklı bağımlılık yoluyla otoriter rejimlerin kademeli olarak gevşemesini beklediğini iddia ediyor. Türk politika yapıcılar, otoriter Arap rejimlerinin öngörülebilir gelecekte varlıklarını sürdürmelerini bekliyorlardı. Huber ise (2015), Türkiye ortaklarını demokratik reformlar yapmaya ikna etmek için iletişimsel araçlara bel bağladığından, Arap Baharı'na kadar demokrasinin teşvik edilmesinin çok daha temkinli ve tanımlayıcı kaldığını iddia eder. Arap Baharı ile başlayan Türkiye'nin demokrasi teşviki, "komşularla sıfır sorun" politikasına zarar vererek daha çatışmacı bir hal aldı.

Komşularla sıfır sorun, rejimlere hoşgörü ve o rejimin doğası ne olursa olsun işbirliği yapma isteği anlamına geliyordu. Türkiye sonunda sıfır sorun politikasına olan bağlılığından ve bölgedeki herkesle konuşan tarafsız bir arabulucu olma hedefinden vazgeçti. Komşularla sıfır sorun ilkesi Suriye'de dağıtılırken, Mısır'da Türkiye'nin tarafsız arabuluculuk iddiası itibarsızlaştırıldı, çünkü Türkiye'nin Müslüman Kardeşler'e partizan desteği çok açıktı. Bu da Türkiye'nin mezhepçi bir dış politika izlediği iddialarına delil olmuştur (Ayata, 2015).

Arap baharı, Türkiye'nin olayları bölgesel bir lider olarak öne sürmek için kullanması nedeniyle Türk dış politikasında büyük bir değişikliğe neden oldu. Ankara, her aktörle iletişim kurma ve aralarında aracı olma rolünden vazgeçerek Arap dünyasının dönüşümüne öncülük etmeyi seçti (Altunışık & Martin, 2023). Türkiye, diğer bazı İslamcı grupların yanı sıra Suriye, Mısır ve Tunus'ta Müslüman Kardeşler'i aktif olarak destekledi.

Arap Baharı'nın başlangıcından itibaren Türkiye kendisini demokrasi modeli olarak göstermiş ve öncü bir rol oynamaya talip olmuştur. Ayaklanmalar nedeniyle önemli ekonomik kayıplar yaşamasına rağmen Türkiye, Arap Baharını daha hesap verebilir ve demokratik bir yönetime doğru bir düzeltme olarak gördü. AKP, ılımlı İslamcı ve Müslüman Kardeşler bağlantılı örgütlerin güçlenmesinden memnundu (Taşpınar, 2012). Arap Baharı'nın bölgedeki otokrasileri çökerteceğini hesaplayan Ankara, demokratikleşme dalgasının İhvan kolunu ele geçirme olasılığını hedef aldı. Türkiye ve Katar İhvan'ı desteklerken Suudi Arabistan, BAE, Mısır ve Bahreyn yasakladı. Bu, Körfez ülkeleri tarafından "ılımlılar ve İslamcılar" ve Ankara tarafından "rekabetçi demokrasi ve otoriter monarşi" şeklinde çerçevelenen bölgesel bir ideolojik savaşa dönüştü (Taş, 2022).

Türkiye, İhvan liderliğindeki ve Türkiye müttefiki Sünni hükümetlerle yeni bir Ortadoğu hedefliyordu. Arap Dörtlüsü'nün aksine Mısır ve Tunus'ta yerleşik ekonomik çıkarları olmadığı için Türkiye'nin İhvan ayaklanmalarından korkacak çok az şeyi vardı. AKP, Türkiye'nin ciddi ekonomik çıkarlarının olduğu Libya'da ise Kaddafi'ye karşı daha temkinli davrandı. Suriye, Türkiye için Libya'ya benziyordu. Türkiye, İslamcılara tam desteğini reform çağrılarının başarısızlıkla sonuçlanmasının ardından verdi. Her durumda ortak olan bir unsur, Türkiye'nin rejimleri halkın talep ettiği reformları uygulamaya çağırmasıydı (Başkan ve Taşpınar, 2021).

AKP neo-Osmanlıcı dönüşümü miras aldı ve benimsedi. AKP, Balkanlar, Orta Doğu ve Kafkasya'yı Türkiye'nin doğal hinterlandı olarak görmüş ve Türkiye'nin tam ortasında olduğu için bu bölgelere kayıtsız kalamayacağını iddia etmiştir (Erdoğan, 2010).

Neo-Osmanlıcılık, Ahmet Davutoğlu'nun stratejik derinlik doktrini ile olgunluğuna ulaştı. AKP'nin dış politikasının birincil teorisyeni olarak adlandırılabilecek Davutoğlu, Türkiye'nin tarihsel mirasını kullanarak güç ve nüfuzunun genişletilmesinden yanaydı (Murinson, 2006). AKP liderleri, Türkiye'nin Ortadoğu'da lider bir rol üstlenmeye uygun olduğuna ve yerel halkın bu rolü kabul etmeye istekli olduğuna inanıyorlardı. Uygunluğunu tartışmadan Davutoğlu (2010b), Türkiye'nin daha önce Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun tebaası olan halklara karşı sorumlulukları olduğunu savunur. Bu haliyle AKP'nin medeniyet söylemi, Türkiye'yi bölgesinin ve medeniyetinin öncüsü olarak resmetmektedir (Duran, 2013).

AKP liderleri Ortadoğu'daki ulus-devletlerin Batı tarafından suni olarak empoze edilen yaratıklar olduğunu vey Türkiye ile Ortadoğu arasındaki yapay duvarları yıkmaları gerektiğini ısrarla dile getirdiler. Hz.Muhammed'in "komşusu açken tok yatan mü'min değildir" hadisini aktararak (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, 2015), dış politika revizyonizmlerine etik bir yön veriyorlar. Davutoğlu, Ortadoğu halklarını bölen ve emperyalist güçler tarafından yerel koşulları dikkate almadan dikilen “yapay” sınırları eleştirdi (Murinson, 2006). Erdoğan (2010) da bu sınırları ve duvarları yapay olarak nitelendirmekte ve Türkiye'nin Ortadoğu'daki halklar arasında bunları ortadan kaldırmak için çalıştığını belirtmektedir.

Kalın, ulusal çıkarların klasik realist tanımını çok dar buluyor ve temkinli bir idealizmin hem iç hem de dış siyasete nüfuz ettiğini savunuyor (Kalın, 2012). Bir ulusun ulusal çıkarlarının öncelikleriyle ve o ulusun kimliğini nasıl tanımladığıyla şekillendiğini savunuyor. Klasik ulusal çıkar tanımlarının bile değere dayalı unsurları içermeye başladığını ve neo-

muhafazakar ulusal çıkar tanımlarına benzerlik gösterdiğini belirtir. Türk dış politikasında üç yeni ilke tanımlıyor; ikili ilişkileri sağlamlaştırma araçları olarak siyasi ve ekonomik adalet, güvenlik ve özgürlük arasındaki denge, ve ticari ve ekonomik kalkınma. Güvenlik ve özgürlük arasındaki denge, AKP'nin reelpolitik ile idealizm arasında bir orta yol talep etmek için kullandığı merkezi bir kavramdır. Bu anlayış, siyasi gerçekler ile etik değerler arasındaki denge (Kalın, 2012) veya idealpolitik yanında reelpolitik anlayışıyla hareket etme (Erdoğan, 2009) gibi farklı biçimlerde karşımıza çıkmaktadır.

Suriye, Türkiye'nin komşularla sıfır sorun politikasının poster çocuğuydu. Bir zamanlar Türkiye'nin 1990'ların sonunda Öcalan'ın Şam'daki ikametgahı nedeniyle neredeyse savaştığı amansız bir düşman olan Suriye, Adana Anlaşmaları'ndan sonra ve özellikle AKP'nin yükselişiyle Türkiye'nin yakın ortağı oldu. 2002'den itibaren AKP hükümeti Suriye'ye yönelik diplomatik girişimlerini artırdı.

Suriye'de ayaklanmaların patlak vermesinden sonra Türkiye önce Esad'ı protestoları yatıştırmak için reformlar yapmaya ikna etmeye çalıştı. Türk liderler, Suriye liderliğini reformları gerçekleştirmeye ikna edecek güce sahip olduklarına inanıyorlardı. Beşar Esad'ın babasından farklı olarak liberal eğilimlere sahip olduğuna, böylece ülkesini liberalleştirmeye ikna edilebileceğine inanıyorlardı (D'Alema, 2017). Türkiye, reformlar için Suriye hükümetine baskı yapmak üzere ABD ve AB ile birlikte çalıştı. Öniş (2012), Türkiye'ye yönelik ilk beklentinin Suriye'de arabuluculuk yapmak ve rejimi kademeli reformlar için teşvik etmek olduğunu öne sürüyor. Ancak AB ve ABD, Türkiye'yi daha agresif ve aktivist bir duruşa itti. Temmuz 2011'den itibaren ABD, Esad'ın artık iktidarda kalamayacağını belirterek pozisyonunu değiştirdi. Türkiye, Ağustos ayında Suriye hükümetine bir ültimatom vererek bu pozisyona katıldı ve Suriye'de rejimi açıkça hedef almaya başladı. Türkiye, Suriye ile diplomatik ilişkilerini dondurdu ve asıl amacını Beşar Esad'ı devirmek olarak belirledi.

Ankara, uluslararası toplumu Suriye'yi izole etmeye ve daha katı yaptırımlar uygulamaya teşvik etti. Türkiye, Suriye rejimine karşı Suriye hükümetinin meşruiyetini ve egemenliğini sorgulayan Suriye'nin Dostları adlı büyük bir koalisyon kurmayı amaçladı. Bu görüşmelerde Davutoğlu, Türkiye'nin muhalefeti Suriye'nin meşru hükümeti olarak tanıdığını ifade etti. Sonunda Türkiye, Suriye Dostları'nın diğer üyelerini Suriye Ulusal Konseyi'ni Suriye'nin meşru hükümeti olarak tanımaya ve onlara silah vermeye ikna etti (Çakmak, 2015). Rejimin 2013'te kimyasal silah kullandığı Guta'nın ardından Türkiye, ABD ve AB'yi daha güçlü bir insani yardım politikası için ikna etmeyi amaçladı, ancak çok az başarılı oldu. Türkiye, diplomatik seçeneği reddederek Suriye'ye Kosova benzeri bir müdahale talep etti (Hürriyet

Daily News, 2013). IŞİD'in ortaya çıkmasından sonra Suriye'de tablo oldukça değişti. Türkiye'nin önceliği Esad'ı devirmek olmaya devam ederken, Batı önceliği IŞİD'le mücadeleydi. Bu durum iki taraf arasında büyük bir ayrışmaya yol açtı.

Arap Baharı'nın ilk dalgasından sonra Türkiye devrimleri sahiplendi ve aşırı özgüvene kapıldı. Bin Ali, Kaddafi ve Mübarek'in görevden alınmasına tanık olan Türk siyasa yapıcılar, Esad'ın görevden alınmasını güvenli bir bahis olarak gördü, ancak önceki olaylar temsili benzetmeler değildi ve Esad'ın düşüşünün hiç de kesin olmadığını gösterdi (Demir, 2017). Erdoğan ve Davutoğlu, Esad'ın kaderinin Bin Ali, Kaddafi ve Mübarek'inkine benzer olduğuna dair aşırı özgüvenli açıklamalar yaptılar. Hatta Erdoğan, yakında Şam'daki Emevi Camii'nde namaz kılacağının sözünü bile verdi (Hürriyet Daily News, 2012). Ortadoğu'da yeni bir jeostratejik düzenin doğmak üzere olduğu ve Türkiye'nin bu yeni düzenin lideri ve öncüsü olacağı inancındaki güven devam etti. Bu atmosferde Türkiye, Suriye'de ideolojik olarak kendisine bağlı bir hükümet kurmak ve bir "Müslüman Kardeşler" kuşağına liderlik etmek istedi (Demir, 2017).

Türkiye'nin Suriye'deki inatçı tavrı ulusal çıkarlarına birçok açıdan zarar verdi. Uluslararası İslamcı savaşçıların topraklarını Suriye'ye bir geçiş üssü olarak kullanmasına müdahale etmemesi diplomatik saygınlığını zedeledi. PKK'nın bir kolu olan PYD, Suriye'nin kuzeyindeki fiili bir hakimiyet kurarak Türkiye'nin komşusu haline geldi. Yerinden edilen milyonlarca Suriyeli Türkiye'nin yolunu tutarak ülkeye tarihinin en büyük göç krizini yaşattı. Ayrıca Türkiye'nin hem Rusya ve İran ile, hem Batı ülkeleri ile, hem de Mısır ve Körfez ülkeleri ile arasının bozulmasına sebep oldu.

AKP'nin Suriye İç Savaşı sırasındaki davranışına ilişkin karşıt rasyonalist ve idealist açıklamalar mevcuttur. Rasyonalistler, Türkiye'nin siyasi ve ekonomik çıkarları doğrultusunda hareket ettiğini ve dış politikasını sadece ideolojik gerekçelerle yönlendirmediğini düşünüyorlar. Bu açıklamalar, Türk dış politikasındaki realist veya emperyal unsurları öne çıkarmakta ve çoğu zaman ideolojik ve normatif hedeflerin, Ortadoğu'da Türk hegemonyası oluşturmak olarak özetlenebilecek maddi ulusal çıkarların süsü olduğunu iddia etmektedir. İdealistler, AKP'nin Ortadoğu'ya yönelik dış politikasında normatif ve idealist hedefleri olduğunu ve bu normatif ve ideolojik hedefler uğruna zaman zaman Türk ulusal çıkarlarını feda ettiğini iddia etmektedirler.

Özellikle Arap Baharı'nın ilk aşamasından sonra ve güvenlik ve düzenin yeniden önceliklendirilmesinden önce, Türk dış politikasının aşırı bir aktivizm düzeyine ulaştığını,

Holsti'nin (1970) en aktivist olarak tanımladığı "devrim kalesi/kurtarıcı" rolünü üstlendiğini savunuyorum. Bu rolü benimseyen hükümetler, yurt dışında çeşitli devrimci hareketleri örgütleme ya da yönetme sorumluluğuna sahip olduklarını hissederler. Ana sorumluluklarından birinin, yabancı devrimcilere fiziksel ve manevi destek sağlayabilecek bir devrim feneri olarak hareket etmek olduğunu düşünürler. Arap Baharı'nın orta aşamalarındaki Türk dış politikası, bu rol anlayışına tam olarak uymasa da kesinlikle benziyor. Türkiye bu aşamada kendisini Arap baharının şampiyonu olarak resmetmiştir (Ayata, 2015). Türkiye, birçok ülkede çok sayıda devrimci örgütü, bu savaş alanlarında statükonun koruyucusu ülkelerle ilişkileri düşmanlaştıracak ölçüde silahlandırdı ve aktif olarak destekledi.

Tocci'nin çerçevesini kullanarak, Suriye'deki TFP'nin normatif olup olmadığını değerlendireceğim. Burada söz konusu olan normatiflik, tarafsız olmayan, yani onun etik varyantı olacaktır. Tocci'ye (2008) göre, bir ülkenin dış politikasının normatif olabilmesi için amaçlarının ve araçlarının yanı sıra yol açtığı etkinin de normatif olması gerekir. Bu nedenle Türk dış politikasını üç farklı boyutta inceleyeceğim; amaçları, araçları ve etkisi.

Amaç konusunda temel çelişki bölgesel güvenlik ve demokrasi/özgürlük arasında görünmektedir. Türk politika yapıcılar Suriye'de demokrasiyi ilerletmeyi ve sivil özgürlükleri yaymayı amaçlıyordu, ancak bunun yol açabileceği güvenlik tehditlerinin de farkındaydılar. Bir başka çelişki de Türkiye'nin Suriye'deki çıkarlarıyla ilgiliydi. Türkiye'nin iç savaş öncesinde Suriye ile ekonomik ilişkileri giderek gelişiyordu ve iki ülke arasında dostane ilişkiler vardı. Sonuç olarak, Türkiye'nin Suriye'deki değer temelli hedefleri hem ekonomik hem de güvenlik çıkarlarıyla çelişiyordu. Türkiye'nin Orta Doğu'ya yönelik çevre hedefleri, demokrasiyi desteklemek, ticareti teşvik etmek ve sınırları zayıflatmak olarak özetlenebilir. Bölgedeki rejimlerle gelişen ilişkilere rağmen, Türk politika yapıcıların normatif hedefleri olmaya devam etti.

Türk politika yapıcıların etik değerleri, Türkiye'nin uzun vadeli çevre hedefleriyle iç içe geçmişti. Türkiye bölgesel bir lider, bölgesel bir hegemon olmayı arzulamış ve bunun gerçekleşmesi için bölgede benzer düşünen rejimler aramıştır. İkili ilişkilerdeki bazı gelişmelere rağmen, görece laik Arap milliyetçisi rejimler, AKP'nin bölgesel emelleriyle uyumlu değildi. Türkiye, İran'ın ve daha sonra Suudi Arabistan'ın sunduğu farklı bölgesel görünümlerle rekabet ediyordu ve bunlara karşı mevcut rejimlere güvenemezdi. Bu nedenle, Türkiye'nin çevre hedeflerinde belirginleşen çıkarları vardı, ancak bu uzun vadeli hedefler çok riskliydi ve kısa vadeli sahiplenme hedeflerine zarar verdiği kanıtlandı. Türkiye,

çevresini iddialı bir şekilde yeniden yapılandırmayı amaçladı, ancak ciddi ekonomik ve güvenlik gerilemeleriyle karşı karşıya kaldı. Türkiye bunu yaparken, en azından bu çalışma kapsamında, yasal ve çok taraflı bir çerçeve içinde kalmayı hedeflemiştir. Türkiye hevesli bir NATO üyesi gibi hareket etti ve Suriye'ye karşı çok taraflı eylem çağrısında bulundu. Türk dış politikasının Tocci'nin (2008) hukuka uygunluk ve çok taraflılık kriterlerini karşıladığını ve Suriye'ye yönelik normatif hedefleri olduğunu söyleyebiliriz.

Türkiye, en azından bu tezin zamansal kapsamında, Suriye'de normatif araçları kullanmayı tercih etmiştir. Türkiye, Kasım 2016'daki Fırat Kalkanı Harekatı'na kadar Suriye'de herhangi bir büyük tek taraflı askeri harekata doğrudan müdahil olmadı. Davutoğlu hükümetleri döneminde Türkiye, Suriye'de uluslararası hukukun izin vermediği hiçbir tek taraflı operasyon gerçekleştirmemiştir. Ancak Davutoğlu'nun dış politikası ortak araçlar kriterini karşılamıyor. Türkiye'nin Suriye liderliğiyle ilişkilerinde yalnızca ekonomik, diplomatik ve kültürel araçlara güvendiği doğrudur. Dolayısıyla, Arap baharının patlak vermesinden önce, Türkiye-Suriye ilişkileri neredeyse tamamen normatif ve kooptatif araçlara dayanıyordu. Bu araçlar Suriye'de liberalleşmeyi ve Ortadoğu'da bölgesel entegrasyonu teşvik etmek için kullanıldılar. Türkiye'nin çok taraflı eylem konusundaki ısrarı, BM ve Arap Ligi'ndeki Suriye rejimini tecrit etme çabaları, uluslararası yasal çerçeve içinde kalma girişimi anlamına geliyor.

Suriye'de yarattığı etkiye bakarak Türk dış politikasını normatif olarak adlandırmak güç. İç savaş sırasında yüzbinlerce Suriyeli öldürüldü, milyonlarcası yer değiştirilerek ülkelerini terk etmeye zorlandı, terör örgütleri güçlendirildi, bölgesel güvenlik ciddi şekilde azaldı. Bütün bunları Türkiye'nin müdahalesine bağlamak haksızlık olur, ne de olsa olayları en başta Türkiye kışkırtmadı. Ancak Türkiye, iç savaşın tarafları arasındaki gerilimin tırmanmasında kesinlikle rol oynadı. Türkiye, Suriye rejimiyle müzakere etmeyi reddederek savaşın uzamasına da kesinlikle katkıda bulundu. Bu ret kısmen insani kaygılardan kaynaklanıyordu, çünkü Türk hükümetleri Suriye rejimini kendi vatandaşlarına karşı kimyasal silah kullanmakla ciddi şekilde eleştirdi. Yine de savaşın uzaması başlı başına bir insani felaket yarattı. Dolayısıyla, normatif hedeflere ve çoğunlukla normatif araçlara sahip olmasına rağmen, Türk dış politikasının Suriye İç Savaşı'na yönelik etkisini normatif olarak nitelemek zor görünüyor.

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