

T.C.
BAHCESEHIR UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL
THE DEPARTMENT OF MIGRATION STUDIES

**HISTORICAL TRANSFORMATION OF TÜRKİYE'S STATE POLICIES
TOWARDS TURKISH MIGRANTS IN
THE UNITED STATES**

**MASTER'S THESIS
ŞEVVAL ÇOKLAR**

İSTANBUL 2024

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THESIS ADVISOR
ASSOC. PROF. DAMLA BAYRAKTAR AKSEL

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Program Name:	Migration Studies Master Program
Student's Name and Surname:	Şevval ÇOKLAR
Name of The Thesis:	HISTORICAL TRANSFORMATION OF TÜRKİYE'S STATE POLICIES TOWARDS TURKISH MIGRANTS IN THE UNITED STATES
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Prof. Dr. Ulaş
SUNATA
Institute Director

This thesis was read by us, quality and content as a Master's thesis has been seen and accepted as sufficient.

	Title/Name	Institution	Signature
Thesis Advisor's	Doç.Dr. Damla B. AKSEL	Bahçeşehir University	
2 nd Member	Prof. Dr. Ulaş SUNATA	Bahçeşehir University	
3 nd Member (Outside Institution)	Doç.Dr. İşil Zeynep Türkan İPEK	Yeditepe University	

I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

Name Surname : Şevval Çoklar

Signature :



ABSTRACT

HISTORICAL TRANSFORMATION OF TÜRKİYE'S STATE POLICIES TOWARDS TURKISH MIGRANTS IN THE UNITED STATES

Şevval Çoklar

Master's Program in Migration Studies

Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Damla Bayraktar Aksel

16 January 2024, pages 102

Thesis examines the results of the diaspora engagement policies implemented by the Türkiye towards the Turkish-American community and the innovations made with YTB in the context of public diplomacy. In this process, which is handled in a historical context, the transformation of the policies put into effect and the work of the new diaspora institutions on Turks in America with the coming to power of the AKP government is examined. In order to observe the different dimensions of the state-citizen interaction, YTB has been identified as the breaking point and the change in state policies in the TR's contact with the Turks in the U.S. after this period has been observed. In this context, the reflections of the pro-active policies of the AKP in the recent period are analyzed in this study. Thus the diplomatic and political moves that emerged through the transnational community with the strengthening of the communication of Turkish diplomats in foreign missions with citizens were considered important. Moreover, the impact of dynamics can consolidate the relationship of non-state actors, associations and citizens with the Türkiye, such as the basic rights and political institutionalization

offered by the state to the transnational community is discussed. Thus, the policy of meeting the socio-cultural, religious, economic and educational needs of citizens abroad, which has increased in all state institutions, has had different repercussions on the transnational community. The aim is to see the changing attitude of the state in the post-2010 period with all its dynamics and institutions in the research.

Keywords: Turkish-American Society, Diaspora Engagement Policy, Diaspora Institutions, Homeland-Citizen Relations, Public Diplomacy, Diaspora Diplomacy



ÖZ

TÜRKİYE CUMHURİYETİ'NİN ABD'DEKİ TÜRK GÖÇMENLERİNE YÖNELİK DEVLET POLİTİKALARININ TARİHSEL DÖNÜŞÜMÜ

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Uluslararası göç, doğası gereği ulus-ötesi bağlantılar yaratır. Bazı devletler ise, yurtdışında yaşayan vatandaşlarıyla ulus-ötesi bağları devam ettirmek için sosyo-kültürel, ekonomik ve siyasi değişimler öngörür ve bu bağlamdaki politikalarını hayatı geçirir. Çünkü küreselleşmenin sınırsız akışlardan oluşan günümüzde, göç bir kalkınma yolu olarak görülebilir. Böylece politika yapıcılar ülkelerinin çıkarlarına olacak bazı uygulamalar yaratmak istemektedir.

Türkiye Cumhuriyeti de ulus-ötesi topluluklarıyla ilişki kurmak için yeni politikalar geliştirmiştir. Son dönemde, yurtdışındaki vatandaşların sorunları devlet için daha görünür hale gelmiştir. Dışişleri Bakanlığı yurtdışı misyonlarının personel sayısını arttırmış ve konsolosluk hizmetlerini genişletmiştir. Diaspora kurumları kurulmuş ve devletin diğer kurumlarıyla eşgüdüm sağlanmıştır. Bu bağlamda, YTB, YEE ve DCA gibi kurumalarda Türk- Amerikan toplumuna yönelik planlanan yenilik ve hizmetler mevcuttur. Yine bu noktada, yurtdışındaki Türkleri konsolide etmek adına “ulusal çıkarlar” doğrultusunda uygulamalar savunularak taban siyasetinin önemi vurgulanmıştır.

Bu noktada, vaka olarak Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nin seçilme sebebi AKP hükümetinin son dönemde uyguladığı "pro-active" politikaların ve farklı diplomasi yöntemlerinin incelenerek literatüre dahil edilmesinin gerekliliğidir. Ayrıca, yurtdışındaki vatandaşlara seçme ve seçilme hakkının verilmesi, Dışişleri Bakanlığı'nın diaspora kurumları ile işbirliği gibi gelişmeler sonucunda ulus- ötesi toplumun "kamu diplomatları" olarak algılanmaya başlaması, Türkiye'nin yumuşak gücü olan sosyal, kültürel ve eğitsel konuların dünya kamuoyundaki algısını değiştirmiştir.

Bu çalışma, hem Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nin vatandaşla ilişkilerini tahlil etmek hem de dernekler ve lobi şirketleri ile kurulan işbirlikleriyle "Güçlü Türkiye" düşüncesine hizmet eden faktörleri ele almıştır. Bu açıdan 2010 öncesi ve sonrası uygulanan politikaların farklılıklarını belirleyici noktadır ve Türkiye'nin ilk diaspora kurumu olan YTB'nin kuruluşu tezdeki kırılma noktası olarak ele alınmıştır. Araştırmada, YTB'nin getirdiği yenilikler ve yarattığı etki önem arz etmiştir.

Ayrıca 2010 sonrasında yaşanan 2013 Gezi Parkı Protestoları, FETÖ yapılanması ve 2016 Darbe Girişimi, COVID-19 pandemisi gibi toplumda kırılma ve uzaklaşma yaratan veya devlet-vatandaş ilişkisini sekteye uğratan olaylar incelenmiş ve yaşananların doğurduğu sonuçlara yer verilmiştir.

Bu araştırmmanın bulgusu, ABD özelindeki YTB ve YEE gibi yumuşak güç unsurlarının Balkanlar ve Orta Asya ülkelerine göre daha az etki alanı bulduğu, ABD'deki heterojen Türk yapısının mukim dış temsilciliklerle ilişkilerinin bireysel temalarla geliştiği ve devlet-vatandaş arasındaki bağın yine dış misyonlar aracılığıyla şekillendiğidir.

Son zamanlarda, Dışişleri Bakanlığı, Washington Büyükelçiliği ve ABD'deki Türk Başkonsoloslukları'nın "ayrım gözetmeme" ve "aktif angajman" prensiplerinin hayatı geçirildiği sonucuna ulaşılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Türk-Amerikan Toplumu, Diaspora Katılım Politikaları, Diaspora Kurumları, Anavatan-Vatandaş İlişkileri, Kamu Diplomasisi, Diaspora Diplomasisi



I dedicate this thesis to all girls who have determination but cannot find the courage, who are not allowed to succeed, whose lives are being taken away from them. Don't give up.

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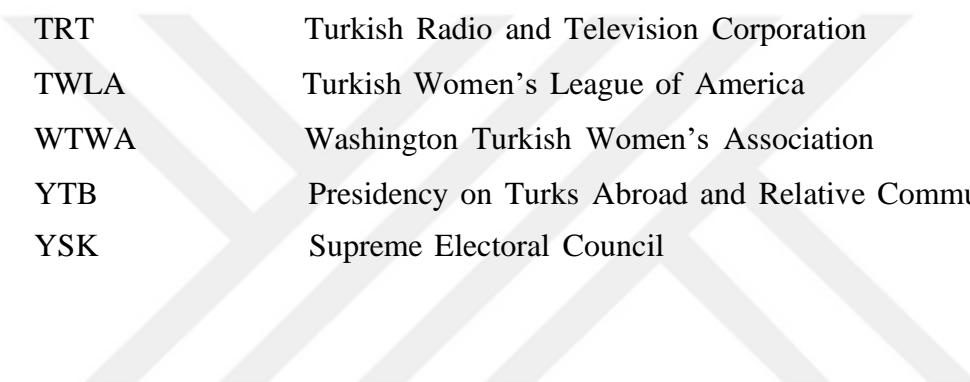
TABLE OF CONTENTS

ETHICAL CONDUCT	iii
ABSTRACT	iv
ÖZ	vi
DEDICATION	viii
ACKNOWLEDGMENT	ix
TABLE OF CONTENTS	x
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xii
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
1.1 Research Questions	4
1.2 Methodology	6
1.3 Research Findings	9
1.4 Plan of the Thesis	11
Chapter 2: The Oritical Framework	14
2.1 Transnationalism	14
2.2 Diasporas	16
2.3 Diaspora Engagement Policies	23
2.4 Diaspora Diplomacy	27
Chapter 3: Transformation of Turks in U.S. Different Migrants in Different Periods	30
3.1 Associations of Turks in the Late 19th Century and Early 20th Century	33
3.2 Migrations Between 1945-1980	34
3.2.1 Associations Between 1945-1980	36
3.3 Transformation in the 1980s	40
3.3.1 Associations in the 1980s	42
3.4 After 2000s	45
3.4.1 The Term of AKP	47
3.4.2 Associations after 2000s	49
Chapter 4: Before 2010 is State More Innovative?	52
4.1 Turkish Population	52
4.2 Associations Before 2010	54

4.3 Novelties made by Turkish State for Citizens	
Living Abroad before 2010	56
4.3.1 Ministry of foreign affairs	56
4.3.2 Diyanet.....	57
4.3.3 MoNE	57
4.3.4 Yunus Emre institute.....	57
4.3.5 Departments of Turkish studies.....	58
4.3.6 Economy	59
4.3.7 Right to vote and to be elected.....	59
Chapter 5: After 2010 New Actors Welcomed	63
5.1 YTB. (The Presidency for Turks Abroad and Relative Communities)	63
5.1.1 Right to vote abroad after YTB.....	65
5.1.2 Socio-cultural life and education after YTB	66
5.2 Ministry of Foreign Affairs.....	68
5.3 Diyanet Center of America	75
5.4 Novelties made by Turkish State for Citizens Living Abroad after 2010	79
5.4.1 Ministry of trade.....	80
5.4.2 MoNE	81
5.4.3 Turkish student associations	82
5.5 TASC.....	83
5.6 Festivals	85
Chapter 6: Differences Between Pre-2010 and Post-2010	88
Chapter 7: Conclusion.....	95
KAYNAKÇA.....	102

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ABD	United States of America
ADD	Atatürk Though Association
AKP	Justice and Development Party
ANAP	Mainland Party
ATA	Assembly of Turkic American Federations
ATAA	Assembly of Turkish American Associations
ATAF.	Assembly of Turkic American Federations
ATAS	Association of Turkish American Scientists
ATC	American Turkish Council
ATS	American Turkish Society
ATSA-DC	The Assembly of Turkish Student Associations
CHP	Republican People's Party
DCA	Religious Center of America
DITIB	Religious Affairs Turkish Islamic Union
DP	Democratic Party
DTIK	World Turkish Business Council
ECHR	European Court of Human Rights
FARA	Foreign Agents Registration Act
FTAA	Federation of Turkish American Associations
HDP	Peoples' Democratic Party
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INS	Immigration and Naturalization Service
IRCA	Immigration Reform and Control Act
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MHP	Nationalist Action Party
MoNE	Ministry of National Education
MUSIAD	Turkish American Businessman Association
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
PAC	Political Action Committee
TAAC	Turkic American Alliance
TACC	Turkish American Community Center



TACS	Turkish American Cultural Society
TADF	Federation of Turkish American Associations
TAGD	Turkish American Giresuns Organization
TAIF	Turkish American Islamic Foundation
TASC	Turkish American National Steering Committee
TCA	Turkish Coalition of America
TCC	Turkish Cultural Centers
TIKA	Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency
TOBB	Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Türkiye
TOKTEN	Transfer of Knowledge Through Expatriate Nationals
TUSIAD	Turkish Industrialists and Businessmen Association
TRT	Turkish Radio and Television Corporation
TWLA	Turkish Women's League of America
WTWA	Washington Turkish Women's Association
YTB	Presidency on Turks Abroad and Relative Communities
YSK	Supreme Electoral Council

Chapter 1

Introduction

From the Ottoman Empire to the establishment of the Republic of Türkiye and its aftermath, the migration of Turks to the United States is known. The first known migrations started with different ethnic groups going to America at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, and they still continue today. Migration from Türkiye to America took place in masses or individually due to different ethnicities, structures and reasons. Some of those who came returned to their country after a while, while others settled down and started a new life and business. Today, the Turkish-American society has become an example of a transnational society. The reason why they are called transnational is that they live their lives in a transnational social space and develop inclusive identities in terms of both the country of origin and the country of migration (Özgür, 2018).

International migration inherently creates transnational connections. The transnational socio-cultural, economic and political exchanges that some states have put in place are incentives for migrant citizens of these states to maintain ties with their homeland (Abadan-Unat, 2017).

States' studies on diaspora politics have increasingly shown a demand for establishing stronger ties with the citizens of source countries living abroad (Gamlen et al, 2019; Ragazzi, 2014 & Adamson, 2018). Thus, scholars got importance to engage with states' motivations towards to diasporas (Ragazzi, 2014).

In a globalizing world, it is no longer possible to ignore transnational societies. Today, in a world where globalization consists of unlimited commitments and flows, policy makers of states that see migration as a path to development want to create some promising practices that will be in the interests of their countries. The Turkish state has also made moves in this regard (Şenay, 2021). Therefore, with the increase in transnational migration, the Republic of

Türkiye has become concerned with the rights and requests of its people living far from their homeland.

In this framework, some constitutional regulations have been introduced. With the "obligations of the state towards citizens living abroad", which were the outcome of the 1982 Constitution, the state was held responsible for meeting the family unity, social security, cultural and social needs of Turks abroad (Şenay, 2021). In this case, the Turkish state has developed new policies to establish relations with transnational communities. Communities living far from their homeland, on the other hand, tend to accept a role that will shape "solidarity with their homeland" due to the emotional ties they feel to their country of origin. For this reason, the "grassroot" becomes important to benefit from the experience of the transnational community and to act on behalf of national interests. From the 1982 Constitution until the AKP government came to power, cultural improvements rather than policy change were observed.

However, President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, in his speech where he met with representatives of the Turkish-American society during his visit to Washington in 2019:

"We have created solid bridges between our 6,5 million citizens who have established a life for themselves in nearly 100 countries of the world and our 82 million people living in our 81 provinces. We increased the number and quality of the services we provide to our citizens living abroad by making positive discrimination when necessary. Today, each of our brothers and sisters living abroad feels the power of the Republic of Türkiye on their side more than 17 years ago. Türkiye's successes in economy, democracy, defense industry and foreign policy also raise your position here" (TCBB, 2019).

Based on this speech, it should be said that migration from Türkiye to the U.S. also affects some fundamental issues in terms of Turkish-American relations. For this reason, the Republic of Türkiye, which allocates a certain budget to U.S. lobbying companies every year to create public opinion and protect the country's interests, wants to conceive a new momentum between

Türkiye and U.S. with the homeland-society relationship it has established in the U.S. because a strong transnational society has a say in the host country. Ties between the home country and the host country is created and strengthened by the transnational society. Thus, the political field of the transnational society expands (Soysal, 1997). For this reason, it is thought that the Turkish-American society in the U.S. can have an impact on improving the relations between the two countries and protecting Türkiye's interests in the U.S. In addition, when the policies of the Turkish state towards its citizens living abroad evolved into the idea of "those of us living abroad", sensitivity on issues such as "protecting national values", "national culture" and "mutual interests" began to be expected from them. Based on these reasons, the ideal of connecting the transnational Turkish society to their homeland has emerged (Aydin, 2014).

The participation policies and institutional infrastructures created aimed to facilitate political, economic and cultural transfer between the homeland and the transnational society. In this context, structures such as schools, media, associations and think tanks have a work to do.

However, as is well known, while state-community relations were expected to improve with the establishment of YTB after 2010, policies remained limited for a period. One of the biggest reasons was the Gezi Protests and the perceived disproportionate use of force by a certain group of people. After this tension that disrupted state-citizen relations, the failed coup attempt in 2016 led to a rupture between the Turkish community in the US. These days, political moves are in constant flux and evolution.

I have been working on this research for more than a year in order to understand the citizen-state relations in the eyes of the Turkish state. The important point in my research is how the state policies of the Republic of Türkiye are shaped with respect to Turks in the United States. In this context, to identify the transformation and breaking points of policies from first migrations to the present was the key. For this reason, to understand the context, I examine different factors which is affected state-citizen relations, also research includes the tools it uses in cultural diplomacy, the lobbying activities it conducts, and the language opportunities it offers to Turks abroad.

On the other hand, this study examines either construction of the socio-cultural structure of the Turkish-American society which is discussed from very different and complex perspectives in the literature and or how the presence of Turks in the United States was shaped in a historical context. It is my greatest hope that my work will contribute to the literature with a holistic approach in terms of the Turkish-American society's relationship with their homeland and state institutions. In this context, the process that continues especially after the establishment of YTB will be a breaking point for the research.

This thesis discusses how the relationship between the Republic of Türkiye and its transnational citizens has been shaped and how the policies of state institutions have changed.

How the social, cultural and political needs of Turks living in the U.S. are provided by the state is also a subject detailed in the research. In short, the all aspects of these policies implemented by the state of origin are discussed. I examine the Turkish state's relations with Turks living in the U.S and its attitude towards them, the support of lobbying activities and the extent to which it helps its citizens in the association processes, and its cooperation with associations.

1.1 Research Questions

This research discusses how the relations between the Republic of Türkiye and the Turkish society in America have changed in the historical context, evaluates the socio-cultural, political and commercial transformations of the policies of the homeland state in line with the decisions taken by the policy makers of the governments, and evaluates the changes in the AKP's (Justice and Development Party) power, which has been in power since 2002. The point is to examine how the approach to transnational communities as changed compared to previous governments. Thus, I discuss the historical process from the beginning of the 19th century to the present by dividing it into 5 parts. My main aim is to examine to what extent and in what way the approach to transnational society continues with the establishment of YTB, using state resources. In short, my work will be of interest to those who try to understand how the Turkish state's policies on its citizens living abroad have been developed and transformed over

time and its multi-layered nature and diaspora governance politics specifically for Turks in America.

The topic is important to discuss because immigrants, the actors of international migration, become permanent in the places they go to, states have begun to deal more closely with their transnational communities and obtain elements beneficial to the homeland from them (Gamlen, 2011 & Kastoryano, 2000). In this context, states have decided to reshape their ties with their citizens living abroad (Aksel, 2019). The study seeks answers to questions such as the *level of state-citizen relations* and *the status of policies in periods when Türkiye's political perspective* has changed. In this context, the study also answers the questions of *how policies developed and changed before and after the establishment of YTB in 2010?*, and *what is its impact on citizen-state relations*. That is because different resources and opportunities of diaspora institutions are used for the purposes of the state (Gamlen, 2010). Thus, institutional changes are important in terms of the purpose and structure of the state.

Many countries around the world like Türkiye have started to see their transnational citizens as elements that can provide benefits to their homelands. In particular, it is known that with the establishment of the Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities (YTB) after 2010, there has been a demand for continuous support from the transnational society to Türkiye, even requests such as "acting in the national interest" on behalf of the state (Şenay, 2021). The reason for conducting this study with consideration of the policies of the Republic of Türkiye is the transformation of the AKP government's proactive diaspora participation policies into institutionalized communication with the diaspora (De Haas, 2007).

On the other hand, the connection between the Turkish-American society and the Republic of Türkiye is complex. Furthermore, the presence of Turks in the United States does not present a homogeneous appearance (Akıncı, 2002). Based on all of these, it is decided to examine the state-society relationship through the lens of Turks living in the U.S. with different ideologies and to analyze the impact like the FETO¹ on the transnational Turkish society, in order to understand the challenges and trials the state faces in reaching Turkish-Americans, who are spread across wide geographical regions different from European countries.

¹ Islamist movement that attempted a coup d'état in TR, 2016 due to its illegal status and staffing they have.

Additionally, the fact that lobbying activities are legal in the U.S. and projects carried out within the scope of diaspora policies can be more easily implemented in the U.S. also plays an important role in selecting the Turkish society in America as the subject of this research. However, the important point here is that NGOs cannot carry out lobbying activities. Under the principles of FARA¹, lobby companies or PACs for foreign countries must report their activities to the Department of Justice. This is intended to inform the public about pressure groups that may have a word in American Congress (Khalilov, 2008).

While the study examines the policies of the Republic of Türkiye towards the transnational society in a historical sense, it considers YTB as the breaking point as I mentioned before. In this context, it can be attributed as important because it is a very new study and the depth of its field.

1.2 Methodology

Three different methods were used in this study. In the first stage, the literature was examined through secondary literature review. Publications of other researchers providing research results could be given as examples of sources of secondary literature review. In encyclopedias, books and review articles, authors summarize previous research and provide information about the results (Büyüköztürk, 2013). In this context, studies on how transnational migrations were shaped and the effects of the Turkish government's diaspora participation policies on Turks in America will be examined through a secondary literature review. The historical transformation of policies was discussed systematically and then the breaking and transformation points of policies on Turks in America were emphasized. The importance of literature review was important in terms of understanding the information obtained as a result of previous research in academic literature.

In the second stage, qualitative research was conducted to collect and analyze data from the field. Qualitative research is a type of research created by data collection methods such as observation and document analysis. It represents

¹ See also. <https://www.justice.gov/nsd-fara>

the process of examining events and phenomena in a holistic manner in a realistic environment, and examines human and social behavior (Baltaci, 2017). “Qualitative researchers are interested in understanding the meaning people construct, that is, how people make sense of their world and their experiences in it” (Merriam, 2009 & Guest et al., 2013). The reason for using qualitative research in this research is to make sense of social phenomena and interpret them (Babie, 2014).

There are many data collection methods in qualitative research, but in this study, semi-structured in-depth interviews were used. It is a technique in which the flow is determined according to the answers given in order to reach the desired information (Polat, 2022). In this context, as Brinkmann and Kvale (2009) state, the main aim is to access the "information that is transmitted in narrative form".

The third stage of the study includes scanning and analysis of parliamentary resources. Politics methodology has worked to develop methods such as interviewing, observation, archival research and case analysis from the qualitative research method as well as the quantitative method for political analysis (Eldem, 2020). Based on this, analysis of historical transformation from past to present is possible by scanning old sources and examining similarities/differences. In my research, I examine archive documents, minutes, interviews and other documents in order to understand the historical process (George, Bennett, 2005). My research includes both literature review and archive research. I also aim to establish relations (George & Bennett, 2005; Bennett & Elman, 2006) between the literature regarding the subject I study and common observations in the interviews based on my fieldwork conducted with qualitative methods ie. my datas.

Finally, it should be noted that my research has exploratory aspects, considering that it also addresses actors and processes that are not mentioned in the literature. In social sciences, it is important to gain new perspectives on a research topic (Babie, 2014). There are important reasons why this study examines transnational policies on Turks in America. As is frequently stated in the research, the heterogeneous structure that Turks in America have formed

over time requires understanding their relationship with each other and the dimension that state-society relations have gained. Historical consideration of the diaspora engagement policies of the homeland on the transnational society is also important for examining the transnational, political and social practices of immigrants chronologically. For these reasons, selecting this case for the research was valuable.

In this study, the respondents were determined by snowball method. In snowball sampling, a contact is established with one of the units in the universe, and then with the help of the person with whom the contact is established, another one is contacted, and then another one is contacted in the same way (Gürbüz, 2008). In this way, the respondents are expanded in a chain. Snowball sampling allows for the tracing of networks and relationships (GAR, 2019).

For the collection of data in the research, active or retired state officials who are familiar with the subject were needed. I was able to reach other officials through the government officials I interviewed. There is concern about people working in state institutions sharing information belonging to the state (Aksel, 2022). For this reason, the people I conducted research with are from the group stated as hard-to-reach. A series of bureaucratic correspondence and permissions were obtained before the fieldwork of this research I conducted in state institutions began, and the research was presented to the Turkish Embassy, Consulate Generals in U.S. and Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs in all aspects. As a result, in this research with hard-to-reach individuals, the mode of access to information and privacy were prioritized. In this context, the identities, demographic information and institutions of the respondents were not disclosed throughout the research.

For the research, I needed to interview government officials who are still in office or retired. Therefore, I interviewed those who are familiar with the subject of my research, that is, those who have worked on the subject. I also reached other officials through the guidance of the respondents I interviewed. Thus, as mentioned above, with the snowball sampling method, which is used in social sciences and especially in qualitative research, I reached the respondents in order and conducted a part of the fieldwork. That is because, snowball sampling is another widely used method for reaching hard-to-reach groups (Aksel, 2022).

In this study, "overt-active participant observation", one of the participant observation methods was used. Within this method, active observation is when the researcher takes part in the daily activities of the group (DeWalt, 2011). I continued my observations as part of the group in which I conducted my study. In this type of research, it is considered necessary to prefer the role of "participant observer" in order to eliminate the distrust or concern about the research by the target audience (Aksel, 2022).

In addition, my respondents were also aware of the research. Thus, in order to collect data, I interned at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Republic of Türkiye and the Embassy of the Republic of Türkiye in Washington, respectively. During my time in both institutions, I participated in events, invitations and festivals. Especially being in charge of events in the U.S. turned into an opportunity for me to observe Turks, Turkish associations and other actors.

On the other hand, due to the ethical concerns of the research, information about the respondents, such as age and gender, cannot be openly disclosed for the confidentiality of the relationship between the researcher and the target audience. Also, any information about the respondents could lead to the disclosure of their identity. However, the research was conducted by interviewing the undersecretaries, officials and attachés of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Turkish Embassy in Washington, several Turkish Consulates General in the United States, YTB, Diyanet Center of America, and other ministries as deemed necessary.

Positionality plays an important role in the collection, organization and interpretation of data in research (GAR, 2019). Thus, for the success of my study, I established one-to-one and sincere contacts in the interview environment. For this reason, since I worked in the institutions I discussed in the thesis, the study was written within a certain framework and the sensitivity of state institutions was observed.

In 2022-2023, I spent three months in Türkiye (Ankara) and eight months in the United States (Washington D.C.). Ankara and Washington D.C. were important for the research for two reasons. The first is that state institutions are located in Ankara, and the second is that the Turkish Embassy in the U.S. and other institutions of the Turkish state are headquartered in Washington D.C.

Semi-structured interviews conducted in the two capitals yielded interviews with 20 active government officials. The interviews, all of which were face-to-face, lasted approximately 40 minutes and were not audio-recorded at the request of the participants. The data of the semi-structured interviews were collected by taking notes of the answers given.

The fieldwork was challenging in terms of time and resource utilization. In particular, some of the state officials who were requested to be interviewed were unable to make appointments due to their full agendas, which led to limitations.

However, it should be noted that no political difficulties were encountered during this period, but I should state that since I have been observing to Turkish foreign missions and Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Foreign Affairs for a long time, the use of ministry jargon in my discourses can be seen as a difficulty for the academic research.

1.3 Research Findings

In this research, the changes in state policies before and after 2010 were observed. The effects of YTB, the first diaspora institution and one of the soft power elements of the state, were also analyzed through the plans and projects of the state and the coordination of state institutions with each other, and the relationship between the citizen and the state was also analyzed.

For this reason, in order to make sense of the process, many factors have been examined, from the reasons for the first migration to the way in which associations, lobbying activities and different policies implemented by political powers have been carried out over time. Public diplomacy efforts have been made to ensure cooperation and coordination between institutions and NGO in strategic communication, promotion of the country. The transformation was found to be as follows:

It is commonly mentioned in the literature that the Turks who had migrated from the Ottoman Empire to the U.S. in the 19th century decided to change the continent due to economic and political problems, especially the order they were not satisfied with. It is obvious that the first group of immigrants were uneducated, and they were mostly young men who came to the U.S. to work. Later, with the establishment of the Republic of Türkiye, most Turks were called back to their homeland, but for those who remained in the U.S., a new era had begun. Here, it is known that Turks have become more sensitive to social issues and have come together from time to time and established the foundations of associations. A group of Turks, such as academics and students who wanted to both study and teach at prestigious American universities, and professionals who wanted to multiply their success in business life, continued their presence in the U.S. This was the first time the concept of "brain drain" was encountered in the literature.

In the following process, Turks, who for a long time played the role of "workers" bringing foreign currency to their country from abroad, came to a different position in the eyes of the state with the transformations brought about by the 1981 Constitution. Here we see that Türkiye has now embarked on a path to change its image abroad by emphasizing diaspora policies. As the meaning of their existence changed in the eyes of the state, the social structures of the Turks in America also changed. As far as we observe here, trans-national citizens, given the role of "public diplomats", have been used to change the image of Türkiye in the world public opinion on issues such as education and culture, which are Türkiye's soft power. The state has assumed a guiding and protective role in transnationalism through innovations and improvements in its institutions. In this context, trying to fulfill the rights and requests of citizens to some extent was seen as an important step. Especially the AKP government, which came to power after 2000, implemented different diplomacy methods.

Before 2010, as the institutions whose infrastructure was planned became visible afterwards, and especially as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs cooperated with these diaspora institutions, it was deemed necessary to establish close ties in the state-citizen relationship and to strengthen the communication of Turkish diplomats in foreign missions with citizens. However, it is known that Turks

with different ideologies do not have the same relationship with the state. The important point here is that the state adopts an "embracing" attitude and adhere to the principle of "non-discrimination". As is known, lobbying activities in the United States are legal. In this context, Türkiye's "empowerment" through associations and lobbying firms would serve the "Strong Türkiye" image, which has been on the agenda frequently lately. Here, too, as we will see in detail in the research, the presence of Turks in the U.S. has failed to make an impact due to both the dilemmas created by the Turks themselves, such as ideological concerns and financial inadequacies, and the elements that break the unity in the society, such as congregations and pandemics. In other words, the association and lobbying activities of Turks in the U.S. which have accelerated considerably compared to the past, have still not reached sufficient dimensions in the eyes of the state. In this respect, it is important that all actors that can unify such as YTB, DCA, TASC, ATAA, etc. work in coordination according to the policies of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the duties and needs of foreign missions. In this regard, it follows that the empowerment of foreign missions and their communication with citizens continues today.

1.4 Plan of the Thesis

This thesis is consisted of seven chapter with an introduction and conclusion. At this moment, to be able to position on my arguments in the wider literature, I present the Chapter 2 which examines the theoretical framework, focusing on the transnationalism, diasporas, diaspora engagement policies and diaspora diplomacy. Thus, I examined the theoretical basis for Turkish migration to the U.S. For this reason, I first conceptualized transnational migrations and saw that "people living in places other than their countries of birth establish links between their countries of origin and their destination countries and form transnational communities". This was an important conclusion for me to understand to what extent Turks in the U.S. protect the physical, legal and institutional interests of their state. I also examined different dynamics, such as how non-state actors, associations, and citizens living in places other than their country of birth can or should relate to their countries of origin. In this way, important points emerged, such as the rights that states grant to their citizens and

the need for political institutionalization. Based on these foundations, I sought an answer to the question of whether Turks in the United States are to be called a "transnational society" or a "diaspora" and did not use the term "Turkish diaspora" for the rest of the thesis. In short, the theoretical framework served as a guide for the shaping of the subsequent chapters of the thesis.

In Chapter 3, I present the history of migration from Türkiye to the United States and the historical transformation of Türkiye's state policies towards the Turkish-American society from 19th century until 2000s. In this chapter, I realized how the social and political structure of Turks in the U.S. has changed over time. I examined the importance of developments in the world and in Türkiye on migration to the U.S. I concluded that the heterogeneous structure of Turks living in the U.S. poses a challenge in terms of association and institutionalization of associations. I also talked about how the perception of immigrants in the eyes of the state has changed in the historical process. The information I obtained in this chapter was meaningful as a preliminary preparation for examining the recent changes in diaspora engagement policies and the state-citizen relationship.

In Chapter 4, I emphasize that a cosmopolitan Turkish presence has emerged under the influence of globalization. In this framework, migration to the U.S. has continued to increase. The expectations of the Turkish state from the Turkish society also increased during this period. The problems of the Turks, who have been given political and diplomatic responsibilities, have become more visible for the state. The state, with all its institutions, started to pursue a policy to meet the socio-cultural, religious and educational needs.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs increased the number of personnel in its representations abroad and expanded consular services. Mosque associations supported the organization of Turks in the US. With the growth of the transnational Turkish society, some important issues such as the right to vote abroad came to the agenda. An examination of all these developments shows us the necessity of YTB, which will be operational as of 2010.

Chapter 5 examines the post-2010 period by making comparisons with the pre-2010 period. The long-standing idea that there should be an institution to deal with Turks abroad was realized and YTB was established. In this section, the innovations and services for the diaspora coordinated by YTB and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were supported by other state institutions. In line with YTB's mission, the areas of soft power were expanded and the idea of "we are with you" for citizens abroad was emphasized. After 2010, the DCA was opened to meet the needs of the Turkish and Muslim society in the US. It was intended to be a "meeting point", but as we will see in the related section, there are controversial points on the subject.

Chapter 6 analyzes the differences before and after YTB. In this context, answers are sought to questions such as to what extent YTB's work abroad is successful and whether diaspora institutions are effective in the U.S.

In my concluding chapter, for the last time, I explain why I chose Türkiye as my homeland in the research. Then, I discuss the advantages and disadvantages of seeing citizens abroad as "bridges" and "potential representatives" between the two states. I summarize the initiatives and efforts necessary to preserve the Turkish self abroad. I also argue that "common concerns" are the unifying factor for the Turkish society in the U.S., which has different ideologies and socio-cultural levels. Again, I explain the importance of grassroots politics, arguing that there are practices of the state in line with "national interests" to consolidate Turks. However, at this point, I emphasize that the Turkish-Islamic synthesis does not have a unifying role. Finally, as a researcher who has been in close contact with both the state and citizens and associations in the US during my research, I point out that as the U.S. continues to be a center of attraction for Turks, new needs will emerge, and that this active topic can be revisited with all other dynamics after my research. I claim that the greatest contribution of this research to the literature is the examination of state-citizen relations up to the present day.

Chapter 2

Theoretical Framework

In this chapter, the theoretical framework is shaped around transnationalism, diaspora, diaspora engagement policies and diaspora diplomacy. First of all, by addressing the concept of transnationalism, the idea that transnational societies have gained a new dimension beyond the physical and political borders of the state is put forward. Then, by examining the concept of diaspora, it is argued that not all migration is forced migration and by analyzing the literature discusses "some points that are important for a community" to become a diaspora.

In that point, the Turkish-American community mentioned in the thesis is not called "diaspora" in line with inferences such as "not being well-organized" and "the majority of the community does not have a future plan for the homeland". Throughout the thesis, the Turks in America are referred to as "Turkish-American Society" within the framework of the definition of "transnational community". This is because, in order to define transnational communities as diaspora, it is necessary to integrate into the politics, economy and society of the host country, to invest in it and to establish tangible and intangible ties.

The theoretical framework is followed by a description of how diaspora engagement policies work and their requirements. In this context, the impact of communities in the country of residence and their role in foreign policy are discussed. Then, the impact of diaspora diplomacy on the "soft power" of countries, such as culture, arts and education, is explained.

2.1 Transnationalism

Approximately 3% of the world's population lives in countries other than where they were born. Therefore, new definitions have emerged in international migration writing in the globalizing world. One of these is the concept of "transnationalism". Transnationalism can be expressed as maintaining national

and religious ties in the home country and host country. For some, "transnationalism" has not been considered as a phenomenon separate from the broader definitions of globalization. For Faist (2010), transnational ties occur outside the borders of at least two states. In addition, different dynamics based on national identity created by the sense of "common homeland", legal-political rights and duties on their homeland, social values and norms, and making and accepting or rejecting social order have been revealed (Norris, 2011 & Ronkainen, 2011).

Historically, the concept of "transnational" used in social sciences since the 1970s has generally been interpreted as "multiple ties and interactions that bring together people and institutions outside the borders of nation-states". In 1971, Keohane and Nye used the term "transnational" to emphasize the importance of global interactions and the role of interstate policies. Three important developments have created global economic and technological conditions for transnational communities. These are 1) the liberalization, globalization, and flexibility of capitalism, 2) the development of new technologies in telecommunications, especially in long-distance communication and 3) the facilitation and cheapening of transportation as a result of innovations in the transportation sector (Faist, 2000).

After then, the concept of "transnationalism" was re-conceptualized by Schiller, Bash, and Blanc-Szanton in the early 1990s. While the previously referred to "transnationalism" covered cross-border financial operations and organized companies economically, the redefined "transnationalism" by Schiller, Bash and Blanc-Szanton (1992) is known as the construction of social spaces where immigrants' countries of origin and the place they live in penetrate each other. According to them, "transnationalism is the emergence of a social process in which immigrants establish social spaces that transcend geographical, cultural, and political boundaries." In other words, people who live in different countries from their birthplace have established ties between their home and destination countries and have formed communities that we call "transnational". These communities, which sometimes tend to protect their "homes" even if they are far from their countries of origin, have the idea of having a "common homeland" (Schiller et al. 1992).

In addition, transnationalism refers to the creation of "new subjectivities" in the global world by those who also identify themselves as "here and there" (Nonini & Ong, 1997).

In Aksel's (2016) article, transnationalism is described as a complex structure of trans-border transactions that involve consent, objection, and other dynamics, rather than the linear spread of ideas and norms, which is different from globalization. Because the concept of transnationalism, along with states' efforts to protect their physical, legal, and institutional interests, creates new dynamics on non-state actors and people who reside in countries other than their place of origin. As Bauböck (2003) also notes, political transnationalism is more than just political activities within regional boundaries. One of the significant points between migrants and their home countries is their legal, economic, and political status in their country of origin. People who reside abroad also need to maintain their status in their home countries. Those who have not severed their socio-political ties with their home country want to institutionalize their position in economic, political, and social matters, and have a say in matters such as taxation, social security and political influence, including the right to vote and be elected (Østergaard-Nielsen, 2003). For Glick-Schiller, transnational communities who are not entirely dependent on the country they reside in can continue to strengthen their ties with their home country as globalization and communication continue to develop (Glick-Schiller, 1995). In this context, the definition of diasporas should also be examined.

2.2 Diasporas

It is thought that the Greek definition of diaspora comes from the ancient Greek word 'dia sperio' (Yıldız, 2013). According to different views, it emerged from a word meaning "scattering" by combining the words 'dia' and 'speirein' (Bauman, 2010). Briefly, the first definition of diaspora is known as "forced dispersion". It was first used to refer to the Greeks in the Hellenic world, and then to the Jews in the early 6th century (Britannica, 2023). It refers to the spatial displacement of cultures and social relationships with geographical dispersion. (Sağlam, 2020).

According to Bauböck, diaspora is primarily the dispersal of a society from common origin to different geographical regions. Diaspora communities maintain their collective consciousness. It also develops good relations with the host country. In this way, they carry out political work for their homeland with views arising from collective consciousness. However, as it is known, not all immigrant communities are called diaspora. In this context, according to Bauböck, the first generation of diaspora societies are constantly renewed, which means continuity of migration. The identity created by the diaspora continues to be transferred to the next generations even if the flow of migration is not ensured (Bauböck, 2010).

Moreover, the term diaspora was first used in Hebrew to refer to the colonies established by the Jews expelled from Babylon and people who had to live far away from their homeland (Shuval, 2003). Simon Dubnov was the first to use the diaspora concept in a sense other than explaining what Jews experienced, and the meaning of the word expanded (Hilbrenner, Lutes & Zielinski, 2008).

In this context, in the social sciences, before the 1950s, the diaspora concept was only defined as people who were forcibly displaced or left their homeland due to traumatic events (Eskicioğlu, 2022). Later, it was seen as any dispersion that occurs outside state borders, including voluntary migration, and the diaspora concept began to be articulated in different ways to define immigrant groups and determine diasporization processes (Bruneau, 1995; Dorai et al, 1998 & Shuval, 2003). Cohen (1997) criticized the requirement for diasporas to be mandatory or traumatic and included communities that left their homeland according to their wishes in the diaspora. It is often used as shorthand for any transnational group that maintains a sense of national or ethnic collective identity by cultivating strong ties with each other and with their real or imagined homeland (Adamson, 2016).

As it is known, different definitions were made for diasporas, which came to the fore more frequently after the 1980s, such as "the sense of collective belonging that immigrant people who continue their ethnic traditions have not lost." Shuval (2003) defines diasporas as communities dispersed across geographical locations with ongoing migration stories but maintaining their ties.

with the homeland and preserving their collective identity. She also emphasizes that they have a multi-layered structure and says that diasporas develop themselves over time and become communities that include cultural, social, economic and political dimensions.

Different definitions of diaspora led to a confusion of terms, as every society, from migrants to expatriates, from labor migrants to refugees, was referred to as a diaspora (Eskicioğlu, 2022). In order to eliminate this vague definition, Butler (2001) said, "migration has been a part of human history since the beginning, and constant changes of place are involved, but we only call some of these groups 'diaspora'." In this case, some researchers have identified criteria to differentiate diasporas from others. Thus, classical and modern diaspora classifications began to be made in the literature.

John Armstrong's article "Mobilized and Proletarian Diasporas" (1976) has led to various typological studies on diasporas. Armstrong defines diasporas as "any ethnic society that does not have a regional basis within a specific government, extends beyond national borders, and thus has a relatively small minority in every section of governance." He attributes the reasons and consequences of migration to economic, political, and social factors (Armstrong, 1976).

In his work titled "Modern Diasporas in International Politics" (1986), Sheffer examines the role played by modern diasporas in shaping international politics and emphasizes the importance of this role. According to Sheffer, diasporas emerge as a result of the dispersion of ethnic communities to different geographical areas. Sheffer argues that modern diasporas have socio-cultural ties with their homelands, and in addition to domestic politics in their homeland, they also have a say in political issues in the host country. Sheffer highlights the significance of states recognizing the importance of diaspora communities and engaging with them in order to address migration, nationalism, and identity-related issues effectively. The study also addresses the diaspora-state relationship. In this context, the debate revolves around how governments can mobilize their diasporas. Sheffer emphasizes that diasporas can engage in

lobbying activities, raise funds, and even get involved in armed conflicts on behalf of the host country if necessary.

Furthermore, in his book (1986), Sheffer states that the concept of diaspora can be applicable not only to Jews but also to other communities that have existed before and after them.

Sheffer's examples of Greek and Chinese communities that emerged in Europe in the 19th century have provided different perspectives for other researchers (Anteby, 2005). With the inclusion of modern diasporas in migration studies, the Turkish diaspora has also been examined under the diaspora concept for the first time (Öztürk, 2015 & cited in Eskicioğlu, 2022). In this context, Sheffer argues that there are certain structural, organizational, and behavioral patterns that determine the character of a diaspora society, and he links the criteria for a society to be considered a diaspora to the following three points:

- a. Diasporas preserve and develop their collective identities in their own countries.
- b. They have a different internal organization from both their homeland and the host country.
- c. They have significant or symbolic ties with their homeland.

It can be said that Sheffer's definition and criteria bring a more political perspective to the concept of diaspora. Subsequently, in the 1990s, different typologies were proposed in the literature to understand diasporas (Anteby, Yemini & Berthomiere, 2005).

Safran, in particular, made efforts to make the term more widely used. Based on research on the history of Jews, Safran tried to categorize communities by proposing certain criteria and argued that diasporas are constructed around the relationship between "attachment to their homeland and fear of rejection in the country where they live," strengthening the formal connection between the center and the homeland (Sideri, 2008).

In his articles (1991 & 1999), Safran provided the following definitions for diasporas:

- a. Dispersed from an original "center" to at least two "peripheral" places;
- b. Maintaining a memory, vision or myth about their original homeland;
- c. Believing that they are not fully accepted by the host country and may never be accepted;
- d. Seeing the homeland of their ancestors as the ultimate destination when the time comes;
- e. Devoting themselves to the preservation or restoration of their homeland; and
- f. Being significantly tied to these continued relationships with the homeland through group consciousness and solidarity.

Diasporas that are considered to meet Safran's (1991) criteria, which are characterized by traumatic memories and pressures related to migration, can be called classical diasporas, while factors such as interactions with the homeland and host country after migration, dispersion to different places, and transformation become important for modern diasporas. Capitalism is referred to as a global consequence of modern diasporas (Kaya, 2011).

Cohen (2008) divides diasporas into two categories: classic and modern. Cohen uses the term "diaspora" to refer to all groups without taking into account any differences within the group (Cohen, 2008). According to Kaya (2011), Cohen's classification is based on changes in the global economy.

However, while all transnational communities are diasporic, not all transnational communities are diasporas. Bauböck defines diasporas as communities that have migrated from their place of birth and settled in different states, while still maintaining their collective consciousness without being completely assimilated into the host society (Bauböck, 2010). According to him, diasporas have strong ties with their homelands and are not hesitant to engage in political movements for their homeland while residing in their adopted countries.

Although all nations operate in the transnational sphere, not all of them form a diaspora (Butler, 2001; Sökefeld 2006; Başer, 2013). Eskicioğlu notes that what sets the diaspora apart from other transnational communities is their ability to sustain social mobility. In the early 1990s, Basch, Glick-Schiller, and Blanc (1994) suggested that in addition to nations existing within limited geographical boundaries, there are those who are dispersed within the borders of other states but are still socio-politically, culturally, and economically linked to their homelands. As the world becomes increasingly globalized, as Tölölyan argues, "the contact between diaspora groups scattered across different regions is important in terms of their ability to see themselves as 'a single nation scattered across different lands' and to maintain communication with one another" (Tölölyan, 1996).

In addition, to be classified as a diaspora, transnational communities integrate with the politics, economy, and society of the host country, establish financial and emotional ties, and invest in the host country. Organized diasporas participate in religious, cultural, social, and political activities in the hostcountry, as well as in associations, educational programs, cultural events, and youth movements supported by actors in their homelands (Vertovec, 1999).

IOM published a book which is named "Developing a Road Map for Engaging Diasporas in Development: A Handbook for Policymakers and Practitioners in Home and Host Countries" In this book, according to IOM: Governments at both ends of the migration cycle - the host and origin countries - recognize the value that diasporas bring to development policies, seeking ways to expand human capital and financial resources. Diaspora members assist in achieving growth and development in foreign exchange, investment, tourism, and politics." Orozco (2003) summarizes the economic involvement of diasporas under the "Five Ts": "tourism, transportation, telecommunications, trade, and transmission of monetary remittances".

Diasporas that have strong ties with both the host society and their homeland can be influential in domestic and foreign politics, play a good lobbyist role, and influence political developments in the homeland and host country (Lyons & Mandaville, 2010). That is why it is the government's

responsibility to protect the rights of citizens living abroad, but it is also expected that citizens act in the interest of their homeland for the sake of the state because diasporas can carry out effective activities as pressure groups (Hopyar, Topal & Tauscher, 2022) Therefore, the transnationalism of the diaspora means not only maintaining their ties with their homeland but also being involved in the politics, economy, and society of host countries and investing in them (Eskicioğlu, 2020). This creates a symbolic and material connection between the host society and other possible communities.

As it known that diaspora is not only communities that do not live in their homeland, but also a result of political situations and interests, with the emergence of the concept of transnationalism. Bauböck and Faist (2010) argue that diasporas have emerged as a project of some political elites, creating a memory and identity in line with their interests. Furthermore, globalization, which is the reason for the development of the diaspora concept today, has increased the importance of fundamental rights and freedoms in the world, and states have had to increase their interest in diasporas. In other words, diaspora communities have begun to express various cultural, political, and economic meanings for their homelands and host communities. With the concept of the "diaspora turn" introduced by Agunias (2009) in the literature, many countries and international organizations have started working with diasporas to cooperate (Agunias, 2009). Diaspora institutions represent "state-led transnationalism" (Gamlen, 2014) or "long-distance nationalism", (Schiller, Basch & Blanc, 1992) since they project domestic policies beyond their borders into diasporas as well as to those who stay at home. On the other hand, diaspora institutions also include migrant organizations which demand higher recognition by nation-states and even stipulate changes in the practices of the home country(Akçapar & Aksel, 2017).

States have expectations as much as transnational communities. Following the developments in the literature on international migration, states use the ties formed beyond their borders to determine a position for themselves in the international conjuncture. For this purpose, some states see their citizens living abroad as political, diplomatic, commercial and cultural intermediaries and begin to engage in diaspora politics.

2.3 Diaspora Engagement Policies

Diaspora engagement policies refer to the practices of a country towards its citizens living abroad. These policies are developed to value the economic, political, social, and cultural contributions of diaspora communities, respond to their needs, and maintain their ties with the country (Kolbaşı, 2022). Diaspora policies can include (Ulusoy, 2017) the following:

- a. Citizenship: Some countries allow their citizens living abroad to return to the country and regain citizenship.
- b. Investment: Some countries offer various incentives to their citizens living abroad to invest in the country.
- c. Education: Some countries offer education opportunities for their citizens living abroad to return to the country.
- d. Cultural relations: Some countries offer their citizens living abroad the opportunity to participate in cultural events in the country, thereby strengthening their relations with the diaspora communities.
- e. Political participation: Some countries provide their citizens living abroad with the opportunity to vote in elections or appoint representatives from diaspora communities to their parliaments or governments.
- f. Support abroad: Some countries offer their citizens living abroad consular services, emergency assistance, and other supports.

Diaspora policies aim to strengthen the ties between citizens living abroad and their country, benefiting both the country and diaspora communities. Diaspora Engagement Policies have increased with the recognition of the economic, cultural, and political impact of transnational communities (Kalm, 2010). States have a responsibility to their citizens living abroad; they ensure their security, protect their rights, and consider their interests as well as those of the state (Köse, 2021). Ragazzi (2014) argues that in the context of a globalized world, states recognize transnational communities as part of their nation and implement policies for them. There are two main transformations of so-called diaspora engagement policy: first, to establish diaspora organizations and

ministries and second, to begin working to encourage a diaspora among their citizens who are living abroad.

In this context, it is necessary for the citizens who will benefit from abroad to be aware of the interests of the host country. In addition, ministries guide foreign citizens according to their needs and position diaspora organizations to meet the needs of the diaspora (Urpekova, 2022). The state, which is aware of the needs of its citizens living abroad and can provide them with a range of services, will establish a form of solidarity that will bring the overseas society together as the next step (Caldarini, 2020). As stated in the European Union's report titled "For a European Policy on Diasporas," by bringing together the diaspora society through education, economy, and diplomacy, psychological support can be provided for issues such as language barriers and difficulties in accessing social welfare for your citizens living abroad (Pisco, 2021).

States support the spread of practices such as dual citizenship, political participation, voting, and being elected for their citizens living abroad (Okyay, 2015). Gamlen (2014) has observed an increase in diaspora institutions by states since the 1980s. Along with diaspora institutions, governments have made changes in public policies and implemented different policies according to the needs of diasporas (Ragazzi, 2014). Governments have implemented complicated programs for their own interests and benefits (Köse, 2021). In short, it can be said that diaspora policies revolve around language, religion, culture, and voting rights, particularly regarding voting from abroad. With the transformation of the negative attitude towards migration in migration studies, the benefits of the migrants to their homeland have started to come to the fore (Boyle & Kitchin, 2013). The view that transnational communities can benefit their homeland economically, diplomatically, and culturally has become dominant. Ragazzi (2014) has demonstrated that the diaspora brings foreign exchange to their homeland. States, not wanting to overlook the benefits brought by their citizens living abroad, have renewed their citizenship policies, accepting dual and multiple citizenship. There are also "semi-citizenship" options such as the "blue card" which is used in Türkiye.

Brubaker and Kim (2011), who attribute diaspora policies as "politics of identification," have stated that states put forward some loyalty policies to their citizens living outside their own borders. Despite attempts to fit diasporas into all definitions and criteria, they are heterogeneous structures and contain different dynamics, desires, and needs within themselves.

Dufoix (2008) tries to explain diaspora activities related to citizens living abroad on four basic points. First, solidarity within the society living independently of the homeland is at stake. Second, trans-state elements such as religion and identity are at the forefront. In the center-periphery model, the comfort and organization of the transnational society living in the country are entirely related to the homeland. In this case, "national diaspora" consolidates with institutions provided by the homeland such as embassies and schools. In Dufoix's model, it is assumed that the state is not in conflict with its citizens abroad.

For Gamlen, diaspora policies are necessary for three reasons: states are pragmatic, treat their diasporas equally, and the state-diaspora relationship needs to be well managed in the globalizing world. Gamlen (2009) sees the state as an actor that can have diasporic relations and influence in a very wide area, with his diasporic state theory, which he calls the "immigrant state system". In this system, the state is pluralistic and multi-layered (Köse, 2021). According to the theory, states have a hierarchical role in managing migration and diaspora and policies are shaped in this dimension (Gamlen, 2009).

According to Ragazzi (2014), there are three important points: countries of origin can benefit economically from their diasporas, states maintain their nationalist stance in the globalizing world, and states have management power for the economic, cultural and social situations they are in. Similarly, Koinova and Tsurapas (2018) argue that diaspora policies are shaped around economic and political gain, culture, language and nationalism.

In their study which is titled as "Explaining the Rise of Diaspora Institutions," Gamlen and his colleagues (2013) stated that states demand economic and socio-political support from their transnational communities in

international power struggles. While this utilitarian initiative suggests that diaspora policies are exploitative in the context of the center-periphery relationship, there are also theorists who argue that it is a "win-win" situation. On the one hand, sending states receive money, technology, and knowledge transfer from their transnational communities; and also immigrants continue to receive support from their homeland. Therefore, rather than fixed social groups, diasporas are now recognized as constituency-building projects that are mobilized by political and social entrepreneurs, including policy makers (Akçapar & Aksel, 2017). The political, cultural, and economic relations established between the nation-state and the diaspora can nourish a sense of belonging for both parties (Dieckhoff, 2017). In this case, the host country often questions the loyalty of the diaspora because they engage in economic activities, remittance and foreign currency transfers, share knowledge from the host country, and conduct lobbying activities in favor of their homeland (Lainer-Vos, 2010).

Diasporas are known to send money and humanitarian aid to their homelands, hire certain paid soldiers during conflict stages, engage in lobbying activities and spread propaganda, and sometimes even benefit from criminal networks (Koinova, 2011). Furthermore, Gamlen and his colleagues (2019) argue that origin countries "embrace" their citizens abroad, regardless of their status, and uphold the idea of "protecting and defending the rights of every citizen abroad." Ragazzi (2014) states that "We can see diaspora politics as a neoliberal turn hypothesis that can shape political-economic dimensions." According to him, the changes in the structure of the globaleconomic-political system after 1980 have influenced this thinking. However, in addition to all these views, Gamlen (2014) and Ragazzi (2014) argue that all factors in diaspora policies are evaluated together and that the needs of heterogeneous transnational communities are taken into account. Gamlen (2009) argues that diaspora does not have a static and homogeneous structure, and that cultural construction is also a part of diaspora politics.

All these construction processes aim to establish "living ties" between the homeland and the citizen. In this context, the homeland wants to show that it supports its citizens abroad (Budak, 2020). At the same time, these ties also affect the bilateral relations of countries. By conducting diaspora diplomacy,

states determine an "image" on behalf of their "country" to the world public opinion through their diasporas.

2.4 Diaspora Diplomacy

Diaspora diplomacy is a concept that encompasses diplomatic activities directed towards a country's citizens and diaspora communities abroad. Such activities are carried out as an extension of a country's policies towards its diaspora communities and among their objectives are strengthening the ties of citizens living abroad with their country, promoting policies towards diaspora communities, promoting the country's culture and values, developing economic and commercial relations, increasing international cooperation, and enhancing the country's international influence (McConnell, 2017). Diaspora diplomacy is carried out through meetings, events, visits, communication activities, and other diplomatic activities with citizens living abroad and diaspora communities. Such activities not only strengthen relationships with citizens living abroad and diaspora communities, but also serve the cultural, economic, and political interests of a country. Diaspora diplomacy has become a policy adopted by many countries today (IFAIR, 2018). Especially with the increasing globalization and migration, citizens living abroad and diaspora communities play an important role in their countries' economic, political, and cultural life. Therefore, diaspora diplomacy is an important tool to increase a country's international influence.

The use of soft power is known in diaspora diplomacy. First introduced by Joseph Nye, "soft power" is the use of cultural and social actors to strengthen a nation-state's relations with its citizens and diasporas abroad (Nye, 1990). Nye (1990) argues that a country's power and influence cannot be measured solely by its economic and military presence. One way to introduce a country's cultural heritage, music, art, sports, and other values is through its citizens living abroad. This way, the loyalty of transnational communities to their homeland increases, and citizens who prioritize their sense of belonging can find motivation to support their homeland. In addition to this, Nye (1990) argues that such activities increase a country's presence and visibility in the international arena. Soft power is more cost-effective than military and economic power and creates elements that can increase a country's prestige. Nye sees "soft power" as important for

increasing a country's attractiveness and recognition of its values by other countries. In diaspora diplomacy, soft power aims to win sympathy in the host country through a country's transnational communities. In other words, this situation enables a country to leave positive impressions culturally, politically, and economically and gain a prestigious position in the international area (Nye, 1990).

Tsourapas (2022) argues that diaspora diplomacy is a foreign policy strategy, which involves policies put in place by states to regulate their relationships with transnational communities. According to him, communities living outside their homeland facilitate a state's access to resources abroad. Through this policy strategy, states understand the needs of transnational communities, protect citizenship rights, and collaborate with them. As I mentioned earlier, with the shift from negative to positive perceptions of migration in the international migration literature, states aim to establish close relationships with migrant communities. Diaspora diplomacy determines the relationship of a state with its transnational communities and its place in international politics (Adamson, 2018). For this purpose, public diplomacy tries to attract the interest and support of target audiences and positively influence the public opinion and image of target countries using various tools and methods (Aksel, 2017).

Tsourapas (2022) has stated that diaspora diplomacy has become an important element of foreign policy for many states. However, it should be noted that there is also the possibility of conflict and tension between the wrongly implemented diaspora policies and the countries that want to protect their own interests. In addition, the success of these policies also depends on the socio-cultural and political factors of the target country and the success rate may vary. In the event of incorrect planning of public diplomacy, the public opinion in host countries may be negatively affected, and the desired goals may be reversed (Tsourapas, 2022).

In short, the diaspora institutions of the state pursue two objectives: Firstly, they attempt to impose their country's domestic policies on transnational communities. Secondly, diaspora institutions aim to increase the visibility of

immigrant organizations through their activities (Akçapar & Aksel, 2017). States use "public diplomacy" to reinforce their professional image in the transnational arena. By seeking different ways to employ this effective tool, states aim to transform their diplomatic activities into government-people relations and involve civil society organizations in the game (Akçapar & Aksel, 2017). States encourage lobbying activities and efforts within the diaspora to work towards a common goal. Soft power is more easily used in diaspora diplomacy compared to hard power tools such as military and economic power. Furthermore, soft power is more sustainable and effective for states (Arkılıç, 2022). According to Arkılıç (2022), persuading a state or actor with soft power in diaspora diplomacy, influencing the people and their leaders, and achieving foreign policy objectives within one's own country are much easier and effortless.

At this stage, states also impose certain responsibilities on their diasporas. This is because diasporas can enhance the state's position in international politics. At the same time, they play an important role in improving the relationship between the homeland and the host country in terms of creating political, economic and social impact (Hopyar, Topal & Tauscher, 2022). Diasporas constantly strive to create their transnational social spheres in the host country. They also have functions such as spreading political movements alongwith their shared cultural, ethnic, and religious heritage (Faist, 2000).

To sum, the basis on which the research will be written has been determined with the contributions of the scholars examined within the theoretical framework and the literature. In this context, it was decided not to use the definition of "diaspora" for Turks in the U.S., based on the proposition of "multiple ties and interactions that connect people or institutions across the borders of nation-states" (Vertovec, 1999). It is decided how diaspora diplomacy and diaspora engagement policies are determined and to what extent they will be used in other parts of the research. In the following chapter, the presence of Turks in the United States is discussed in a historical context. Chapter 3 discusses the period from the first Turks who went to the U.S. in the 19th century until 2000. This chapter covers the 19th-20th century, 1945-1980, the transformation in the 1980s and the period after the 2000s.

Chapter 3

Transformation of Turks in U.S. Different Migrants in Different Periods

Turkish migration to the United States has occurred in three major waves (Karpat, 1995). The end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century are considered as the first wave. It is known that in the 19th century, many Ottoman citizens migrated to the United States for various reasons. Economic and political factors were mainly responsible for these migrations. The main reasons include the higher wages paid to unskilled Turkish workers compared to their homeland and the increase in bribery and nepotism in the Ottoman Empire (Bali, 2004). In the last 20-30 years of the Ottoman Empire, a total of one million Ottoman citizens came to the United States.

Although there were occasional setbacks in terms of return and migration routes, migrations to America continued to increase in the 20th century. Moreover, it can be said that the migrations in the 20th century were based on different foundations with the modernization of Türkiye. From this perspective, it would not be wrong to talk about a Turkish migration story that changed shape over time. For example, in the 1960s, economic difficulties and political turmoil in Türkiye led to migrations for education and job opportunities. Today, opportunities in technology, science and engineering fields are among the main reasons for migration.

In this section, starting from the first migration process of Turks from the Ottoman Empire to the United States, the structure of migrations and the extent to which the state factor has been determinant and/or influential in these transformations, as well as their social structures such as the jobs and associations of Turks in America, will be discussed. In addition, the evolution of the diaspora policies of the Republic of Türkiye over time will be examined, including innovations, developments, and all steps.

According to official figures in the United States, approximately 1.2 million people migrated from the Ottoman Empire to the United States between 1820 and 1920 and settled there (Karpat, 1995).

It is mentioned that the first migrations were carried out by Greeks and Armenians. Records which kept at the end of the 19th century also show that Greeks, Azerbaijanis, Jews, Arabs, and Albanians migrated from the Ottoman Empire to the United States (Güler, 2004). There are inconsistencies in the research findings.

According to the study by Kurtuluş (1999), it is stated that 326,347 people migrated from the Ottoman Empire to the United States between 1820 and 1920. Karpat, who conducted the first detailed study on Turks, stated that the number of people who migrated to the United States between 1820 and 1931 was 415,793. According to official records, it is known that the number of people who entered the United States from the Ottoman Empire through Ellis Island between January 1892, June 1897 and 1901-1931 was 212,825 (Ellis Island, 2003). American research during the same period shows that 65,756 Armenians, 18,848 Turks and nearly 120,000 other ethnic Ottoman subjects also migrated to America.

According to Karpat (1995), there were also prominent individuals from the Ottoman Empire among the migrants, but there is not enough information about them because they were not recorded. Based on all these data, it is clearly seen that Syrians, Armenians, Greeks, Jews, and Turks, whose exact numbers cannot be known, migrated to the U.S. It is clear that the accuracy of the records kept about the Turkish population during this period raises doubts. This is because many Turks registered themselves with Christian names or declared themselves as "Syrian" or "Armenian" to facilitate their entry into the United States, which subsequently emerged (Karpat, 1995). Thus, although the history of migrations from Türkiye to the United States dates back to the 19th century, official statistics in the studies on this subject have been either insufficient or insignificant because it has become difficult to conduct research on Turks migrating to the U.S. due to the concept of "Turk." According to American sources, a "Turk" is a person who was born in the Ottoman Empire before 1923, who is Muslim himself or whose family is Muslim, and who identifies himself as "Turk" (Halman, 1980).

The majority of the first wave Turkish immigrants in the United States were generally peasants and farmers. Bilge (1997) stated in her research that 93.51% of Turkish immigrants in the United States were male. They mostly settled in Chicago, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, Detroit, and Massachusetts (Ahmed, 1986). According to Ahmed (1993), the reason why no Muslim Turkish women migrated before the end of World War I was that America was far away and a Christian country, men played the role of breadwinners in the family, and it was unknown how Muslim women would live in the destination of migration.

Güler (2004) states that Turkish immigrants in this period were disadvantaged because they did not know English and were employed in unskilled jobs. Men without occupational expertise in finding jobs in the United States were unskilled workers, and most of the women, whose number was known to be very small, were homemakers with children. Unmarried men worked as railway, mine, and factory workers and resided in developing areas of the United States. Immigrants who wanted to find jobs in factories could find them through their compatriots (Güler, 2004). Turkish immigrants who came with a large migration between 1876-1915 settled in Massachusetts, Detroit, New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, and San Francisco (Akçapar, 2009), and most Turkish workers lived in the towns of Lynn, Peabody, and Salem in Massachusetts. However, it was estimated that there were 2000 Turks living in Detroit, which had the largest Ottoman Muslim society in the country (Senouci, 2016). Turks in Detroit started working in wire drawing factories in the automotive industry (Yalman, 2001).

Sertel (1969) stated in his research in Detroit that the lives of Turks and Kurds working in Ford's automobile factory were no different from hell, and they worked in the heaviest jobs because they were unskilled. These workers worked like robots for 10-15 hours in the factory. They were not unionized, lacked knowledge, and were unaware of their rights. As the railroad advanced westward, they started living in Nebraska, California, and Texas. Considering all these reasons, Turks were leading a poor, lonely, and difficult life (Güler, 2004). Their social life was limited to going to the "kahvehane" (coffeehouse) in their spare time (Grabovski, 2005).

For this reason, there are missing elements in the association process of the first Turkish immigrants to the US. In the following section, the first association processes will be discussed.

3.1 Associations of Turks in the Late 19th Century and Early 20th Century

Association plays an important role in the development of collective consciousness and collective action of transnational communities. However, Turkish immigrants who came to the United States to escape economic difficulties in their country and intended to return when they achieved financial sufficiency have had insufficient efforts in institutionalization, organization, opening schools, and spreading culture (Oruç, 2014). There is no NGO that was established by those who went to America with the first wave of migration and has survived until today (Güngör, 2011; Akçapar, 2010 & cited in Oruç, 2014). One of the most important reasons for this is the migration restriction of Turks according to the Johnson Reed Act after World War I (Altschiller, 1995). Nevertheless, under the conditions of the period, Turks established more than 25 associations throughout America. These associations, usually established to provide funeral services and other society services, include the Turkish Aid Society and Hilal-i Ahmer (Red Crescent) as the most famous ones. The TurkishAid Society, established in New York, also had branches in regions where Turks lived intensively, such as Cleveland, Detroit and Chicago. Hilal-i Ahmer, established in 1922, was located in Detroit. Besides their society services, these associations collected significant amounts of aid for the War of Independence in the 1920s and for healing the wounds of the earthquake in Erzincan in the 1930s and sent them to Anatolia. Also, during that period, Turks started regular publications such as "Hemşehri," "Seda-i Vatan," and "Birlik" (Karpat, 1995 & Bilge, 1994). The second reason why Turkish NGOs did not become permanent and there were return migrations is the National Origins Act, which came into effect in 1924, ending mass migrations.

On the other hand, after the establishment of the Republic of Türkiye, the Turkish government offered the Turkish people in the United States the opportunity to return to their country, and most Turks returned home in response to this call (Senouci, 2016). After World War II, with the settlement of some

Turks in the United States, civil initiatives became more widespread in association activities.

The first migrations from the Ottoman Empire to America were labor migrations. Immigrants were usually men who would find jobs in certain industrial cities and send money back to the homeland. The sole purpose of these immigrants was to earn money and return to their home countries (Açehan, 2005). For this reason, they had no ideas of association and collective action. Most of them returned to their country after the establishment of the Republic of Türkiye.

3.2 Migrations Between 1945-1980

The migration of Turks to the has increased significantly again after World War II but it has not been as mass migration as in the 1900s (Ertan, 2002). Furthermore, the same study indicates that Turks who migrated after 1945 were more qualified and educated than the immigrants in the first wave. In this context, when the literature is examined, it is observed that second wave migrations have a different profile from the first wave. Turks who migrated to the United States during this period mainly settled in big cities such as New York, New Jersey, Chicago, Washington DC and Los Angeles. Many Turkish immigrants have integrated into American society and been successful in their careers. In addition, Turkish youth who adapted to the American education system have strived to have a successful career by receiving university education. Particularly, after the signing of the Fulbright agreement in 1949, numerous academics and experts also participated in programs in the U.S. (Bettie, 2015). With the Fulbright Agreement, Turkish-American students, graduates and academics were supported with scholarships. This agreement helped to establish educational and cultural relations between Türkiye and the U.S. (Aysal & Arslan, 2021).

The other evolvement is with the introduction of the States political rapprochement as a result of the Truman Doctrine in 1947 and Türkiye's NATO membership in 1952 (Özcan, 2019), Turks continued to try to find their

professional pursuits by migrating to the U.S. (Karpat, 1995). Especially, the migration of soldiers, bureaucrats and students was revitalized (Güngör, 2011).

Unlike the Turks in the first wave of migration, those who migrated from Türkiye between 1950-1980 are described as the pioneers of "brain drain" in the literature by Akçapar (2005) and Kurtuluş (1999). The reason why this professional group preferred America was the utilitarian and practical nature of the American education system (Kaya, 2003). Furthermore, the "eastern and southeastern duty in Türkiye" assigned to professionals has also been a driving factor for migration to America. Most of the Turks who migrated to the U.S. after World War II were highly educated doctors, engineers, and scientists (Evinch, 2009). Unlike the first wave of migration, this time the migrating society consisted of highly educated individuals, families, and both genders (Senouci, 2016). These immigrants, positioning themselves within American society as well-educated, high-income, middle-upper class, were inclined to easily integrate into American culture (Ahmed, 1986). Some of the Turks who migrated in the 1950s did not return to their home country and settled in the U.S. Similarly, some of the students who came to America for undergraduate and graduate education also decided to live in America (Ata, 2000/2).

On the other hand, there was a migration group, including qualified workers. Within the changes made in the Immigration Law in 1965, people from some professional groups immigrated to the U.S. (Kaya, 2006) because The Immigration Act of 1965 abolished the previous quota system, which had favored immigrants from Northern and Western Europe. Also, the new act aimed to promote family reunification and attract skilled workers from all over the world (Keely, 1971). These Turkish group had come to U.S. with the opportunities of Immigration Law too. Most of this Turkish group who moved to

U.S. with the Immigration Act were tailors and worked in a clothing workshop in Rochester until the 1980s (Akyiğit & Şan, 2021). Professionals and workers who created a life for themselves in the U.S. also began to become more organized. They established clubs in Chicago, Detroit, New York and Massachusetts and started meeting once a week (Akçapar, 2016).

3.2.1 Associations Between 1945-1980. But there was a beginning of this process. The aggressive attitude of Greek and Armenian groups towards Türkiye and the Turkish society has strengthened the social organization of the Turkish society in America. The "Turkish-Armenian Conflict" is the most important issue with a historical continuity that enables Turks in the U.S. to act together. In addition, the Turkish society stands together against the activities of the Armenian lobby in the U.S. Especially on days such as April 24, it is possible to see the unity of Turks in the U.S. (Yiğittürk-Ekiyor, 2018). As known that the strengthening of Armenian diaspora ties in U.S. is also influenced by the shaping of connections among Armenian communities through anti-Turkish propaganda (Saribayova, 2023). Also, the 1974 Cyprus Peace Operation and the Türkiye- hostile proposals presented to the U.S. Congress have sustained this tension for years.

At the same time, in the 1970s, various terrorist organizations emerged. The increasingly radicalized ASALA, initially known for assassinating Turkish diplomats, later gained significant attention in the international society for its attacks on civilians. That's why, the assassination of 50 Turkish diplomats by the ASALA terrorist organization caused great concern among the Turkish society in America too (Kaya, 2003). Turks started to organize social events by establishing communities and associations in different cities of America (Senouci, 2016). Associations, primarily established for cultural reasons, allowed the society to come together during Turkish national and religious holidays (Akçapar, 2005).

In addition, with the establishment of associations in the states, efforts were made to enable children born in the U.S to learn Turkish and be familiar with Turkish culture. Because these children were born in U.S. or when they are too young, they immigrated to U.S. (İşik-Ercan, 2014). Turkish associations try not to forget Turkish culture nevertheless these children would spend their whole life in U.S. Thus, associations supported them about two language proficiency and their adaptation of society. This generation, which looked after the interests of each other and the Republic of Türkiye and in the U.S., remained in contact with their compatriots and gradually attached importance to cultural activities. Those who could not return to Türkiye and those who came from Türkiye came together despite difficult conditions in the U.S and established the first Turkish associations in that period, which laid the foundations of TADF. Founded in 1956, TADF aimed to

bring together Turkish associations established in various regions in the U.S. under one roof. By coordinating Turkish associations in the U.S., its purpose is to promote cooperation among Turks through these associations. TADF organizes cultural activities, seminars, panels, and conferences for this purpose.²

The Turkish Cultural Alliance of New York, founded in 1933, is one of the most important formations of this period (Akçapar, 2009). In 1949, the Turkish American Society was established. In 1956, the Turkish American Associations and the Federation of Turkish American Associations (FTAA) were founded, becoming non-profit organizations representing the Turkish-American society. As an umbrella organization, FTAA which encompasses more than 50 member associations throughout the United States, aims to enhance friendship between Turkish and American people, support the learning of Turkish language and culture and implement programs to bring communities together and strengthen them through scholarships, events and festivals. The federation, which was established by the merger of three associations, strives to support the Turkish- American society not only in language and culture, but also in music, history and economy. Still, it brings companies together that want to do business with Turks and encourages the improvement of Turkish business relations (Khalilov, 2008). The most public event organized by the FTAA is the Turkish Day Parade, which has been held annually since 1980. Although the parade is unofficial, it gained official recognition in 1982 with the support of the Turkish government due to attacks by the ASALA terrorist organization targeting Turkish citizens living abroad and Turkish diplomats (Aksel, 2019). Furthermore, FTAA collaborates with government officials to protect the rights and interests of the Turkish- American society. Since 1985, the Turkish government has provided financial support to the federation and associations through the Turkish Promotion Fund. The Fund which is sub-institution of Prime Ministry was established in 1985 to disseminate Türkiye's culture, language, history, and art to the world and to

² See also. <https://tadf.info>

shape world public opinion in accordance with Türkiye's interests (Arkılıç, 2016).

With this wave of migration, Turks have become more visible in the American states where the children of those who came to America were born in the host country. Meetings and picnics have turned into larger festivals, while small associations have grown to take on the role of an umbrella association for other associations (Oruç, 2014). Associations have continued to be established according to different needs. The Turkish Women's Association of America was established in 1958, and the Turkish American Associations Council was established in 1979 (Senouci, 2016). In addition, The Atatürk School has been in service since 1971. The school started its educational life with the efforts and support of Ayla Erdamar, President of the Turkish Women's Association of America, and the then Consul General Mr. Sait Saipoğlu. In 1977, the school was moved to the Turkish House with the efforts of the then Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador İlter Türkmen and Consul General Sıtkı Coşkun.³

Atatürk School's policy is to introduce Turkish history and Atatürk to the children of Turks in America. The school curriculum is not unrelated to schools in Türkiye. Basically, the idea is that this is how ties with Türkiye can be maintained (Otçu & Grillman, 2014). The school still provides Turkish education at the primary level and at the same time teaches English to women who immigrated from Türkiye (Şanlıer & Yüksel, 2008).

In 1964, MATA was also established to serve the citizens in Maryland and Baltimore. With the leadership of Sükrü Elekdağ, who was the ambassador to Washington, ATAA (Assembly of Turkish American Associations) was established in 1979. With his contribution, this association based in Washington D.C. brought together all other associations under its umbrella (Yavuzer, 2009). ATAA, which represents 60 local branches and 500,000 Turkish Americans throughout the United States, serves locally and nationwide to develop an informed and empowered Turkish-American society and support strong U.S.- Türkiye relations. ATAA has carried out a range of activities, including

³ See also. <https://ataturkokulu.atkb.org/map/hakkimizda>

educational seminars for Turkish-American communities on grassroots advocacy and civic leadership, conferences on current political, social, and economic issues related to Türkiye and U.S.- Türkiye relations (Aksel, 2019).

In the following years, the Turkish-American society continued to strengthen, and association activities continued with the support of umbrella associations. During this period, it is known that in line with the change in the state's policies and the emergence of new dynamics of desires, needs, and interests, there were also initiatives to conduct economic and diplomatic relations, in addition to associations that tried to keep the society together with cultural activities. Initially, the demand for education, culture, and native language was responded to by sending teachers, and this was followed by institutional structures within the process, reflecting in development plans and government policies. In the mid-1960s, Turkish policymakers became concerned about the "loss of national and cultural values" (Aksel, 2019).

Religious and cultural moves were made to maintain the sense of belonging to Türkiye. Therefore, the dispatch of teachers and religious officers came to the agenda. Five years after the start of teacher assignments, the Inter-Ministerial Culture Commission was established in 1971 by the Ministry of Education and other ministries to coordinate the sending of teachers and other personnel. This commission included representatives from the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Education, and the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, and education counselors and attachés were assigned to embassies and consulates. Today, MEB has 81 representative offices abroad, 6 of them are in the U.S.

In 1975, a Directorate General of Foreign Affairs was established within the Directorate of Religious Affairs by a decision of the Council of Ministers. With the Decision of the Council of Ministers dated 24/02/1978 and numbered 7/14656, 10 foreign Religious Services Consultancy positions were opened for the first time, thus ensuring the presence of the Presidency of Religious Affairs abroad.⁴

⁴ See also. ([https://diyanet.gov.tr/tr-TR/Kurumsal\)./Detay//1/presidency-of-religious-affairs-establishment-and-history](https://diyanet.gov.tr/tr-TR/Kurumsal)./Detay//1/presidency-of-religious-affairs-establishment-and-history))

However, despite a bill being submitted to the Assembly in 1965 regarding voting rights for our citizens abroad, it did not even pass the commission stages. Other public policies, including social, cultural, educational and religious services, have

mainly been included as components in coordination efforts (Köse, 2020).

Before the 1980s, only the Ministry of Labor, the Presidency of Religious Affairs and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were active abroad. The work of these institutions was not deemed sufficient by the State Planning Organization (DPT) (Abandan, 1964).

In line with the concept of "dual citizenship" introduced in 1981 and the responsibilities given by the 1982 Constitution to the Republic of Türkiye for its citizens abroad, innovations occurred in state institutions. In the following section, the transformation that came with the 1980s will be discussed.

3.3 Transformation in the 1980s

According to official figures from the U.S. Bureau of Immigration and Citizenship, nearly 450 thousand people migrated from Türkiye between 1820 and 2000 (US Census, 2000). Some of them returned to Türkiye due to the inability to reunite with their families, the completion of their education, and various other reasons. It is assumed that approximately 16,000 people remained in 1985 (U.S. Census, 2000), and the presence of Turkish citizens in the U.S. has steadily increased. The third wave of migration accelerated with Özal's liberalization measures, and emigration from Türkiye intensified (Senouci, 2016). Özal's policies during this period influenced the profile of migrants. There was a "policy of opening up to the outside world" that Turgut Özal pursued during his tenure as prime minister and president from 1980 to 1993. This policy included measures such as promoting foreign investment, increasing exports, dismantling protectionist policies in the agricultural sector, and signing free trade agreements with other countries (Özcan, 2016). The U.S. also supported Türkiye's liberal international economy and free market initiative. For this reason, Özal's free market-oriented economic system was appreciated by Washington (Uslu, 1997).

Özal's policies of opening up to the outside world encouraged the migration of various segments of Turkish society to America in social and cultural terms (Ergil, 2000). The conservative segment also turned to migration to the U.S. under the influence of Özal's policies, the interest in the United States among different voices, political views, and social classes within the Turkish society resulted in a significant

transformation in the structure of the Turkish-American society (Güvenç, 1998). It is known that in addition to the profile of previous Turkish immigrants, in this period after 1980, citizens from all segments of society came to America, including students, semi-skilled workers, academics and unskilled workers, creating a heterogeneous image in U.S. society (Senouci, 2016) but like, Gamlen (2009) argues, cultural construction is a part of diaspora politics so it is understandable that Turkish society did not have a static and homogeneous structure in that time. Also it should be mentioned that for the first time in this period, Turks abroad were politicized in line with Özal's foreign policy objectives (Ünver, 2013).

According to a report published by the U.S. Bureau of Immigration and Census in 1990, 44.5% of immigrants were women and 55.5% were men (U.S. Census, 1990). During this period, in which the percentage of men and women was almost equally distributed and Turks from all segments expressed a tendency to migrate to the U.S., we can see immigrants from different ideologies and education levels, from university students to laborers, nationalists, leftists, and conservatives. It is known that during this period of continuous student migration, university students created their own financial resources to study in America. Even if they could not receive scholarships from the Ministry of National Education or the Higher Education Council, there were students who worked outside or worked as assistants at universities while continuing their education (Kaya, 2003). Another segment we consider apart from students is relatively less educated, unskilled or semi-skilled individuals who are not highly proficient in English. Some of these Turkish individuals who work in gas stations, markets and restaurants entered the U.S. illegally or legally with a visa and continued to stay in the U.S. after the expiration of their visa (Kaya, 2004).

In his article, Kaya (2004) states that "Turks who go to the U.S. illegally start working in the workplaces where other Turks work and settle in neighborhoods such as Paterson, New Jersey and Brooklyn, New York, where rents are relatively low. These Turks, who generally have low English proficiency, live isolated from American society and become ghettoized." It has been said that this new group is more conservative compared to previous Turkish immigrants and integrates their Turkish-Islamic identity, living with a strong connection to each other locally and regionally (Akıncı, 2002).

Akıncı (2002) also commented on the unskilled segment of Turkish citizens who

arrived in the U.S. during the same period: "Some are uneducated or poorly educated, and most of them work for low wages in the service sector, a group of blue-collar workers migrated to the U.S." Karpat (1995), in relation to the migration of this mentioned third wave, made the same comment on the immigrant profile after 1980, "This new group is employed in the service sector and mainly resides in New York and New Jersey." It has been mentioned that the majority of the groups coming from Çorum, Giresun, Yozgat, and Ankara, often through kinship and society ties, are primary school graduates and live in solidarity in the places they settle. Especially due to the intense migration of people from Giresun's Yağlıdere district through hometown networks, the U.S. Consulate has been extremely reluctant to issue visas to people from Giresun, Yağlıdere since then (Güler, 2008).

In this context, it can be said that the mentioned third wave of immigrantshas changed the profile of Turkish immigrants in the United States (Akçapar, 2004). Talat Sait Halman stated regarding this issue: "With the return of professionals who came on Fulbright scholarships, the less educated segment has continued to live in the United States after 1980." Some of these Turkish- Americans mentioned may not speak the language very well, but there are those who have become successful by establishing businesses and organizing according to their own needs. In fact, Karpat (2008) commented on this group as "a migrant society with internal harmony and solidarity, sharing a commonlanguage, culture, and history, and upholding national values."

3.3.1 Associations in the 1980s. In the 1980s, the Turkish-American society became organized and trade chambers were established. These associations and trade chambers aimed to work for Turkish-American relations and local-national political interests. In the same year, it was discussed in the Turkish Grand National Assembly that Turkish state institutions should financially support the activities of the transnational society in order to strengthen their foreign relations. The Turkish state aimed to carry out ethnic lobbying activities with the support of ambassadors and foreign missions (Aksel, 2019). Thus, Turkish citizens abroad, who were ignored by coalition governments until 1980, gained importance. National and institutional diaspora policies started to take shape as of 1980 (İyi & Umarova, 2022).

One of the most important organizations operating in this field is the American Turkish Council (ATC), founded in 1985 to strengthen relations between the United

States and Türkiye through business, political and cultural means. Through the network of former and active Turkish diplomats at the ATC (Aksel, 2019), businesspeople and elected officials from the United States and Türkiye, as well as businesses, institutions and governments, have worked to bring the two countries closer. With a mission to expand economic and diplomatic relations, ATC has made moves to advocate for mutually beneficial partnerships and pragmatic policies for both countries. Every year, the ATC organized a conference in Washington D.C. to which it invited Turkish and American politicians, administrators, and members of the military to address issues affecting US-TR relations (Khalilov, 2008). It can be said that its main goal is to increase trade relations between Türkiye and America (Arı, 1997).

Also, in Washington D.C, the Ataturk Society of America (ASA) was established in 1995. It started to work in coordination with the Ataturk Thought Association in Türkiye.

Another important issue is that with the increase in the number of Turkish people in the U.S. and their settlement, there has been an increase in religious needs. In this direction, TAİF (Turkish American Islamic Foundation) was established in 1993 through a joint effort of the Türkiye Diyanet Foundation and the Directorate of Religious Affairs. In addition, a pioneer effort was carried out by the Religious Affairs Advisor of the Turkish Embassy in Washington to meet the needs, and religious services for Turks and Muslims began to be provided at a mosque in Maryland (Yavuzer, 2006). Crimean and Karachay Turks also started to gather around the mosques and associations established by the Directorate of Religious Affairs (Yavuzer, 2010). In the same year, a social service officer was appointed to handle religious affairs at the consulate in New York. In 1993, the title was changed to "religious attaché".

However, it is known that although TAİF started its activities in the 1990s, it could not fully represent the Turkish society and bring Turkish immigrants in the U.S. together (Aksel, 2019).

As it is known, informing national and international public opinion by using the media as an intermediary is recognized as a kind of public diplomacy (Eren, 2020). In this context, TRT started its international broadcasts with TRT- INT in 1990 and independent of DFH, it was available via satellite throughout North America(

Şanlıer- Yüksel, 2008). Also in 2002, TRT would be opened its 6th foreign office, the Washington office.⁵ TRT's broadcasts in Turkish abroad are considered important in terms of maintaining the social and cultural ties of Turks living abroad with the homeland (Bal, 2018). Besides religion, language, media and cultural needs, work has also been done in the field of education.

Ministry of National Education started joint educational projects with institutions and collaborations with foreign universities. Exchange programs for Turkish and foreign academicians were also active. Academicians who came to Türkiye were also of great importance because cultural and educational programs were also seen as a kind of diplomatic relations (Örnek, 2012). Thus, state institutions cooperated with civil foundations and universities to strengthen these relations. There has been student mobility towards abroad programs supported by the Ministry of Education and the Council of Higher Education. Institutes were first established during this period to conduct research on Turkish Studies at universities and continued their activities with the donations of the Turkish government.⁶ In 2008, according to the news at the official internet page of Turkish Studies, ITS in this sense emerges as a non-profit educational foundation established by the Turkish government to promote and develop Turkish studies in American universities. ITS has tried to help create and reflect Türkiye's positive image and culture. In 1997, the Turkish Intercollegiate Students Society (ITTS) was established to bring together Turks in American universities (Aksel, 2019).

⁵ See also. (<https://www.trt1.com.tr/tarihce>).

⁶ See also. (turkishstudies.org).

Analyzing all these developments, Aksel (2019) stated in her research that "most of the initiatives such as exporting national culture through language and religion, starting Turkish television broadcasting, and opening cultural centers aimed to strengthen Turkish citizenship in a transnational realm. In this context, while the state tries to maintain the connection of its transnational citizens with the homeland, it also creates an image of a Turkish citizen." However, despite the financial and material support of Turkish diplomatic missions and associations in the United States, Turks have not been able to be united practically (Aksel, 2019).

By 1980, changes in the composition of Turks in the United States are clearly visible. Especially with the granting of the right to dual citizenship in 1981, Turks abroad started to acquire the citizenship of the country they lived in. It is now necessary to discuss the needs of Turks abroad. In this situation, the Turkish state, which wanted to benefit from its citizens abroad, implemented diaspora policies pragmatically for the first time. During this period, association also became professionalized. The accelerated association activities represent social life for Turks. Turkish-Americans construct their collective identity in schools, mosques and associations (Kaya, 2005). Until the 2000s, the Diyanet, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Labor and the Ministry of National Education were organized abroad.

The changing foreign policy with the AKP era has created differences in the presence of public institutions abroad. At the same time, the AKP has also conducted diaspora policies differently. For the first time, a commission was established to address the socio-economic, religious and educational problems of citizens abroad. The change in the 2000s will be discussed in all its dynamics, from population to state policies.

3.4 After 2000s

We can call the migration period that started in the 2000s as the last wave. Since globalization offers ease of travel and communication, immigration to the U.S. has begun to attract more attention than before (Kaya, 2006). Of course, the presence of Turks in the U.S. continued, and a cosmopolitan Turkish presence was formed (Kaya, 2003).

According to the research that conducted by U.S Census in 2000, at that time

117,575 people who identified themselves as "Turkish" lived in the United States. However, those who still do not have a job at the consulate, have not declared their address are not registered in the embassy system and do not enter through the door, or do not pay taxes in the U.S, are afraid to come to the consulate because their visa type is not suitable for working and living and therefore we do not know that is also a fact that there are many Turks living illegally. In addition, another reason why Turks did not visit foreign missions much was that diplomats could not communicate easily with the society and "the Turkish-American society saw diplomats as intercessors".

Turks in America are estimated to be more than 350 thousand (Kaya, 2006). For the reasons mentioned above, there is no exact information about the numbers. "There is a concentration of the Turkish population in certain states and regions. We know that many Turks live mostly in New York, New Jersey, Ohio, Florida, Maryland, North Carolina, Indianapolis and Illinois." (Ezen, 2016). Especially New York is relatively more attractive for the Turkish society who came to the U.S. because there are Turks living in places such as NYC and Clifton, Paterson, and Cliffside Park (Ferris, 1995). When it comes to the reasons for settling here, different dynamics emerge. For example, it is easier for Turks whose language skills are inadequate to find a job in places where there is a settled Turkish population (Kaya, 2003), but for people with a high level of education, who are fluent in English and who are professional in some professions, it is possible to live in almost all states of the U.S. In addition, well-educated Turks, who position themselves in the middle and upper classes, integrated into American society more quickly, so they did not see living in different states as a problem.

The Turkish society, which has spread all over the country and whose number is constantly increasing, still sees America as a center of attraction and strives to find a place for themselves in the U.S, is now expected to show itself politically and diplomatically, as well as providing economic benefits such as bringing foreign currency to Türkiye (Köse, 2020). Because states now think that just as they look after their transnational communities, their communities also work in their interests.

When we consider this issue specifically for the Republic of Türkiye, it can be said that the "Coordination Board for Citizens Living Abroad" was established in 1998 for our citizens living abroad.

With the diversification of economic activities of citizens abroad and the

increasing presence of citizens from all walks of life abroad, the benefits to the homeland are not only considered in terms of labor force. SPO⁷ stated that it is important for citizens abroad to come to the agenda with a more holistic approach. To put it briefly, Turks in the U.S. have assumed the role of potential mediators in Türkiye-United States relations (Aksel, 2019). For this reason, all government institutions, especially the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, support the active political participation of Turks living abroad in the host country (Mügge, 2012). The long stay of Turks, whose population is increasing abroad, in the host country has revealed the need for some economic benefit policies as well as social, cultural, religious and educational policies (Köse, 2020).

Turkish foreign policy, which was shaped by securitization, citizen demands and aspirations and the struggle against political organizations until the 2000s, renewed itself after 2000 and was shaped by the establishment of a Turkish state elite and Türkiye's modernization and preservation of its Muslim identity (Aydın, 2014). Therefore, in order to prove Türkiye's global and regional power, the AKP's agenda was to maintain warm relations with Turkic states, close ties with the Islamic world, but also cooperation and good relations with the West (Magued, 2012). In the section, AKP will be analyzed.

3.4.1 The term of AKP. After the economic crisis of 2001, the AKP government, which won the 2002 elections and is still in power today, emerged as a new actor. With the AKP coming to power in 2002, Türkiye found itself in the midst of a socio-economic and political transformation. There were plans to diversify and increase the areas of investment in Türkiye. With the development plans and intensification of economic interaction, Türkiye was designated as a "regional power" (Magued, 2012). In this context, it would not be wrong to speak of Türkiye as a country where improving relations with the West and the Islamic world was at the core, but which also projected a "compassionate" image for sub-Saharan countries (Öniş, 2012).

⁷ Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı, *ing.*

The AKP's new moves have increased the role of migrants living abroad as potential representatives and bridges between states and communities (Aksel, 2019). With the AKP's changes in official state institutions, society-state relations have also expanded. For this reason, as in all policies, some importance and changes have been proposed in migration policies.

The TBMM (2003) Report, which evaluates the problems of Turkish citizens abroad and provides recommendations for the policies of institutions, highlights the following points:

“Issues such as the education of our citizens living abroad, dual citizenship rights, voting and candidacy rights, as well as the problems they experience when entering and leaving the country, and the insufficient evaluation of the economic power/investments of our citizens living abroad, are present. Institutions that provide services to citizens abroad such as the Ministry of National Education (MEB), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Türkiye (TOBB), Turkish Radio and Television Corporation (TRT), and Presidency of Religious Affairs (Diyane İşleri Başkanlığı) should shape their policies according to these sensitivities.” (TBMM, 2003).

The report code the nature of the relationship between the immigrant society and the Turkish state and host states differently and emphasized citizens' access to social, political and cultural rights in host countries and in the international arena (Aksel, 2019). Since the day it came to power, AKP has asked the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to change the approach towards citizens living abroad and to create a new governance model between state institutions and society, as a priority (Aksel, 2019).

The state has now started to take steps to reach citizens and tried to improve the inadequate consular services. In addition, efforts were made to increase the number and quality of foreign representative offices. The number of Turkish foreign missions, which was 163 in 2002, increased to 236 in 2017, including 135 embassies, 86 consulates, permanent representatives and trade offices. It should be said that today Türkiye has 257 representatives abroad. It was expected that the dialogue with the Turkish society living abroad would be strengthened, and great roles were

given to ambassadors and the resident embassies in terms of "improving and changing the citizens".

3.4.2 Associations after 2000s. The needs of Turks abroad were addressed, and in order to meet these needs, the Turkish society tried to strengthen its organization in the United States by opening mosques and workers' associations. However, after the attack on the Twin Towers in New York on September 11, 2001, which caused an increase in Islamophobia and xenophobia all over the world, immigration became an important problem in the world. It is known that in this period, the perspective on migration and immigrants changed and the fear of migration increased, and migration was seen as an element that threatened national, cultural and social security (Kaya, 2016). Security approaches have increased in Europe and America; Muslims, including Turks, were seen as dangerous (Küçükcan, 2021). During this period, security concerns in the U.S. also gave rise to political concerns about undocumented immigration (Schain, 2012). With the fear of global terrorism, the idea of "controlling" and "preventing" migration has emerged (Oğuz & Gök, 2016). Using Real ID Law that came into force in 2005, the requirements for being an asylum seeker were limited and deportation became easier (Cianciarulo, 2006). With these new approaches applied to immigrants, restrictions came to rights. For these reasons, the institutionalization and professionalization of the associations established by Turkish immigrants have become difficult, and the organization of the Turkish society has also slowed down.

The striking dimensions of Islamophobia were revealed in the "Religion and Public Life" research conducted by the Pew Research Center in the U.S. two years after the attack, and 44% of the participants thought that Islam supports violence. For this reason, TAİF, which had the word "Islam" in its name and statute, was dissolved in 2003 and the Turkish American Society Center (TACC) was established in the same year (TACC, 2009). This foundation, which provides religious services such as TAİF, has also hosted social and cultural events. TACC also organizes Quran and religious knowledge courses with official religious officials assigned from Türkiye. This mosque is the first Turkish mosque in the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia, called the DMV region. In 1957, Diyanet established a mosque very close to the Turkish Embassy in Washington D.C. Its name is the Islamic Center, but after its establishment, the management was left to Saudi Arabia and Egypt (Yavuzer, 2010). In short, until TACC, there were no registered Turkish mosques in the U.S.

Güngör (2011) mentioned the importance of unity under the leadership of mosques in America. However, Turks do not cooperate among themselves and with other muslims due to reasons such as the distance of mosques to the places where Turks live, the busy work schedule in the US and the low importance given to religion. For these reasons, the religious environment built around mosques and associations did not serve as a glue to bring together the Turkish society living in the U.S. until the 2000s (Aksel, 2019). However, it is known that after the 2000s, a small number of Turks started to see mosques as a cultural center to get away from the problems arising from living abroad.

In the same period, student associations at universities also began to mobilize. Almost all major universities in the U.S. have Turkish student organizations (Kaya, 2005). For example, the Turkish Student Association was re-established at Georgetown University in 2006. Student clubs have also tried to take some steps in order to both bring Turkish students together and introduce Turkish culture to the world. It is also known that they help new Turkish students coming to universities with their home and other needs.

As a result, although the increasing Turkish population in the United States in the 2000s brings together different dynamics and state actors, the number of Turks who see themselves as a part of the society because they are Turkish and/or muslim is not very high.

Kaya (2005) attributes the socialization of the Turkish-American society to schools, mosques, clubs and associations. These institutions are as building block for identity construction (Kaya, 2005). However, due to language and cultural differences, Turks cannot fully integrate into American society and other Muslim communities. Of course, it is also important to note that the United States is a large country made up of many states spread across a large continent. However, it is obvious that full unity and solidarity still could not be achieved in the 2000s. The fact that the Turkish population living in the U.S. has very different socio-economic conditions, political and ideological differences, and the small number of Turkish citizens in the U.S. are still important factors.

Considering all these reasons, as of pre-2010, the Republic of Türkiye deemed it appropriate to exhibit a more active and innovative attitude with its state

institutions and the new practices and policies it introduced to these institutions. The next chapter examines the innovations Türkiye has implemented within the framework of state policies. At the same time, preliminary preparations for the second term of the AKP government, which will begin in 2010, have started with the change and development of foreign policy instruments in this period.



Chapter 4

Before 2010 is State More Innovative?

The growth, organization and institutionalization of the transnational societies and association structures have led to changes and developments in the policies of the Republic of Türkiye. Diaspora policies of Türkiye vary in economic, political, social and cultural areas. Türkiye has shaped some civil, social and political rights to vote and to be elected has come to the agenda for the first time. Changes were made to the basic election provisions in 2008. The AKP government, under the leadership of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, has also implemented different practices in services of trans-national citizens. The Republic of Türkiye has also improved consular services for its citizens living abroad.

On the other hand, increase in the number of associations has been observed with the increase in the Turkish presence in the U.S. Cooperation has been established between existing associations and the Turkish state. Different policies have also been pursued in terms of state-association relations.

In this section, political, economic and diplomatic changes will be discussed and religious services will be mentioned. Additionally, the presence of the Turkish society in the U.S. and the association structures in their places of residence will be addressed. The socio-economic, cultural and political services received by the Turkish-American society from their homelands and the role of AKP's policies in these services will also be discussed. Chronologically, the period from the AKP coming to power to the establishment of YTB will be examined.

4.1 Turkish Population

The presence of Turks in America has been increasing over the years. Turks of America publisher Cemil Özyurt said:

"In the census conducted by the American Census Bureau in 2000, the number of Turks living in America was 117 thousand, in the 2010 census it was 199 thousand, and in 2016 it varied between 136 thousand and 182 thousand."⁸

According to U.S. Census data, however the number of officially known Turks between 2000 and 2017 is recorded as 135,441, it is assumed that approximately 400 thousand Turks, including unregistered ones, are in America. In this context, it is known that Turkish people mostly live in Paterson, New Jersey. It is estimated that 35000 thousand Turks live here, including Yağlıdere people from Giresun, which is one of the best examples of migration through the network of relations.

There are also many people who came to the U.S. after the 2000s through the "Diversity Immigrant Visa Lottery Program". Those who "have at least high school education or equivalent" and "work in a job that requires at least two years of education and experience in the last five years" were able to benefit from this visa type (Department of State, Diversity Visa Lottery Program, 2000). It is known that on this occasion, Turks also came to the U.S. in large numbers due to legal regulations. It is also said that most of these people are densely settled by Turks in Cliffside Park, Queens, Sunnyside and Sheepshead Bay in Brooklyn and Long Island in NYC. According to the research of U.S. Census, Turks mostly live in New York and its surroundings (U.S. Census, 2010). There are many statistics about the number of Turks living in and around NYC.

To the research conducted by ACS in 2008, it is known that approximately 134 thousand people live in the U.S., generally located around the NYC metropolitan area (American Society Survey, 2008). According to other estimates, as I mentioned before, it is thought that between 200,000 and 400,000 Turks are in America and 100,000 of them live around NYC (Köser-Akçapar, 2009). The next census shows that Turks are densely found in New Jersey, California, Florida, especially Orlando and Miami, Texas, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Virginia and Maryland (U.S. Census, 2010).

⁸ See also. (www.voaturkce.com).

In order to more accurately estimate the number of Turks living in the U.S.

ATAA and ATS (Aksel, 2019) carried out a campaign in cooperation with the U.S. Census Bureau in 2009 and asked people who filled out the information for the American census to indicate their answers as "white" and "Turkish".

However, not only people from the Turkish society live in this region. Sheepshead Bay, in particular, is ethnically diverse. Along with Turks, Russians, Greeks and Kazakhs, Azeri, Turkmen, Uyghur, Kyrgyz, Uzbek, Tatar people and Turkish Cypriot people from Turkish noble societies are also present in these regions (Kurtuluş, 1999). The population of Meskhetian Turks in America is too large to be ignored.

It would not be wrong to say that a Turkish society is slowly being built by forming associations in the regions they live in, working to institutionalize previously established associations, and carrying out their activities and programs under umbrella associations.

4.2 Associations Before 2010

Türkiye society in this way, the Turkish-American society grows, develops and wants to have an influence on American foreign policy (Micallef, 2006).

As the most important tool of pressure groups, lobbying activities have a very important place in the politics of the United States. Lobbying activity is trying to unite around a common denominator and put pressure on the bureaucracy and political power (Tunç & Göksel, 2020). In the United States, these activities are legal and legitimate.

ATAA is an umbrella association that continues its work in this context until today. Representing more than 60 local chapters and 500,000 Turkish Americans across the United States, ATAA serves locally and nationwide to develop an informed and empowered Turkish-American society and promote strong U.S.-Türkiye relations. ATAA is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization organized under the laws of the District of Columbia. ATAA describes its 2 important missions as follows:

"The first is to create an informed national Turkish-American society that can help strengthen United States-Türkiye relations and take an active role in promoting a balanced and realistic picture of Türkiye in the United States. The other is to

educate Americans in government, the media, and the public at large about issues that concern Türkiye and Turkish Americans.” In order to strengthen the Turkish public in America, ATAA organizes events on all national holidays, gives scholarships to students, informs the Turkish-American society on issues of interest through its publications, and tries to have a say in the American parliament by considering the interests of the Turkish state.

With the incentives of the Turkish state and the increasing interest in lobbying activities in the U.S, TCA started to carry out lobbying activities professionally (Aksel, 2019). In 2007, TCA was established to introduce Turkish-Americans, to be successful in guiding policy makers and to make Türkiye properly known in the U.S. “TCA is a completely independent 501(c)(3) public charity that receives no funding from the U.S. or Turkish government. It is funded entirely by Turkish-Americans who believe in a strong United States- Türkiye relations and are proud of the Turkish view, and others who share these ideals. TCA is not affiliated with any other organization.⁹

It is an organization established to increase Türkiye's cultural and economic impact. Its aim is to carry out studies on issues such as developing friendship, cooperation and strategic partnerships between Türkiye and the U.S., promoting Türkiye's cultural and historical heritage and society, and increasing dialogue between Turkish-American communities. The organization operates in political, economic, social and cultural fields and plays an important role in developing relations between Türkiye and the U.S. (TCA, 2016). However, TCA is in a different lobbying position than ATAA, with its non-member institutional framework and professional staff (Aksel, 2019). Additionally, the Turkish American Political Action Committee (PAC), a lobbying organization affiliated with but independent of TCA, was established in 2007. It was stated that the positive effects of this situation were seen in the congress in the following period. In the same years, changes were also seen in the policies of the Republic of Türkiye towards Turks living abroad.

⁹ See also. (<https://www.tc-america.org/about.htm>).

The important reason for the Republic of Türkiye's innovations in migration policies is the transnational developments in the Turkish diaspora communities and

the Turkish state's recognition of its citizens living abroad as political, cultural and diplomatic actors (İçduygu, Aksel, 2013). In this section, institutions and innovations will be discussed.

4.3 Novelties made by Turkish State for Citizens Living Abroad before 2010

The Republic of Türkiye has used language, religion, culture, history and media as tools for its transnational citizens. It has organized congresses and conferences for Turkish citizens abroad and cooperated with associations. At the same time, it has also established state institutions, thereby creating actors to take care of its citizens living abroad. Türkiye has taken historical needs into account when determining its policies. Innovations and their consequences will be analyzed.

4.3.1 Ministry of foreign affairs. Firstly, it is known that the General Directorate of Consular Affairs under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs supports the integration of Turks living abroad into the host society and deals with the problems of its citizens (İyi & Umarova, 2022). With the reshaping of citizenship policies, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs increased the number of personnel in its foreign missions and expanded its consular services. With the development of technology and improved internet usage, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has established the e-consulate system for its citizens. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which introduced the e-visa application for foreign citizens, has carried out the visa acquisition process online for some foreigners who meet the criteria. Consular procedures have also been developed in the form of birth, death, passport, citizenship, marriage, divorce, military service, social security, insurance, retirement and all transactions that can be done at the notary. Using the “Mobile Consulate” application, convenience has been provided for those who cannot come to consulates or embassies. Efforts were made to reach the Turkish society in the U.S.

4.3.2 Diyanet. According to Arkılıç (2016), "Diyanet are to train religious personnel, provide religious education, enlighten the public about Islam, and administer sacred places of worship." Diyanet has increased its presence thanks to the increase in the number of mosque associations and the appointment of muftis to mosques under the supervision of the Turkish Embassy in Washington. In accordance with the periodic policies of the AKP, activities in the field of religion continued and the "Religious Council", which brought together those providing religious services, was organized (Aksel, 2019). In accordance with Türkiye's new foreign policy and image, education, culture and social life were also included in the mosque programs, and efforts were made to turn it into a center that would appeal not only to the Turks but also to the entire Islamic world.

4.3.3 MoNE. Changes in the field of education have not been ignored either. Apart from the efforts of the Atatürk School and associations to teach Turkish culture, the Ministry of Education has also provided education to children in Türkiye, such as Turkish culture, religion and ethics, history of the republic, Atatürk's principles and reforms, for the children of immigrants living abroad, with the project called "Our Relatives in Distance" (Aksel, 2019). training was provided to a similar standard. In this context, it is known that the Ministry of Culture and Tourism tried to carry out projects for a while, in addition to the cultural trainings of the Ministry of Education, in order to recognize and promote Turkish culture, and that there are personnel called "cultural advisors" in Embassies and Consulates. For example, the New York Culture and Promotion Attaché participates in many events, including the "Turkish Parade", but cultural activities are not limited to these.

4.3.4 Yunus Emre institute. Yunus Emre Institute, which organizes social and cultural events (Kaya & Tecmen, 2011) for those who are curious about Türkiye's traditions, was founded in 2009. There are 85 cultural centers abroad. In addition to Turkish education given in cultural centers, Turkology departments and Turkish teaching are supported through collaborations with educational institutions in different countries (<https://www.yee.org.tr/tr/kurumsal/yunus-emre-enstitusu>).

In this context, YEE's activities abroad are considered as cultural diplomacy (Çakır, 2018).

YEE, an institution of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, aims to introduce Turkish culture, language and people to the world. Cultural diplomacy is under the authority of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs but the Ministry of Culture and Tourism is also an important factor in promoting Turkish culture abroad. "Cultural" studies, which are frequently on the agenda in Turkish foreign policy, have gained more momentum with the existence of YEE. In particular, the then Foreign Minister Davutoğlu constantly emphasized that "not only diplomacy but also culture, trade and economy will be tools for foreign policy" (Kaya & Tecmen, 2011).

Using cultural diplomacy to draw a Turkish image abroad, the institute has established a structure in which culture, heritage and modernity can be synthesized. With the training called "Cultural Diplomacy Academy", which they launched in 2016, they aim to evaluate the reflections of Türkiye's unique intellectual background on Turkish cultural diplomacy and to understand terms such as public and cultural diplomacy. However, the last activity was held in 2019.

In this context, YEE, which offers opportunities such as Turkish lessons, folk dances and education in Türkiye, has its headquarters in Washington D.C. in the U.S., but it carries out relatively less active and limited programs compared to other institutions. Nevertheless, with the establishment of YTB in 2010, they continue their activities as Türkiye's two "soft powers". Underlying this is the idea of Türkiye, using its soft power to become a "regional hegemon", in line with the AKP's foreign policy.

4.3.5 Departments of Turkish studies. There are "Turkish Studies" departments in 20 universities across the U.S., especially Harvard University and UCLA. In these universities, different Turkish studies such as Turkish language and literature, history, culture, sociology and political science are researched. Gönül Tekin and Şinasi Tekin published the "Journal of Turkish Studies" in Harvard University Press for years. The Turkish state supports the Turkish

Studies departments of these universities in the U.S., and important government institutions such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and TDK make efforts to provide financial and academic benefits (CDCPP, 2013). In addition, the Turkish state aims to attract foreign students to this department with different scholarship programs. This is an important and qualified situation that will increase the image and prestige of the Republic of Türkiye. In this context, the policy practices of the Turkish state have focused on supporting Turkish Studies in American universities (Aksel, 2019).

4.3.6 Economy. The economic developments are as follows. TUSIAD opened an office in Washington in 2007. It is known to carry out activities that can have an impact on Congress (Ürek & Doğan, 2011). DEIK, which was established in 2008 under TOBB is "To help develop Türkiye's economic, financial, commercial and industrial activities with foreign countries for the benefit of the country, to make consultative decisions in order to ensure harmonious working between its own organizations and other public and private organizations." and to help make the best use of business opportunities by activating existing opportunities in this field (Tunç & Göksel, 2020).

The main aim was to contribute to the Turkish economy. At the same time, the Turkish World Business Council wanted to bring together Turkish entrepreneurs and gather professionals working in international companies that would strengthen the Turkish lobby under a single roof (Aksel, 2019).

Along with these efforts, it is known that after 2008, Turks increased their financial resources to carry out lobbying activities and thus their activities started to be successful. Tunç, Göksel (2020) concluded in their article that, "the fact that the number of inter-parliamentary friendship groups, which was very few in 1995, has reached 80 by 2008 shows that the Turkish lobby has been successful in its work."

4.3.7 Right to vote and to be elected. With the amendment made in the Turkish election legislation in 2006, the requirement to become a voter was regulated by the "address-based population registration" system. With this application, all citizens who can vote are transferred to the voter registry (Köse, 2020). These conditions were also brought to citizens living abroad with the

regulations in 2008 and 2012 because citizens have all the rights arising from the bond of citizenship a priori, but the right to vote is not a right directly granted to citizens living abroad (Koçak & Dinler, 2023). For voting abroad, it is important to fulfill the legal regulations and the conditions.

Voting from abroad, in its simplest terms, is "the right to vote for some or all of a country's voters who live temporarily or permanently transnationally" (IDEA, 2007). The law regulating the voting of Turkish citizens living abroad has been changed many times. Citizens, who were initially only able to vote at border gates, coming to Türkiye during elections and voting during holidays if there are elections do not meet the definition of "overseas votes" (Okyay, 2014). In 1995, YSK was given the authority to organize overseas elections for the constitutional right to elect and be elected (Abandan & Unat, 2017). Between 1995 and 2007, it was said that there were legal and actual obstacles and voting was allowed only at border gates because it was not deemed safe for voters living abroad to vote by mail by lawmakers (Okyay, 2014). In 2008, the Law on Elections and Electoral Rolls opened the way for Turkish citizens living abroad to vote by mail, at border gates, at Turkish representative offices abroad and by electronic voting. However, the Constitutional Court did not approve the use of postal voting due to concerns about voting security. This time, the Election Law was rearranged in 2012 and Turkish citizens abroad were given the right to vote in the country where they reside (Elections and Voter Register Law No.6304, 2012). YSK and diplomatic representations are responsible for creating voters' registers and organizing elections in those countries (Okyay, 2014). Additionally, ballot boxes have been established abroad for parliamentary and presidential elections in Türkiye since 2014. Now, the Republic of Türkiye allows its citizens living abroad to vote only in diplomatic representations (embassies and consulates general) (Abandan-Unat, 2017).

The Supreme Electoral Council may assign personnel of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs abroad, when deemed necessary, to conduct this election. For these elections, the issues stipulated by the Supreme Electoral Council are implemented by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. However, the turnout was not very high in those periods because the voters abroad were concerned about the security of their votes- which came to Türkiye by debiting foreign diplomatic representatives and party officials and were delivered to the YSK. Specifically in our research, it is known that

although 88,555 voters were registered in the 2014 Presidential elections in the U.S. only 10,450 people voted (AVANTI 1, 2014). In short, it has only been possible for Türkiye to take innovative steps within the scope of diaspora policies and make changes to the election law and to vote abroad only in very recent history (Köse, 2020). Voting for citizens living abroad is still a controversial issue. Citizenship ties are taken as basis in voting abroad, and it does not matter whether you live in Türkiye or not, because citizens' voting is seen as a political right. It is unacceptable that citizens abroad, who benefit their host country within the scope of diaspora policies, are expected to make economic and social contributions, and are thought to have a responsibility towards the country of their birth, are deprived of a political right such as not being able to vote. Again, although there are no binding decisions for the exercise of the right to vote from abroad, there are recommendation decisions (Köse, 2020). The decisions of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) dated 2005, numbered 1459 and 1714, encourage member states to provide the right to vote to all their citizens, regardless of their residence, and encourage international cooperation to facilitate practices in this context (COEPA, 2005). Moreover, dual-citizenship status does not pose any problem in this context.

According to Lefleur, Rhodes and Harutyunyan, diaspora actors play an important role in the competition created by the election and diversity and polyphony are ensured in policy-making processes (Lafleur, 2015). In this way, the political will attaches importance to the problems and requests of its citizens living abroad in order to get their votes. The general view on voting by overseas voters is that voting abroad is done in the sense of economic and political mobilization of the diaspora and strengthening the diaspora's belonging to its host country (Köse, 2020). However, in order to demand the participation of voters abroad in elections that will affect the governance of the homeland or to allow citizens living abroad to vote, the political communication network is well established, and the attention of the transnational society is drawn to the elections (Koçak & Dinler, 2023). This is because citizens residing abroad also want to maintain their legal and political status in their home country (Bauböck, 2003). In addition, joint activities for the transnational community in the place where they live and knowing that they have political ties with their home country (Østergaard-Nielsen 2003) are signs that their position at home is protected.

With the innovations introduced to citizens abroad and the new state institutions that emerged during the institution-building process, Türkiye planned to draw a new image for itself. Türkiye's diaspora engagement policies have been shaped in line with its foreign policy, aiming to create a "global power". In this context, the Turkish state has increased its presence abroad through economic, political, diplomatic and cultural innovations while developing state institutions that are soft power elements. At the same time, the state has sought to establish closer ties with its transnational citizens. With the financial and moral support of the state, lobbying activities gained momentum compared to previous years, and Turkish citizens abroad were expected to act in accordance with Türkiye's national interests. Nevertheless, it should be noted that lobbying activities were not sufficient enough in that period.



Chapter 5

After 2010 New Actors Welcomed

In this section, the period after the establishment of YTB will be explained. The AKP government has made some arrangements in ministries and other state institutions and implemented changes in the services provided to citizens living abroad under the leadership of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. During this period, the Republic of Turkey followed a different policy in terms of consular services and association-state relations for its citizens living abroad. The innovations that came with the establishment of YTB, the rights gained by Turks abroad and the common troubles and changing policies of Turks in the USA, the benefits of DCA and TASC to the Turkish society in America in different areas, the extent to which the interests of Turks in the United States are protected, the origins of the society, the benefits to the country, the state's expectations from the transnational society and lobbying activities will be discussed.

5.1 YTB. (The Presidency for Turks Abroad and Relative Communities)

The idea that there should be an institution to deal with Turks abroad, which has been on the agenda since the 1970s, was accepted by Law No. 5978. On this occasion, AKP's foreign-oriented policies and the changes and reforms it made for citizens living abroad continued with the YTB established in 2010. In this way, the idea of creating a ministry or/and diaspora institution, which is the first step of the Diaspora Engagement Policy, came to life. YTB started to coordinate and implement the idea of a presidency that would deal with Turks abroad, which was accepted by all parties in the Turkish Grand National Assembly, in 2010. In addition, public policies and programs were shaped in YTB's field of action. According to Ataselim (2014), this institution is the continuation of TDİK. In 2011, we started talking about YTB as a new actor. With the institutional infrastructure it has created, YTB wants to create a respected Turkish diaspora that has a collective consciousness and is socio- economically, culturally and politically active (Ünver, 2013).

The establishment of YTB is expected to increase the interaction and communication between Turks living abroad, related communities and the host country. At the same time, effective political participation in the host country is one of the important elements. YTB, has been organizing projects in various fields since its establishment. Education, scholarship programs, and Turkish lessons are the main topics in the context of cultural and social relations. It continues its activities by staying in communication with all associations and working in coordination with them. In this context, it can be said that YTB has duties and responsibilities in many areas where the state was not active before (Ünver, 2013). In the interview with the authorities, I received the following information:

“We are in interaction with associations that do not contradict the policies of the Republic of Türkiye and do not support terrorism, associations from all political parties, for example, TASC and ATAA... We are in interaction with all of them.”¹⁰

YTB, which is an important actor in the construction of public diplomacy, follows a unifying policy that brings together every part of Turkish-American society. It is appropriate to give information about YTB's office work specifically for the United States. The main purpose of the department is to raise the status of the country in which it is located and to strive to maintain close ties with the homeland. In this context, it is necessary to strengthen institutions and launch training and mobility programs that will establish ties with Türkiye. In order to implement the strategies, coordination and communication with the society need to be well planned. In particular, due to the structure of the United States, it can be said that planned programs are more easily implemented.

“We have two important programs that will establish a bond between Türkiye and our citizens abroad. These are leadership and media academy... Of course, we revise the participation and application conditions according to the content of the program and the country. But speaking from the perspective of the U.S., this country is easier and more comfortable in terms of implementing some programs. Because the environment is very free.”¹¹

¹⁰ Interview with the YTB authorized, 2022

¹¹ Interview with the YTB authorized, 2022.

As a result, with the opportunities arising from this free environment, YTB can easily work to protect the belonging of citizens abroad to the homeland, to preserve their native language, culture and identity, and to strengthen their social status in the countries where they reside.

It should also be said that, during YTB's project creation processes, ideas are also taken from the Presidency, the Council of Ministers, and the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. YTB plays a coordinating role in the ideas and relations of the Ministries of the Republic of Türkiye. It is stated that there is openness in sharing ideas. One of the important points is the claim that the strong consultation mechanism does not negatively affect the project ideation processes.

5.1.1 Right to vote abroad after YTB. It should be underlined that YTB carried out studies on the right to vote abroad after its establishment. In the general elections held in 2011, it was possible to establish ballot boxes abroad in line with the request of Turkish citizens abroad (Köse, 2020). The issue was discussed by the YSK and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but it is known that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs did not look favorably on this request due to security concerns and the possibility of provocation by terrorist organizations (YSK, 2010, decision, 22).

In the report published by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the request for the establishment of ballot boxes abroad; ministry expressed the reservations about issues such as personnel shortage, difficulties in ensuring the security of polling areas, and how to intervene in case of election law violations. It was assumed that the existing deficiencies were resolved after intensive negotiations between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and YTB, who accelerated their work in a short time. In line with this request, which was presented to the parliament for the first time in 2012, new regulations include the establishment of ballot box committees for ballot box management, preservation and delivery of votes; providing flexibility in defining ballot box areas and locations, it has been made easier for foreign voters to be registered in the registry, and the opportunity to process their applications and objections to the voter lists can be carried out at consulates. In addition, the opportunity to rent space outside the consulate buildings was introduced when determining the places where ballot boxes will be established. Flexibility was provided in determining voting times and it was decided that voting could be done on a 24-

hour basis or by appointment when necessary. Regulations were also made regarding the voting procedure at customs gates and the restriction of voting only at entrances and exits, which had been in place since 1987, was removed and the opportunity to vote as long as the ballot box was open was introduced (TBMM Minutes Magazine, 2012).

Turkish citizens abroad voted for the first time in the 2014 Presidential elections. Later, the 2015 June and November general elections, the 2017 referendum, and the 2018 presidential and parliamentary elections were held according to the new system (Köse, 2020).

YSK tried to make improvements as the voting tendency of voters abroad increased. In 2017, YSK announced that voters could vote outside the mission they are registered in (YSK, 2017, (101)). More people voted because consular district restrictions were lifted. Therefore, the increase in voting rate has increased in this context. Finally, presidential and parliamentary general elections were held in 2023, and according to the information we have, it is known that the election participation rate in the U.S. is 41.3% (YSK, 2023).

5.1.2 Socio-cultural life and education after YTB. Apart from its steps regarding foreign elections, YTB has also taken steps such as education and cultural programs in the native language, social security policies, opening schools and campuses abroad, and granting scholarships to foreign students. “In general, the biggest problem in the U.S. is the failure to maintain cultural and social ties resulting from geographical distance and the loss of language. The easiest language is lost. Diaspora is shaped through language.

“YTB provides support at preschool, high school and university levels in various states and regions such as Michigan, LA, NYC and DC through associations with the program called Turkish Time. YTB is also a financial supporter of scholarship programs in the context of increasing the status of Turks in America.” ¹²

¹² Interview with the YTB authorized, 2022

of the Maarif Foundation and YTB (Köse, 2018). In 2019, YTB President Abdullah Eren emphasized that the resources allocated to the projects and budgets of civil society groups in the U.S. were also increased(YTB, 2019).¹³

It is stated that the main reason for the intense interest in education, scholarships, culture and arts in the U.S. is that cultural diplomacy can be carried out easily in this country.

Examples of symbolic nation-building policies are when the home country develops native language, culture and history courses for the diaspora, produces content for the diaspora through the media, or organizes congresses and conferences involving the diaspora. The provision of language, culture and history courses for Turks in America, implemented by YTB, shows the effort of the homeland to build a nation abroad (İyi & Umarova, 2022).

On the other hand, one of YTB's biggest wishes is the "science diaspora". In the interview:

"There is an intense migration of Turkish engineers in San Francisco. We want to support new studies in both engineering and other science fields and provide interaction between scientists abroad and those in Türkiye. We organized a Congress of Scientists Abroad. "It was last built in 2019, but we want to institutionalize this structure."¹⁴

YTB focuses mostly on subjects such as education and science in the U.S. and YTB aims to provide mechanisms that will contribute to Türkiye's development. The creation of policies appropriate to the needs of the transnational society is seen as an element that will bring the homeland and the Turks in the U.S. closer together. In this context, the image of "strong Türkiye", which is envisaged to be created in the international conjuncture, is approached.

¹³ See also. (www.YTB.gov.tr/haberler/YTB-olarak-abdye-ayri-bir-sayfa-aciyorum).

¹⁴ Interview with the YTB authorized, 2022.

The purpose of AKP's diaspora policies has been considered as a "activist attitude" in terms of foreign policy (Aydın 2014; Mencutek & Başer 2018; Akçapar & Aksel 2017; Yanaşmayan & Kaşlı 2019).

YTB's motto is "Wherever we have citizens and relatives, we are there." Its message means being "an extension of Türkiye" for Turks abroad (Yurtnaç, 2012). In short, with the existence of YTB, it is clearly seen that there has been an intense increase in policies towards transnational citizens between Türkiye and diaspora institutions, especially after 2010 (Şenay, 2013). Also, diaspora policies are not shaped by economy, culture, language and political gain. It is also shaped around the axis of nationalism (Koinova & Gerasimos, 2018). In this context, after establishing an alliance with MHP in domestic politics, AKP also mobilized the "nationalist" wing at home and abroad with its own policies. The purpose of AKP's diaspora policies has been considered as a "activist attitude" in terms of foreign policy (Aydın 2014; Mencutek & Başer 2018; Akçapar & Aksel 2017; Yanaşmayan & Kaşlı 2019).

YTB was given the role of being Türkiye's "soft power", as stated by the then Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu. With this soft power role, it is aimed for Türkiye to be recognized in the U.S. through its transnational society and to gain sympathy from the American society. In this process, YTB strengthens inter-institutional communication, organizes training and mobility programs that will establish ties with Türkiye, and organizes the leadership and media academy. It plans to be successful in its goals such as "raising the status" and "preserving the ties of affection with the homeland". Within the framework of these policies as mentioned, Türkiye has been tried to become the center of many transnational cultural and academic studies. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and its sub-institutions also play an important role.

5.2 Ministry of Foreign Affairs

The state establishes its institutions abroad and conducts its activities transnationally, thereby maintaining a political participation and socio-cultural network beyond its borders (Hıdıroğlu, 2011). In this way, it establishes good relationships that can bridge between its citizens abroad and the homeland.

States open their embassies and consulates at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in order to be represented abroad (Chatterji, Saha, 2017). Embassies carry out the diplomatic relations of their countries and the host country, while consulates provide services to citizens living or traveling abroad. Some of these services include passport, visa, legal affairs, and support and evacuation plans for citizens in emergencies and crises.¹⁵ Like all other states, the consulates of the Turkish state cover the administrative and legal regulations between Türkiye and its citizens.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs also aimed to establish better and sustainable homeland-society relations by renewing or improving the services in its consulates. In this way, while the citizen receives better service, the nation-state turns its transnational society into a collaborative position. Diaspora diplomacy is seen as a foreign policy strategy and means "regulating the relations of states with citizens living abroad" and facilitating the state's access to resources abroad (Tsourapas, 2022). Public diplomacy, which Aksel (2017) also mentioned is to be implemented for Türkiye, which attracts the attention of the U.S., receives its support and creates a positive image in the U.S. In short, the state integrates public diplomacy with its diaspora diplomacy on issues such as protecting national interests, improving Türkiye's image abroad, increasing economic and commercial relations, and protecting cultural assets (Ünver, 2013). Thus, innovations are not limited to blue card, retirement, military service, passport, visa and identity procedures. The following innovations have been made:

"We have been working by appointment since 2019 because, like [consulate.net](#), the ease of e-visa and transferring powers of attorney to the electronic environment has become a great convenience. In addition, people can now carry out some of their transactions via e-government."¹⁶

For example, in Türkiye, citizens can do all the transactions that can do at a notary in Turkish Consulates in U.S. Power of attorney, military service, passport, ID, visa, etc. Although there is a need to go to the different institutions to do these in Türkiye, citizens can do them all under one roof in the U.S. The important point is that the consulate did not make these innovations itself.

¹⁵ See also. (<https://berardiimmigrationlaw.com/whats-the-difference-between-an-embassy>

¹⁶ Interview with the Consulate, 2022.

Changes are notified by the ministry via e-mail and Consuls are notified about changes in the system. Consulate cannot go against the circular, so they have to implement whatever instructions come from the ministry.

The biggest factor in improving citizenship procedures and making address declarations is that citizens abroad can vote, now. Each person from the Turkish society whose citizenship process is carried out is considered as one vote so it can be stated that voting abroad improved the relations between homeland and transnational society. Ankara demonstrates its desire for improved relations with its citizens abroad through the innovations it brings to applications and the policies it implements.

“Relations with citizens have improved. Citizens know the person who knows/does his job. Consul General, for example, is seen as a high rank. In the past, citizens were afraid of consulates and embassies. Now embassies and consulates are more in touch with the public. Complaints are not wanted, so the work is based on solving the citizens' problems as much as possible.”

¹⁷

Recently, Türkiye has been rapidly implementing strategies that envisage rapprochement with its diaspora. Ankara, realizing the importance of citizens' rights, believes that providing good services to its transnational citizens will positively change the "Turkish" image abroad.

For Türkiye's interests, Turks abroad have gained importance as a foreign policy tool (Arkılıç, 2016). In order for the Turkish society abroad to act as a lobby group in the host country, the state has aimed to embrace its transnational communities and provide them with services and rights. Therefore, supporting any policy that is in Türkiye's interests is an expectation of the citizens living abroad by the Republic of Türkiye.

¹⁷ Interview with the Consulate, 2022.

But at the same time, Turks abroad have also become a figurehead for domestic politics. In addition to demonstrating the legitimacy and power of the state abroad, the AKP government has also aimed to gain the votes of the diaspora (İyi & Umarova, 2022).

“You are trying to serve your people in every sense. For example, the ambassador meets with the people and listens to their problems. He participates in all festivals. He listens to the needs of the associations and goes to their iftars and invitations. Now, of course, the right to vote has come into play. There is no gap between diplomats and citizens as there was in the past. There is always an effort to please the citizens.”¹⁸

Foreign missions are an important observation point from which the complex relationship between the transnational society and the state can be understood. Turkish foreign representations can both support the transnational Turkish society's continuous social, economic and political connections with their homeland and try to guide them with their authority in this process.

Turkish Ambassador to the United States Murat Mercan addressed the Turkish people in America in his 'Ambassador Message' as follows:

“You are the bond of friendship between our country and the United States. The achievements of the Turkish-American society in the U.S. contribute to bilateral relations. We will always support the work of the Turkish-American society in the United States. In the meantime, the protection of our country and our culture is our greatest goal. As long as our society acts together, it will do successful work in the U.S. The doors of our Embassy and Consulates General in the U.S. are always open to our citizens and our services and support will continue.”¹⁹

The common effort of everyone, including the Internal Affairs officers in Turkish Embassy in Washington D.C., is stated to "put aside all economic, socio-cultural differences and bring together the Turks in the U.S." Internal Affairs

¹⁸ Interview with the Consulate, 2022.

¹⁹ See also <https://washington-be.mfa.gov.tr/Mission/Message>

Counselors, even though they do not work with citizens one-on-one. They keep in touch with the Turkish-American society.

The idea behind contacts with citizens:

"To listen to the problems related to the embassy and requests regarding their homeland, if any, and to direct them to the relevant people." ²⁰

On the other hand, there is a department in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs whose mission is to ensure the unity of the Turkish society in the United States. The department is responsible for providing general guidance activities and discussions with the Turkish society. As officials stated:

"Although there are ideological differences between our Embassies and Consulates General and the citizens, especially in the U.S, we want the disagreements to end and peace to be established."²¹

Türkiye wanted to organize its citizens and associations living abroad in a call for unity and solidarity in order to expand its transnational space. It was thought that Turks who were visible and assertive abroad would do more useful work for the homeland. In order to serve the political interests of the homeland, collective identity was tried to be strengthened (Arkılıç, 2020). In this position, Embassies and Consulates support the associations, take a position according to the needs of the associations, and provide assistance in whatever the society or associations want. Thus, the Turkish Embassy tries to support all activities regardless of function, management or the ideological view.

"Our principle is to be equal to everyone. Even though the embassy is in D.C., we do a lot of state visits. We made nearly 20 visits in 2021. We also invite people here (to D.C.). "I can summarize our policy as "active engagement" and "non-discrimination."²²

It is obvious that with the "Ambassadors Conference" held for the first time in 2008, developments closely related to our country and region were discussed,

²⁰ Interview with the Internal Affairs Officers, 2022.

²¹ Interview with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Official, 2022.

²² Interview with the Turkish diplomat, 2022.

global trends were evaluated, and current challenges and opportunities were discussed (mfa.gov). In 2008, during the first Ambassadors' Conference, then Foreign Minister Ali Babacan, "emphasized the importance of Ambassadors keeping their finger on the pulse of public opinion and civil society" in the country they are in, in addition to traditional diplomatic contacts and relations with their own citizens. With this understanding, he expected all Chiefs of Mission to act as "catalysts" and "facilitators" in opening healthy channels of communication and contact between non-governmental organizations, academia, media and companies and their counterparts in Türkiye."²³

The Ambassadors Conference serves an important function in the context of Turkish foreign policy in terms of making internal plans and establishing inter-institutional coordination. On this occasion, important duties were assigned to ambassadors and embassies (Aksel, 2019). The state, through in-house planning and inter-institutional collaborations interacts with non-governmental organizations, associations, companies and citizens. The management of Turks living abroad, and the agendas determined for their needs have also become current issues of Turkish foreign policy. With the principle of "active engagement" and "non-discrimination", the Turkish Embassy in Washington sees the Turkish-American society as an important actor in building bridges of friendship between the homeland and the host country. For this reason, the desires of Turks living in America to become citizens and to be harmonious and active in all areas of society is necessary for the improvement and deepening of Türkiye's cultural, political and economic relations with the U.S.

As of 2019-2022, the Turkish state is pursuing a different policy in Congress-Lobby relations and association-citizen practices and is carrying out an intensive program especially in the context of citizen relations. The Embassy is cooperating with associations and the Embassy's support to the Turkish-American society is greater. The importance of lobbying and Congress relations in American politics in terms of foreign policy is evident.

²³ See also. https://www.mfa.gov.tr/disisleri-bakani-ali-babacan_in-buyukelciler-konferansi-acis-konusmasi.tr.mfa

The Turkish Embassy emphasizes to Turks in the U.S. that they should participate in the elections.

"We tell Turks who are American citizens to participate in the elections. We tell them to make appointments with senate members and governors in their districts. They need to meet with the local congress to solve problems in the society."²⁴

As can be clearly seen here, the homeland supports Turkish organizations in the U.S and implements state policies on Turks in the U.S by addressing the lower and upper levels of transnationalism. One debate here is whether transnational policies that states impose on their citizens hinder integration in the host country (Monti, 2015). However, states are utilitarian (Gamlen, 2013) and they see requirements such as "dual citizenship" and "integration into the host country" as important in terms of conducting lobbying activities on behalf of their own national interests and in their favor. In this way, states try to increase their influence in the international arena.

With the other perspective, it is known that there are lobby groups against Türkiye in the U.S. Some groups with FETO and PKK sympathies have serious active lobbying efforts and contacts with congress members. The fact that the Republic of Türkiye, as a state, needs a Turkish society to defend the rights is constantly emphasized.

"There are about 300 thousand Turks in America, but 55 thousand of them are dual citizens. The mass of citizens who can influence the members of Congress are also needed through associations. It needs to be organised. We are lacking."²⁵

Thus, what Türkiye need is an effective majority which is called "grassroots", people who will hold letter meeting and meet in the Senate. In the position, it is not enough to just expect something from the Embassy.

²⁴ Interview with the Turkish diplomat, 2022.

²⁵ Interview with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Official, 2022.

5.3 Diyanet Center of America

One of the oldest institutions working to consolidate the transnational Turkish society is the Diyanet (Şahin, Mencütek & Baser, 2018). In this context, there are many socio-economic, cultural and political actors and programs that are supported or actively contributed to. For example, within cooperating Presidency of Religious Affairs and The Turkish Religious Foundation, Diyanet Center of America whose foundations were laid in 2013 and was opened in 2016 to meet the religious needs of both the Turkish society in the U.S. and other Muslims. Moreover, in this complex structure, there is not only religion but also attention is paid to carrying out cultural studies. It is known that most of the counselors who provide religious and values education in DCA are "imams" (Aydin, Østergaard & Nielsen, 2020).

"Values education is given to teenagers separately in summer and winter as a boarding school. If you ask what values are, it is in the form of cultural and religious education. We employ people who are experts in their fields as speakers and the training is given in Turkish."²⁶

That means, DCA which has a mosque-oriented complex structure, also has sections such as a cultural center, society building, guest house, library, exhibition hall, bathhouse and conference hall. On the other hand, at the Islamic Research Center within the cultural center, consultancy services are provided to students who will go from Türkiye to the U.S. for undergraduate and graduate education.²⁷

"There are 23 students in the Montessori class on weekdays. Most of them are foreigners. There are religious education and memorization classes. We do sunday school on weekends. Turkish girls/boys come in the morning, foreign girls/boys come in the afternoon."²⁸

Religious sees the complex as a "meeting point" where hundreds of people come from surrounding states to perform their prayers and benefit from

²⁶ Interview with the DCA Official, 2023.

²⁷ See also. (<https://diyanetamerica.org/about-us/mission/>).

²⁸ Interview with the DCA Official, 2023.

the services of the cultural center, especially for the Friday prayer. On the other hand, national festivals such as March 18 and April 23 are celebrated in the DCA. There is also a restaurant serving Turkish cuisine inside. However, the problem here is that although it is a Turkish-Islamic center, the Turks who have been there a few times do not prefer to go again, despite all the activities, educational and cultural activities, and delicious Turkish food. The interviewee said the following:

"We want to organize different events, but first we need to find a way to get Turks accustomed to here. On the other hand, if you look at it, this is little Türkiye. Everything you need from grocery stores and markets is here."²⁹

The important point here is that almost 85% of the visitors to the DCA are foreigners. There are estimated to be around 40,000 Turks in the DMV area according to the latest census, but while the DCA appears to be a complex that brings Turkish citizens together, Turks are only known to utilize the coffee shop and restaurant. In general, as a result of the lack of unity among Turks in the U.S., many foreigners also benefit from the facilities in DCA. It is known that Afghans in particular live in the region.

"Even the name of the mosque is effective in preventing Turks from coming. DCA under state control, but there are people who stay away here because of the government. Also, its location is far from the DMV area. This has a negative effect on the Turks who come here."³⁰

Instrumentalizing Islam to reach Türkiye's transnational citizens is an old practice. Although the increase in the AKP's diaspora policies and the rise of Türkiye's transnational politics has become a trend in the last 15 years, the instrumentalization of Turks abroad through religion was seen as an important tool in Turkish politics even before the AKP (Kaya, 2012). Nevertheless, with the second term of the AKP, the Turkish State became an example of "moderate Islam", its desire to take on the role of leader of the Middle East (Aksel, 2019) meant becoming a unifying structure for the DCA but in addition, the fact that

²⁹ Interview with the DCA Official, 2023.

³⁰ Interview with the DCA Official, 2023.

the name DCA includes the word "Diyanet" creates reservations among people of different ideologies.

This has a negative impact on the collective movement of Turks. Apart from the inadequacy of such a large complex structure in bringing the Turkish society together, DCA may play an inclusive and unifying role, under the principle of "non-discrimination", focusing on Turk in U.S. with events, festivals and ignoring all ideological and religious differences. In this way, DCA might be able to appeal to a larger part of the Turkish society in the United States.

In general terms, there are some underlying reasons for this insecure and lack of collective consciousness structure. The changing state policies around transnational Turks and the diasporic return of the AKP have begun to present a different "transnational Turkish society" profile. In America, Turks do not present a "homogeneous" image with people from many different ideologies and classes, such as white-collar workers and members of the Gülenist Movement (Öztürk, Taş & Baser, 2022). For this reason, the conflicting structure of the transnational Turkish society, settled to the abroad prevents them from being in solidarity wherever they go. Turkish society with different socio-cultural levels who have lived apart from each other for a long time is observed that the FETO structure, the organization's extensions in the U.S. and the society have become increasingly disconnected from each other with the pandemic.

"After July 15th, the diaspora drifted apart from each other. We are in a region where FETO is active and their establishments were naturally in the foreground. After July 15th, people started to be more cautious about meeting individuals whose connection to FETO they did not know."³¹

It is clearly seen that there is no relationship of trust between this transnational society with different backgrounds and structures (Öztürk, Taş & Baser, 2022).

³¹ Interview with the THY Official in the U.S, 2022.

"The FETO structure has created a regression in relations and people's unity. People are hesitating and a cautiousness has emerged in the diaspora. Turks in the U.S. were perhaps more closed between 2016 and 2018, but now, with the help and activities of the embassy, relations have begun to be re-established."³²

In this context, the importance of the unifying force undertaken by diplomatic missions has emerged. In addition, the fact that Turkish people in America do not want to establish relations with FETO-related associations, that's why The Embassy became a confirmation mechanism. What increases the fragility of the Turkish presence in America is the presence of FETO there. For this reason, the Turkish people in America are administratively divided into two. It has been observed that lobbying activities have not made any progress and that Turks in the U.S. have become even more introverted due to the FETO structure.

However, the fact that association and lobbying activities with state support are not sufficient, the collective consciousness is not established, and the desired level of success is not achieved does not mean that the Turkish-American society is completely "ignored". According to Hofstede Insights' Data, Turkish people have a collectivistic society and they do not seem like individualist cultures (Hofstede Cultures (Insights & Country Comparison, 2023). Even though the Turkish society in America physically lives in the U.S, they have not completely broken away from their traditions (Ataselim, 2014). For this reason, they tried to form a union with organizations and associations suitable for their social needs. Ataselim (2014) reached some important points for organizations and associations in the field of her research:

- a. The credibility and accountability of the recipient non-profit is very important.
- b. The person who asks is very important.
- c. Trusting the organization in the United States is very important.
- d. There is an overwhelming desire to help Türkiye.

³² Interview with the Turkish Diplomat, 2022.

- e. to. The society believes that there is still a trust issue in the Turkish third sector, but it is improving and they would like to be a part of that development.
- f. Getting the right people involved is important.

Based on the above inferences in this part, the state's cooperation, commercial moves and lobbying activities with Turkish associations in the U.S. will be explained.

5.4. Novelties made by Turkish State for Citizens Living Abroad after 2010

Associations and lobbying activities were established to strengthen the ties between Türkiye and the U.S. on topics such as education, culture, economy, science, religion and defense and to inform the Turkish society in the U.S. on this subject (Ari, 1997). In addition, Turks and Türkiye in the U.S., accurately represented, help eliminate prejudiced thoughts formed in America. As it is known, Turkish associations and lobbying activities in the U.S. address important issues such as ensuring unity, establishing healthy relations with senators and the American press, strengthening United States-Türkiye commercial relations and Turkish investors entering the U.S. market. In Türkiye's foreign policies after 2010, the desire to reach new markets has included important economic actors such as TOBB and TUSKON in terms of industrialization (Öniş, 2011). Shortly, dynamics which are changed in foreign policy is also important in foreign trade. Also, as a result of transnationalism, both countries recognize the value of human capital and financial resources. In the globalizing world, it is necessary to provide rights and freedoms that cannot be ignored for the new subjectivities that emerge.

In her article, Yanaşmayan (2010) argues that the association of Turks abroad is very similar to the divisions in domestic politics. However, the association structures of Turks in America and their cooperation with the Turkish state are more unifying than in Europe. In addition to having associations operating in multiple fields and cooperating with the Turkish state, the homeland -through the efforts of the Turkish Embassy in Washington - uses the diaspora, lobbying activities and public diplomacy to achieve the goal of a "strong

Türkiye". In short, associations, educational programs, scholarships, cultural and social events, donations and youth movements supported by state actors in Türkiye and foreign missions are important (Vertovec, 1999). For this reason, the Turkish Embassy in Washington continues its participation for Turkish unity and solidarity.

5.4.1 Ministry of trade. Consultants of the Ministry of Commerce provide services in the Embassies and Consulates General, regarding these investment and market analyses. Within the scope of Foreign Direct Investment, multinational companies are encouraged to invest and Trade Counsellors who are working in the Embassy provide consultancy on these issues.³³ As it is known, trade is seen as an important actor for the development of relations between countries and the increase of Türkiye's brand prestige. "If the investor is strong, the diaspora can put pressure on the U.S." is a key point of argument. Thus, Counsellors share market research and market information reports for the investor, they also provide information about custom services to Turkish investors. According to the information I obtained from my fieldwork:

"Investments were made in West Virginia. The employment provided there brought recognition to Türkiye in commercial, cultural and educational fields. On the other hand, we also make trade agreements. It is very important to determine Türkiye's position here."³⁴

Through this consultancy service and investment information, the state play a key role in supporting Turks who want to invest in the U.S., and gives importance to both individual gains and Türkiye's prestige abroad.

In this context after 2010, the Turkish government and business leaders began to consider the transnational society as potential partners for development and growth (Ataselim, 2014). For this reason, it has come to the fore that Turks living abroad, who are highly educated and professionally qualified, are seen as social and human capital for Türkiye (Geithner et al. 2004; Brinkerhoff 2008). With the changing diaspora policies of the Republic of Türkiye, Turks who are living abroad have become economic contributors (Aydin, 2014). Development

³³ See also. <https://ticaret.gov.tr/dis-iliskiler/yurt-disi-teskilatimiz>

³⁴ Interview with the Turkish Commercial Counsellor in U.S., 2023.

and increased trade and economic interaction is an important actor for Türkiye's diplomatic activities (Magued, 2012).

These are the underlying reasons for the Ministry of Commerce's move to support Turkish investors abroad. While the Ministry of Commerce maintains these relations, the Ministry of Education has signed academic agreements with universities in Türkiye and the American universities.

5.4.2 MoNE. One of the state institutions providing education services to Turks abroad is the MoNE. The Ministry's foreign organization includes consultants and attachés. Since 1929, MoNE has been sending students abroad. Since 2013, it has been sending students with official scholarships abroad on its behalf in the fields that the ministry needs (Aktekin & Tekben, 2019).

Within the scope of Law No. 1416, it is known that the health, accommodation and salaries of students who go abroad for graduate education are covered by state institutions (MoNE, 2018). State institutions pay students' round-trip tickets once, and overseas salaries are also paid every month. MoNE declares its aims of sending scholars abroad as "increasing qualified human resources" and "strengthening the human capital of the country". When look at it on a historical scale, 21,289 people have benefited from it from 1929 to 2021. To give an example from the D.C. area, Türkiye has a student transfer and admission agreement with Georgetown University.

In addition, with the "Our Future is in Education" project launched in 2021, to the Turkish-American society, those who will come to the U.S from Türkiye for education and training, and Turks living in the U.S, it is aimed to introduce education and R&D opportunities in the U.S. The MoNE is also responsible for collecting and preparing materials for Turkish education abroad.

With the "Turkish School in America" project, an online platform was established to teach Turkish throughout America. On this occasion, online Turkish language opportunity was provided in places where Turkish schools were not available. While teachers are selected from Europe, specifically for the 5-16 age group, infrastructure facilities are provided from Türkiye. The work

continues to make progress even if the teacher and student are not at the same time-zone.

Turkish state institutions, which continue to use education as soft power in this sense, have taken steps to support the education lobby such as YTB, YEE, Maarif Schools. Because for the Turkish state, education and academia strengthen relations between the two countries. Through people-to-people interaction, cultural and educational cooperation is possible. At the same time, citizens living abroad do not move away from the language phenomenon. They continue to know the language and culture of their homeland. In this sense, it is important not to lose the language. The continuation of language unity is seen as the continuation of history and culture. However, educational activities and student mobility are not limited to MoNE or related institutions. Student associations in the U.S. also play a role.

5.4.3 Turkish student associations. It would not be wrong to mention the work of TSAs at George Washington and Georgetown University. TSA at George Washington University has collaborated with other student associations at its schools in the new term. They have adopted the principle of coming together in case of any disaster and helping their own communities first. Stating that the earthquake disaster in Türkiye caused great solidarity for them, the TSA president stated that:

“We received more support from the school in order to increase our unity and that participation in events was higher than before.”³⁵

He also underlined that they are planning to organize an event for the 100th anniversary of the republic and that they will ask for help from their universities and the embassy in this regard.

On the other hand, there is the fact that the way to bring the Turkish society together and promote it correctly is to carry out associations and lobbying activities. As I mentioned before, the most important Turkish lobby actor operating in Washington D.C. for a long time was ATAA. Of course, there are also institutions such as ITS, ATAS and TABA that provide incentives for Turks

³⁵ Interview with the TSA President of George Washington University, 2023.

to participate in the political process and try to raise awareness of Turks in the U.S. on some issues. However, there is an organization that has made a name for itself lately. TASC will be mentioned in this part.

5.5 TASC

In this period, TASC appears as a new actor. Stating that its focus is on the strengthening of the Turkish-American Society, TASC supports public education and advocacy programs in a position to improve relations between the U.S and Türkiye. It also aims to empower the Turkish-American society on issues affecting United States-Türkiye relations. In that position, TASC explains its position like "includes leaders of the Turkish American Society, many of whom are also leaders of other Turkish American organizations."³⁶

TASC, which aims to promote solidarity in diversity and common goals and/or interests, declares that it carries out its activities with an open cooperation between society leaders and volunteers. In this context, TASC which positions itself as the "leader of the Turkish-American Society" has made it its mission to bring together the resources and talents of participating organizations for the common interests of the society.

TASC, which included important names for the Turkish society in America such as Oya Bain and Günay Övünç (Evinch) who left from ATAA, in the period after its establishment, carries out its activities in a polyphonic manner. With these names who joined TASC to create polyphony, it is seen that names rather than professional managements not come to the forefront in association processes.³⁷

They continue their activities within the framework of the principles TASC has adopted as its mission. For example, TASC Co-President Günay Evinch spoke at the American Turkic Council (ATC) 37th Annual Conference and addressed Turkish American civil society leaders. The panel was organized by the Foreign Economic Relations Board (DEIK), World Turkish Business Council

³⁶ See also. <https://ourtasc.org/about-us/>

³⁷ Interview with the TASC Authorized, 2023.

(DTIK) and included Moderator Ömer Er, DEIK President Nail Olpak, DEIK Board Member Rona Yırcalı and MÜSİAD President Mustafa Tuncer.

More than 700 Turkish Americans, U.S. government officials and businessmen attended the two-day conference held in Washington D.C. DTIK, which has representatives in various countries around the world, brings together Turkish business owners by networking with each other for their common goals of trade, commerce and multilateral relations (AVIM, 2019).

On the other hand, while constantly organizing webinars and events on different topics, they also broadcast on YouTube on their channel called TASC TV, where they plan to raise awareness of the Turkish society in America. President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and then-Minister of Foreign Affairs Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu connected via videoconference to support TASC's activities during the pandemic period. In his speech on TASC's YouTube channel, TASC TV, Erdoğan said: "We are intensifying our contacts with Turks in America, both with the participation of TASC and other non-governmental organizations and individually."

According to the news of the U.S. Post, Dr. Halil Mutlu became the AKP's representative to the U.S. and served as TASC Co-chairman (US Post, 2022). With this move, the AKP, which has not had a representative in the U.S. for many years, seems to have extended its power beyond the borders and aims to claim the votes of Turks in the U.S.

Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu, the then Minister of Foreign Affairs, also gave an interview to TASC TV, which is supported by state officials, associations and political parties. The broadcast titled "Turkish Foreign Policy in the Pandemic Period and Forecasts of the New Era". Çavuşoğlu: "We are aware of the role played by TASC. You are Türkiye's representatives in the U.S. "We appreciated the solidarity you showed with the Turkish society and Americans in the U.S. during this process." made a statement. Additionally to this, since its establishment, TASC TV has received and broadcast the congratulatory messages of CHP, MHP and AKP and also it published Turkish Ambassadors and Consuls General.

On the other hand, aid activities and collaborations carried out during the pandemic continued with the sad earthquake activities in Türkiye. Thus, TASC, which has made it its mission to be active in the congress, continues its negotiations. Melih Bektaş met with Pete Sessions in Washington D.C. Pete Sessions the Congressman of Texas: "The American people stand with the Turkish people who experienced this disaster. America has a role that cares about the Turkish people. At the congresses, not only good wishes are given to the Turkish people, but aid is also provided. Not just the United States, we hope that other well-wishers will also support Türkiye. We send our best wishes to all of you." After this meeting, in August 2023, Pete Sessions went to Cyprus with the invitation of the Turkish Cypriot Chamber of Commerce and for the first time in history, an American congressman visited the Turkish Cypriot part. Recently, TASC has become an important element in the plans and programs of the Turkish Government to coordinate the Turks living in the United States and to form a pressure group and lobby in the country where they are located and has shaped its fields of activity within this framework. For this reason, it can be observed that the Turkish lobby has become more active with visits and meetings (Tunç & Göksel, 2020).

5.6 Festivals

Festivals are one of the biggest parts of Türkiye's visibility in the U.S. In this context, Türkiye's festivals in the U.S, which promote Türkiye, teach Turkish culture and conduct a transnational politics by utilizing all political and cultural opportunities abroad, will be discussed.

Turkish visibility in America continues traditionally with Turkish Day Parades and Turkish Heritage Month. 12 years ago, Washington D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser declared October as the "Year of Turkish Heritage". Stating that Türkiye and the U.S. have been strong allies for many years, Bowser said, "Turkish-Americans in Washington have made great contributions to the education, culture, economy and urban development of Washington DC. Many Americans of Turkish origin live in D.C. and surrounding states." Defining Ankara and Washington D.C. as "sister cities", Bowser argued that "after the Turkish Heritage Year, a bridge was built between Turkish and non-Turkish

Americans" and emphasized once again the importance of this festival.³⁸ In this context, the festival is organized by ATA-DC every October.

I had the opportunity to personally attend the festival held on October 16, 2022. In this festival, which is attended by embassy and consulate employees for the first time, themes related to Turkish culture, cuisine and art are covered. Turkish Coffee Lady³⁹ opened a Turkish coffee stand and let people experience coffee fortune telling along with coffee. Concerts were held, folk dances were played, Atatürk School had set up an educational and entertaining program and a painting stand for children. ATAA-DC volunteers everywhere kept the festival running very smoothly. At this event, which was also attended by the US Ambassador of the Republic of Türkiye, Murat Mercan gave an interview to TASC TV. In his speech, Mercan emphasized that it was the first event held after the pandemic and said that all NGOs and government institutions worked hard for this event. He stated that he found it pleasing that TASC, THY, ATAA-DC, YEE and other industry groups promoted Türkiye at the festival. Underlining his desire to hold such events in all major cities of the U.S., Mercan evaluated it as an important opportunity to introduce Turkish culture, tourism and cuisine to the local people and the U.S. by continuing to work with all associations.

Turkish Embassy in Washington organized an art exhibition in which photographed from every corner of Türkiye, sponsored by THY and the materials for the exhibition were provided by the Consulate General of New York. In the festival, foreign people were informed about visa and travel processes to Türkiye by the Consulate authorized.

"The work of associations generally remains at the cultural level. THY sponsors if there is demand. Turkish Festival is perhaps the most important example you will ever see. Of course, THY also supports individual initiatives. For example, we take care to sponsor such initiatives as Turkish Coffee Lady."⁴⁰

³⁸ See also. ([https://move2Turkiye.com/washington-municipality\).-declares-october-as-turkish-heritage-month/](https://move2Turkiye.com/washington-municipality).-declares-october-as-turkish-heritage-month/))

³⁹ See also. <https://turkishcoffeelady.com.tr/pages/hakkimizda>

⁴⁰ Interview with the THY Official in the U.S., 2022.

This event, which increased Türkiye's visibility and made visits to Türkiye interesting, was an important step for cultural diplomacy. In order for Türkiye to realize the goals it has set for itself in the international arena, to achieve a better image abroad and to reveal its cultural privileges, all state institutions and individual movements should be supported. It is also possible to reach large masses through NGOs and associations (Ünver, 2013). In the position, THY sponsor the festivals and events if needed. At the same time, at the Turkish Day Parade held every year, New York Consul General Reyhan Özgür said that the traditional Turkish Day Parade is important in terms of increasing the unity and solidarity of the Turkish-American society and the visibility of the United States' contributions to economic and cultural life. He stated that they attach special importance to the participation of children and young people. Özgür: "Walking as one with the Turkish-American society will strengthen our strength."⁴¹

Thus, according to Consul General Özgür's speech, there is a perception that building strong ties with the society will increase Türkiye's global stature and strengthen its position to compete with the rest of the world. In this context, the active participation of children and youth in the social, cultural and political life of the country they live in without losing their native language and culture will be a visible outcome of the state policies and projects.

Studies have been carried out by resident representatives abroad and other state institutions for diaspora management and collective identity construction (Şenay, 2013). It was thought that progress was made in the creation of a "strong" and "new" Türkiye in line with sponsoring a series of events, providing information on nationally important issues, and statements made by the state officials of the Republic of Türkiye. Diaspora and its related criteria, conceptualized by Sheffer in 1986, can be easily observed in the Turkish state's attitude towards festivals. In this context, the homeland and its citizens living abroad regularly engage in symbolic and important contacts. In this context, the construction of Turks' social spaces that interpenetrate the homeland and the country they live in has become possible to some extent through festivals.

⁴¹ See also. <https://www.dailysabah.com/turkiye/40th-turkish-day-parade-to-be-held-on-may-20-in-new-york/news>

Chapter 6

Differences Between Pre-2010 and Post-2010

The most significant difference between pre-2010 and post-2010 is the realization of the lack of institutions especially in the diaspora and the establishment of an institution such as YTB. The cooperation of diaspora institutions is seen as important for coordinating transnational technology, culture and economy (Kastoryano, 2012). In this context, YTB, which continues its activities as Türkiye's soft power, has been entrusted with the responsibility of interacting with people connected to Türkiye, such as kin communities and citizens. Moreover, the profound changes brought about by diaspora institutions are considered worthy of exploration in the literature. Gamlen (2014) argues that diaspora institutions "extend local spaces beyond national borders, so that infrastructural power is projected beyond the country." In this context, YTB was joined on the scene with YEE, which has the same working mechanism. However, the important point here is that YTB works as a coordinating mechanism when looking at the U.S. in particular. In other words, the elements that will benefit the homeland such as tourism, foreign investments, foreign currency inflows, etc., which YTB has included in its plans but needs different institutions to realize, have not yet reached the expected targets with "cultural diplomacy".

As is well known, the creation of a diaspora institution such as YTB is a decision that supported by all state actors and political parties. Gamlen (2006) argues that the need to create institutions for the diaspora was realized as migration and migrant issues grew within the state system. As such, there were expectations that YTB would have a global voice and increase the political, economic and cultural capacity of Turks in the U.S.

YTB is known to support and coordinate such activities, but it cannot be said that YTB has rallied the entire transnational community of Turks in the U.S. around it. However, it should be noted that YTB's projects and diplomacy traffic that are conducted by the institution may be more effective in regions such as Balkan countries and Central Asian countries than in the U.S. In this context of

Turks in America, social events sponsored by YTB are organized from time to time or YTB joins the events possibly, but the general jurisdiction is under control of the Turkish Embassy in Washington. This means that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been communicating with its citizens more effectively than diaspora organizations through the diaspora diplomacy it has implemented in the last 10 years.

In addition, foreign missions maintain multi-dimensional relations with organizations, lobby groups, citizens, businesspeople, airlines, schools and associations, while at the same time improving consular services "equally for all citizens". In this context, the presence of resident embassies, rather than offices of diaspora organizations opened abroad, seems more effective for citizens.

For example, during my fieldwork in the U.S., I observed that the Turkish Embassy and Consulates General were in close contact with all organizations such as DCA, ATAA, TASC, TUSIAD, etc., and made efforts to ensure that problems experienced by both citizens and organizations were resolved promptly.

To sum, when compared before and after 2010, the existence of a diaspora institution such as YTB had a positive impact on Türkiye's international image. However, in the case of the U.S, YTB-related activities cannot fully organize among the Turkish community. It should be noted that the side providing more active engagement is still Turkish foreign missions at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In other words, it is obvious that the institution that strengthens the state-citizen relationship of Turks in the U.S. is the Turkish Embassy in a more dominant and active way. As far as I have observed, Turks who are looking for a sense of belonging in the U.S. have recently established close relations with the embassy and, national days, festivals and holidays are celebrated together by "honoring" the citizens.

Another important issue is the right to vote for Turks abroad after the establishment of YTB. In this context, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which initially did not look favorably on voting abroad due to possible negative issues such as security weaknesses, lack of personnel and transparency, later made

progress on the "right to vote and be elected abroad" through multifaceted negotiations with YTB and YSK. Thus, with the coordinated efforts of YTB, YSK and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, procedural decisions on the election were reached. The most important development that facilitated the voting process for abroad citizens is the increase in the number of consular missions and resident embassies by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Türkiye, which has opened more than 80 missions in the last 20 years, is currently in the top five in terms of diplomatic representation network in the world with 260 foreign missions.⁴² With the realization of the opportunity to "vote at representations abroad" in 2012, the number of registered voters living abroad became more precisely known and the rate of participation in politics from abroad, which had been around 5 percent in previous elections, exceeded 47 percent in the 2017 referendum. In general, in the elections held between 2014-2018, the number of ballot boxes abroad was five but with each new election, participation has increased. In the 2023 presidential elections, 1.8 million voters abroad participated in the elections (YSK, 2023). In the case of the United States of America, according to YSK data, the participation rate was 41.3%. One of the reasons for the increase in the rate of Turkish overseas voters in the US is explained as follows:

"In the past, every voter could vote at the mission in his/her jurisdiction. The U.S. is a country spread over a wide geography. Citizens sometimes find it more difficult to reach the mission in the jurisdiction where they live. This affected voter participation rates."⁴³

When voters can vote wherever they want, turnout increases. However, in order to vote, voters must go to the Turkish foreign missions where they live and make an "address declaration" and review the "voter registers" on the YSK website before the election. YTB has created a website for the last election in 2023. In coordination with the YSK and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the website outlines what voters need to do and the missions where ballot boxes will

⁴² See also. https://www.mfa.gov.tr/site_media/html/turkiye-yuzyili-nda-turk-dis-politikasi-2024-kitapcik.pdf https://www.mfa.gov.tr/site_media/html/turkiye-yuzyili-nda-turk-dis-politikasi-2024-kitapcik.pdf

⁴³ Interview with the Consulate, 2023.

be set up. While citizens in Türkiye can vote until 17:00 p.m. on election day, the days and hours have been extended for voters abroad.

“There are voters who come from very far away. When the participation rate is high, the voting process in missions can take a long time. Election hours are longer so that voters can vote more easily and employees can come to vote when they are available.”⁴⁴

All these initiatives are assumed to be positive factors for increased participation.⁴⁵ In addition, with citizens declaring their addresses to the missions in order to increase the participation rate, state institutions determine the number of citizens abroad. In this case, the expectations of the state from the transnational society can be shaped according to the data, necessary analyses can be made for the needs of the transnational society, and even the number and working capacity of the foreign offices of YTB and other state institutions can be increased.

The other element that needs to be addressed at this point is that voting abroad are not counted in the country of residence but are brought to Türkiye and delivered to the YSK under the supervision of diplomatic representatives and political party representatives. In this case, within the scope of developments such as the official change in the status of Turks, who have been in the "worker" status for many years in the literature, and the attempt to create a Turkish migrant society abroad, also the granting of the "right to vote" to Turks abroad within the institutionalized policies of YTB also meant transnationalization in terms of political parties (Köse, 2023).

Thus, political parties started to organize abroad and tried to engage with the voters. In the U.S., representatives of CHP, AKP and HDP work for their political parties. Similarly, foreign missions, associations, organizations, YSK, YTB, TASC and ATAA encourage Turkish citizens in the U.S. to vote in the elections in Türkiye. From the 2018 Presidential elections to the 2023 Presidential elections, the number of people voting increased. In 2018, around 35,000 people voted in the US, while more than 51,000 people went to the ballot

⁴⁴ Interview with the Turkish Diplomat, 2023.

⁴⁵ See also. <https://secim.ytb.gov.tr>

box in the 2023 elections.⁴⁶ As a result, granting the right to vote to citizens abroad is seen as a positive step in terms of diaspora policies and homeland- citizen relations (Köse, 2023).

Here, the development of ties between the homeland and the transnational society is reflected in political participation.

In short, the adoption of dual citizenship by the home country is an important development for the transnational community in the context of diaspora politics. Because after granting this right to citizens abroad, the state expects them to show their loyalty to the nation-state (Barabantseva & Sutherland, 2013). In this context, in return for security, protection, fulfillment of requirements, some states expect their citizens to participate in politics and work in the interests of their country. Thus, dual citizenship was introduced for Turks whose labor status changed and who became resident abroad. Later on, diaspora policies were accelerated and gained more importance with the AKP government. In 2010, YTB, which was established with the acceptance of all political parties, brought the right to vote abroad to the agenda and negotiations were held to overcome the reservations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The YSK was put into practice with the coordinated efforts of YTB and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The second important point is the cultural and public diplomacy conducted by YTB, and according to Gamlen (2019), diaspora institutions must fulfill the two requirements of "touch" and "embrace" in order to rise (Evranos, 2021).

YTB has set out with this motto and has been successful with its facilities, scholarships, courses and projects in most Balkan and Central Asian countries. However, the point we are discussing here is that "soft power" elements such as YTB and YEE are not as strong a figure as the Consulates General and the Embassy in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the U.S. According to the fieldwork analysis of this research, the Turkish Embassy in Washington meets with almost all the people and organizations in accordance with the "interests and policies of the state".

⁴⁶ See also. <https://www.haberturk.com/secim/secim2018/cumhurbaskanligi-secimi/ilce/yurtdisi-amerika-birlesik-dev-1151>.

On this occasion, in line with the “embracing” and “non-discriminating” principles of the Turkish Embassy in Washington, the doors of the mission are wide open for all kinds of problems that Turks may face in U.S. This is stated importantly by As H.E. Ambassador Hasan Murat Mercan continuously.

On the other hand, there is an other important issue that affected pre and post 2010 process. Turgut Özal allowed the Gülenist Movement to establish a structure within the State Planning Organization (DPT) and political support led to the national expansion of the community founded by Fetullah Gülen. Aligning himself between nationalism and Islam and known for his work in the so-called Hizmet movement, he escaped to the United States in 1999, citing health problems. In this process, he started to carry out unofficial grassroots activities(Taş, 2022).

This structure, which remained on the agenda of the state, especially the MGK, for a long time, was in a growth consisting of unofficial and official institutions. It had a large number of charter schools in the U.S., as it did in many places abroad, and was trying to create a kind of diaspora. In 2010, the Gülenist Movement began to experience friction with the AKP government, which led to major disagreements with the AKP in 2014 and caused the AKP government to take an anti-Gülen position (Taş, 2022).

In 2016, as a result of the failed coup attempt, efforts began to dismantle this globally connected sect. As it is known, there are members of the community who have been purged from state cadres or fled abroad. However, the activities carried out abroad, which they call "Hizmet Diaspora", are still a question mark for Turks in the US. In this context, a rupture has taken place, creating transnational "distrust and nervousness" for those who avoid contact with a Turkish FETO member.

There was also another rupture that coincided with the period when the Gülen sect clashed with the AKP. In this context, in 2013, a certain part of the public stated that disproportionate force was used during the Gezi protests. This deepened the divisions that were already a problem in Türkiye, as well as the polarization of Turks abroad or their reaction against the state (Başer, Öztürk,

2022). In the face of these events, political reconciliation has become difficult. Because the Gezi Protests, which were seen as "just anti-AKP protests" for a certain group of people and as a "reaction against the restriction of freedoms" for others, brought both society and politics face to face. Thus, for Turks who see abroad as an alternative and migrate from Türkiye, there has been a significant increase in state-citizen tensions. In this complex process, even though the state has changed its policies and tried to consolidate its citizens abroad, the fractures have to some extent been characterized by mutual distrust and lack of contact between citizens. Thus, although there have been changes in the discourse and activities of foreign missions or state diaspora institutions, and they try to provide the same services and meet the same needs, relations with the public have been disrupted.



Chapter 7

Conclusion

In this thesis, I examined "the impact of state policies on Turks in the U.S." in a historical context. After giving the historical background of migration, it was important to see how recent state policies have been implemented. In this context, the heterogeneous image of Turks in the U.S. was also valuable to examine because the aspirations and needs of transnational citizens are shaped by socio-cultural and educational factors. At the same time, the state had to analyze its citizens abroad in order to protect its "national interests".

The reason why I chose Türkiye as the homeland was again the influence of domestic politics in the context of international migration and how political differences determine changes in diaspora participation policies. The Republic of Türkiye, with its own structural changes, has periodically implemented different diaspora policies. In addition to this, the rights granted by the Turkish state to its citizens abroad and its expectations from them started to change. The important point here is the moment when the Republic of Türkiye realized that its citizens living abroad were "permanent".

The "transformation" in Turkish migration to the U.S. in the 1980s was no longer seen as laborers and remittance earners. In this context, the Republic of Türkiye began to promote the political participation and social visibility of its transnational society in the destination by adopting the practice of "dual citizenship" in 1981. In the case of the U.S., the "promoting" role of the Turkish state is important because it is legal to conduct lobbying activities in the U.S. The Turkish state has also shaped its migration policies in this framework and has come to expect "active engagement" from its citizens. In particular, how the AKP's proactive policy stance in the period after the 2002 elections was operationalized through Turks in the U.S. was important for us in this thesis. If 2010 is taken as the second turning point in the AKP rule in terms of international migration, the changes and developments in policies before and after YTB are analyzed in detail in Chapter 3 and Chapter 4. In the simplest terms with YTB, Türkiye met the definition of a real "diaspora institution".

Another important point in this thesis is how YTB took steps in line with its mission and vision and how it responded to the homeland-citizen relationship. Thus, in Chapter 5, I analyzed YTB with the support and efforts of other state institutions, the idea creating an identity for Turkish migrants spread transnationally. Based on the motto "strong diaspora, strong Türkiye", YTB constituted a regional and global reflection of Türkiye's post-2000 transformation on the axis of foreign policy and public diplomacy (Memleketim, 2020). With the conceptualization of the diaspora by YTB, the idea of bringing different types of diasporas -like Turkic states⁴⁷ - closer to each other (İyi & Umarova, 2022) and ensuring that Türkiye becomes "visible" in the international conjuncture was important for the creation of "collective consciousness" and "strong Türkiye". However, the result of this research conducted specifically on Turks in the U.S. is that the transnational society has generally improved the state-citizen relationship through foreign missions. Likewise, the multiple ties and interactions established by Embassy and Consulates General in this field have created more positive results than other institutions.

In this chapter, I also discussed how political participation was shaped by the right to vote abroad and how political parties in Türkiye became transnationalized as a result of increased political participation and its repercussions in the U.S. Another important point here was the views, disagreements and commonalities of the YSK, YTB and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the right to vote for voters abroad. I analyzed the homeland-citizen relationship of this collaborative process.

On the other hand, the most important element underlying these ideas is that AKP's diaspora policy is based on Türkiye's positive image in the world public opinion, and that its "soft power", its citizens abroad, are working towardsthis goal. At the same time, putting pressure on congressional resolutions that would be contrary to Türkiye's interests and lobbying on Türkiye's behalf are of great importance in American politics. In order for these lobbying and pressure groups to work, Türkiye needs to be a guide citizens abroad towards the

⁴⁷ See also. <https://ytb.gov.tr/haberler/turk-devletleri-teskilati-diasporalari-ytb-ev-sahipliginde-bulustu>.

improvement of Turkish-American relations.⁴⁸ In bilateral relations, development projects and the importance given to the economy were at the forefront of the AKP's diplomatic activities (Magued, 2012). In this context, it was a common policy to see citizens abroad as "bridges" and "potential representatives" between the two states.

However, another situation that cannot be ignored is how the state-citizen relationship is perceived by Turkish community. If the state realizes the basic rights and opportunities that its citizens abroad need through its institutions, citizens shape their relations with the state within a certain context. In particular, given that returning to the homeland from the United States is laborious, long and expensive, I believe that the state's provision of a social structure to ease the needs of Turkish people within the work of Republic of Türkiye's diaspora engagement policies is important. This is because the motivation of Turks to serve their homeland is directly proportional to the increased attachment of the transnational Turkish society to their homeland.

Another debate, although is the extent to which the democratic backlash observed in Türkiye after 2010 (Metin & Ramaciotti, 2023) and the anti-government unrest expressed in the Gezi protests have affected other Turks in the U.S. For some Turks, who found the AKP government's response to the Gezi protests disproportionate, state-society relations have been negative. In this context, the climate of conflict on the basis of secularism, ethnicity and democratic values has also created a break of the cooperation and trust between Turkish people and Republic of Türkiye in U.S. Turks in America, who can already have two very different lines such as Islamist and Kemalist, reacted to the consensus that could not be created politically. In other words, distrust in political power has emerged (Sabancılar-Eren, Özden, 2014). In different terms, the idea of "freedoms should not be restricted"⁴⁹ in the ideological background of the Gezi Park events is the simplest explanation for the alienation of Turks in America from state institutions. Also, since the Gezi protests in Türkiye, new waves of migration continue to occur and it is thought that the social structure of Turks will become more heterogeneous (Öztürk, Taş & Baser, 2022).

⁴⁸ Interview with the Association Official, 2023.

⁴⁹ See also. <https://jinepgazetesi.com/2013/07/bilgi-universitesi-gezi-parki-arastirmasi/>

Even if there are different ideologies, non-matching political and religious dynamics in every part of Turkish society in U.S., unfortunately after the sad earthquake disaster that we experienced on February 6, 2023, which caused destruction in 10 provinces of Türkiye, I saw that the Turkish society can strengthen unity in times of common troubles. The financial and sudden earthquake aid, which was implemented at the Turkish Embassy in Washington D.C. and collected with the support and assistance of the citizens, was transported to the Diyanet Center of America with the support of the citizens and shipped to Türkiye from there. In this context, the Turkish society living in America, which is perhaps far from what was expected in terms of coordination and association, -even though they work with the logic of "time is money" in the capitalist order of the U.S. and do not want to waste their time to develop and expand the Turkish society-, as in other sad events, they return to their homeland. That's why Turkish people in U.S. were an important actor for aid as much as possible.

Likewise, I witnessed that serious financial aid was wanted to be sent to Türkiye with the support of Turkish associations, fellow countrymen groups and associations, and fan groups. Even though we know that Turks do not prefer to go to Turkish restaurants in D.C, so to speak, Turks run away from Turks, and they cannot form a collective structure, what I saw after February 6th is that many Turkish restaurant owners sent dinner to DCA and the Turkish Embassy in Washington D.C.

Accordingly, I argue that "common concerns" may be one of the unifying elements for the Turkish community in the U.S., which has different ideologies and socio-cultural levels. From the first migrations to the ASALA period and upto the present day, it is known that there has been a relatively more collective Turkish community brought together by elements that may create sensitivities such as natural disasters, catastrophes, terrorist attacks and, for some, national holidays. In this context, there is also a point of view in the literature that for Turkish immigrants living in the U.S., the unity of common goals/objectives, celebrations, commemorations, participation in ceremonies or rituals, the use of symbols such as language and flags are seen as effective elements for the establishment of transnational symbolic ties (Ekiyor, 2018).

In this context, it is obvious that the efforts of Embassies and Consulates General, which are sub-institutes of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, cannot be ignored. Recently, within the scope of the diaspora policies carried out in coordination with YTB, Turkish diplomats also give an image of being intertwined with the public. Thus, the important point is for citizens to know that they can get help from Embassies and Consulates General in times of need without being subjected to a discrimination. However, the important variable for the relationship between the homeland and the citizen is the political spectrum from which the citizen addresses the situation. While relations with the associations can be organized according to each ideology, relations with the homeland and the embassy are conducted through individual engagements. For economic and political reasons, Turks who have cut ties with Türkiye and migrate to the U.S. have not had relations with the embassy for many years. In recent times, especially the advent of "Voting abroad rights", the bid for the diaspora vote has led to a rapprochement between state institutions and some citizens, however some citizens who have different ideologies are still away from state institutions. On this occasion, AKP's soft-emphasized "pluralism" did not have a successful role in some parts which called themselves "Kemalist"² in diaspora. Thus, the idea of "Protecting and defending the rights of every citizen abroad" (Borchard, 2016) did not affect all parts of Turkish society in U.S. with the same.

Again, I must state clearly that Turks, especially in America, do not see the Turkish-Islamic synthesis as a unifying element. In this context, the Embassies and Consulates, which are able to analyze the profile of their citizens, approach them with an "embracing" attitude "non-discrimination" because they are public institutions of the Turkish state. They continue to provide assistance and support to citizens and associations of whatever ideology they need. For this reason, ideological differences are not seen as a factor limiting the services provided by the state to its citizens. For this reason, the Diyanet Center of America, despite being a mosque complex, becomes a Turkish restaurant and coffeehouse for cultural purposes.

Another important point is how the traces of the "Turkish diaspora", which the state wants to support intensively, have come to life in the U.S. Although the

² See Also. "İşte yabancı müelliflerin (yazarların) Büyük Millî Reisin adına nisbetle "Kemalism" dedikleri Türk inkılâp hareketinin temel prensipleri bunlardır. Bu prensiplere dayanan devlet sistemi Türk milletinin tarihine, ihtiyaçına, içtimaî bünyesine ve mefkûresine (tûlküstü- ne) en uygun olduğu kadar, bütün dünyadaki sistemler içinde de en sağlam ve en mükemmel olanıdır" Türk Tarihi Tetkik Cemiyeti, Tarih IV, İstanbul 1931.

lobbying activities that started in 2008 gained momentum and became visible in 2014, it is not a realistic scenario to expect an organized Turkish society in the U.S. without professional association management.

Moreover, it would be difficult to say that Turks in America, who have lived disconnected from each other both geographically and ideologically for years, have any intention of becoming "organized". In this respect, it is not right to give all the responsibility to the state. Nevertheless, it has not been observed that the Turks in America have been indifferent to any call from the Embassy.

The most important reason why it is difficult to see an organized Turkish structure is FETO's structure in the U.S. In general, the existence of an organization such as FETO has an effect on the "Sense of solidarity" and "collective consciousness". Although the Turkish-American society is not as sensitive to the FETO organization, not knowing who the other person is causes a rupture in the society. Not only FETO, but also most congregations and sectarian organizations have a negative impact on Turks in America. Before interacting with each other, Turks in the society scrutinize whether the other person is affiliated with an organization or not. Especially conservative Turks are more sensitive in this regard. If Diyanet take a more effective position against the Gülenist Movement in this regard, it recruits conservative Turks and citizens of Turkish ancestry by detaching them from the congregations through mosque associations and social activities. Thus, the interaction between state institutions and social groups is multifaceted, complex and complicated.

Many people in the field of this research state that the effort of foreign missions is for the "welfare of the citizen". Through its foreign missions, the Turkish state has been able to establish closer relations with its citizens beyond its borders. For the citizen, the "ease of consular services" was the first thing that stood out, but then, as I mentioned before, the inculcating and embracing state profile strengthened the citizen-homeland relationship. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs' diaspora diplomacy, carried out in coordination with all other state institutions and ministries, is in a successful position. Diaspora diplomacy is carried out through meetings, events, visits, communication activities and other diplomatic activities with citizens and diaspora communities abroad.

Such activities serve Türkiye's cultural, economic and political interests as well as strengthening relations with citizens and diaspora communities abroad.

In short, in order to consolidate Turks in the United States, the state has implemented intricate programs in line with its "national interests" and paid special attention to grassroots politics. In this case, Turks were consolidated through institutions such as embassies, schools, associations and cultural centers provided by the homeland to the Turkish-American society. By making good use of its "soft power" through the consolidated Turks, the Turkish state aims to improve and develop its relations with the United States.

This research was important because of a more recent period, it was written by being present and observed in state institutions and it focused on the transnational Turkish society from the perspective of the state. With developing and changing diaspora policies, Türkiye's foreign policy is dynamic and active. In this context, issues such as the development of lobbying activities in the future, the transition of associations to professional management rather than being managed through names, and the organization of Turks in the United States are issues that can be addressed in the literature in the future. As America continues to be an attractive alternative for Turks to immigrate to, the Turkish-American society is growing, developing and wishing to have an impact on American foreign policy (Micallef, 2006).

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