

A Dictionary of Turkish Foreign Policy in the AK Party Era: A Conceptual Map

Murat Yeşiltaş
Sakarya University

Ali Balci
Sakarya University

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About the Authors

Dr. Murat Yeşiltaş received his BA in International Relations from Sakarya University in 2003, and his MA on the subject of humanitarian intervention and critical theory from the same university. He completed his PhD, entitled “Locating Turkey: Geopolitical Mentality and The Military in Turkey”, in the Department of Political Science and International Relations at Marmara University in 2012. He was as a



visiting researcher at Lancaster University, UK, between 2008-2009, and a visiting scholar at the Virginia Tech State University, Graduate School of Government and International Affairs, US, between 2010-2011. He currently works as an Assistant Professor in the Department of International Relations at Sakarya University, where he teaches graduate and undergraduate courses on critical geopolitics, political geography, and comparative foreign policy analysis. Dr. Yeşiltaş also works as an advisor at the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Center for Strategic Research. Dr.

Yeşiltaş's areas of research are critical geopolitics, political geography, Turkish foreign policy and the Middle East. His articles on Turkish foreign policy have been published in various academic journals, including *Middle East Critique*, *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies*, *Perception: Journal of International Affairs*, *International Relations*, *Bilgi* and *Akademik Orta Doğu*. Dr. Yesiltas is currently working on the following book and research projects: *Locating Turkey: Geopolitical Mentalities in Turkey* (2013), *Turkey, Geography and Geopolitics* (Edit) (2013) and *Intra-Societal Security Dilemma in Turkey* (Sakarya University).

Dr. Ali Balcı is an Associate Professor at Sakarya University. He graduated from the Department of International Relations at Uludag University and obtained his MA and PhD degrees from the Department of International Relations at Sakarya University. He also visited the University of Manchester as a visiting scholar for a year between 2011-2012. He has written several articles published in such journals as the *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies*, *Mediterranean Quarterly*, *Turkish Studies*, *Insight Turkey*, *Middle East Critique* and *Uluslararası İlişkiler* [International Relations]. He is also the author of *Türkiye’de Militarist Devlet Söylemi* (Militarist State Discourse in Turkey) [Ankara: Kadim Yayınları, 2011]. Balcı serves on the editorial boards of *Bilgi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi* (<http://bilgidergi.com>) and *Ortadoğu Yıllığı* (<http://ortadoguyilligi.com>). His research interests include Turkish foreign policy, post-structuralism and foreign policy analysis. He is currently studying the role of foreign policy in the construction of the Kurdish ethnic identity in Turkey.



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Abstract

This study aims to describe the foreign policy discourses and practices which have seen wide use in the era of the Justice and Development Party (the AK Party). Given the fact that concepts do not emerge independently of their historical context, this study argues that the AK Party government's foreign policy can be analysed through the dominant concepts that have been used. The study also argues that what is "new" in the AK Party's foreign policy can be understood by looking at the new concepts and conceptual changes that have occurred in that era. One of the foundational objectives of the study is to outline Turkish foreign policy in the AK Party era by bringing together pertinent concepts and assembling a dictionary of these concepts. Most of the concepts in this study have been defined in the way that they have been used by foreign policy makers, independent of their academic meanings. Lastly, this study has not ordered the concepts in any way to give special meaning or to show importance.

A Dictionary of Turkish Foreign Policy in the AK Party Era: A Conceptual Map

Murat Yeşiltaş and Ali Balcı

Introduction

Concepts are not free of the historical context in which they emerge. In this sense, producing a conceptual map is to picture the dominant and formative language of the era. One of the rare academic issues on which almost all Turkish foreign policy scholars agree is that the traditional language of Turkish foreign policy has changed conspicuously during the AK Party era. The “new” concepts that have been introduced or have found an area of usage are the most significant markers of this change. Therefore, these new concepts give this period of history a meaningful pattern in the context of Turkish foreign policy language and differentiate it from others. Having said this, we are by no means arguing that these concepts were necessarily discovered by AK Party cadres. We are cognisant of the fact that concepts like “historical dimension” (*tarihsel boyut*), “vision deficiency” (*vizyon yetersizliği*), “good relations with neighbours” (*komşularla iyi ilişkiler*), “cooperation among civilisations” (*medeniyetler arası işbirliği*) and “opening” (*açılım*) were used by one of the most influential names of the pre-AK Party period, namely İsmail Cem. By the same token, when we look at the historical continuity of Turkish foreign policy, it is possible to see attempts that had been made by various actors in different periods of the history to re-conceptualise foreign policy. Therefore, we do not assume that these concepts were mere AK Party’s discoveries; instead we argue that they yield both continuity within themselves and also significant discontinuity at the conceptual level.

However, we can also argue that new language and concepts have been used in foreign policy in the AK Party era. While many of these new concepts have been introduced into common usage

during this period, some earlier concepts have been considerably transformed. It is important to note that the concepts introduced in this era were formulated by Ahmet Davutoğlu, an academic and the current minister of foreign affairs and who also served as a consultant to the Prime Minister and the Foreign Ministry in previous AK Party governments. In this sense, Davutoğlu can be said to have constructed the theoretical and intellectual background of Turkish foreign policy in the AK Party era. We do not assume that the conceptual language emanating from this period is completely Davutoğlu's own production; the language established by him has been moulded by the AK Party government. To put it another way, the concepts in question have been adopted by AK Party policy makers and used frequently. Therefore, many of the concepts referred to in this article have been defined primarily by reassembling Davutoğlu's own works and his numerous speeches, talks and interviews. In addition, we have also taken into consideration the Prime Minister's statements and those of other actors within the government (such as foreign policy consultants and so forth).

When we look at the historical continuity of Turkish foreign policy, it is possible to see attempts that had been made by various actors in different periods of the history to re-conceptualise foreign policy.

This study aims to explain the dominant foreign policy discourse and practices in the AK Party era by defining the most popular concepts that have been used by the AK Party and Davutoğlu since 2002. Given that concepts do not emerge independently from their historical period, this study argues that these new concepts have been decisive in the formation of foreign policy discourses and practices and describe the dominant foreign policy in the AK Party era. The study also argues that what is the “new” in Turkish foreign policy can be understood by looking at these conceptual transformations and discontinuities. One of the primary objectives of the study is to summarise the outlines of Turkish foreign policy and to contribute to assembling a dictionary of concepts pertinent to this period via bringing together the concepts in question. We have tried to define many of the concepts in the way they have been used by policy makers, “independent” of their dictionary meaning.

A Conceptual Map of the “new” Turkish Foreign Policy

Self- Perception

Self-perception is one of the most specific and sophisticated concepts that represent the transformation in Turkish foreign policy during the AK Party government but has not been frequently used in the AK Party’s foreign policy discourse. However, self-perception sits as the deepest concept in foreign policy; in other words it is its main underlying philosophy. It was first used by Ahmet Davutoğlu in his book *Alternative Paradigms* and then comprehensively discussed in his following articles. Again in his book *Strategic Depth* it was one of the central concepts in his



criticism of the “shallow” territorial and geographical perception of Turkey in the Cold War era, and he also uses the concept when he attempts to lay out Turkey’s “new” perspective towards its close neighbours. Building a pivotal platform for the analysis of civilisational continuities and transformations, self-perception does not explain changes in time

through constructive or material factors, instead it relates them to “perceptions of place and time developed in harmony with one’s ontological consciousness”. According to Davutoğlu the final factor enabling self-perception to emerge “is not an institutional and formal environment but one’s own worldview that places the problem of existence in a meaningful framework.”¹ Therefore, rather than pointing to a simple problem of existence, self-perception represents “an individual consciousness that does not need social recognition or the other”.² Although it has not shaped the everyday language of foreign policy, this concept has been immensely influential in transforming Turkey’s traditional perception of space and geography, particularly in the Middle East, but also in Central Asia as well as Africa.

Strategic Depth

Strategic Depth was the title of the book written by Ahmet Davutoğlu in 2001. In practical terms, this concept has been used on its own in order to examine the transformation Turkish foreign policy underwent in the early 2000s and to illustrate the theoretical aspect of this new foreign policy. Based on Turkey's historical and geographical depth, the strategic depth concept assumes that Turkey's geopolitical, geocultural and geoeconomic place in the world has significance in terms of the transformation of world politics and international system. Departing from previous foreign policy discourses, which could not make use of the advantages offered by Turkey's rich historical and geographical roots, the strategic depth concept is a theoretical framework that mainly examines the cultural (civilisational), geographical and spatial aspects of Turkish foreign policy.³ In practical foreign policy making, however, the concept of strategic depth refers to the cultural, historical and geographical "centrality" of Turkey in the regional and international system.

The Strategic Depth concept has been used on its own in order to examine the transformation Turkish foreign policy underwent in the early 2000s and to illustrate the theoretical aspect of this new foreign policy.

In Davutoğlu's own words, "the close land, sea and continental basins surrounding Turkey constitutes the geographical centre of the world, and historically covers the areas where the main artery of the history of humankind was formed".⁴

Center State

This term has been used by Davutoğlu to describe Turkey's power of action within the international system. In this respect, the concept of a center state has two main elements. The first criticises the "bridge" metaphor, which has traditionally been used in Turkish foreign policy discourse, that points to Turkey's "connection" with the West and the East both in cultural and material terms. According to this criticism, the "bridge" metaphor

does not cover Turkey's position in the international system "as an actor with independent existence", and "taking this description for granted led us to be represented as a Western country trying to impose the values of the West in our relationship with the East, and as an Eastern country representing the negative aspects of the East in our relationship with the West".⁵ Given this criticism, the second level of the center state discourse takes as its starting point a global and structural rearrangement in the post-Cold War international system- in other words "an absence of system". In geopolitical, geocultural and geoeconomic terms, it sees Turkey not as "an object of transmission" between the East and the West but as a country that can establish, construct and



build a system thanks to its ability to manoeuvre multilaterally. In this sense, the concept of a centre state is not only a geographical definition, it is also a geopolitical perspective covering the role of history, culture and religion in the transformation of the international system and the formation of a new regional-global system through Turkey's foreign policy.

Vision Oriented

A vision-oriented foreign policy is the umbrella principle that was founded and has been exercised in the AK Party era, and went on to become one of the main pillars in the government's foreign policy. Instead of the traditional "wait-and-see" foreign policy for both global and regional crises, this principle provides a normative perspective for Turkey's active role in the emergence, and especially during the resolution, of these crises, and it has been described as the main "principle" on which the "new" Turkish foreign policy has been built.⁶ It consists of two main elements. The first comprises policies that are directly and actively involved in crises from the very beginning, rather than only making policies regarding events after the crises and problems within the geographical region (the close continental area) Turkey is situated

in have started. The second is composed of policies that require Turkey to be involved in regions where there are no problems or crises, unlike in the earlier tradition which generally did not develop policies for such regions.⁷ The opening towards Africa in 2005 and the attempts to deepen relations with Latin America in 2006 and East Asia in 2010 are the main examples of this perspective. One of the most significant practical outcomes of this vision-oriented policy was particularly exemplified by the unanimous approval of all African countries on Turkey's temporary membership to the UN Security Council for 2009-2010.

Soft Power

As it is commonly defined, soft power is when foreign policy is based on such elements as diplomacy, culture, dialogue, cooperation, mutual economic dependency and historical understandings. While Turkish foreign policy has not completely ignored hard power and still bases its policy on a “balance” between hard and soft power, the soft power approach has been used in shaping Turkey's policies to the Middle East and its close geography.⁸ Built on three foundational principles of historical and cultural connection with the region- the democratic tradition, democratic institutions and a free market economy- soft power has been viewed as a necessary method of diplomacy, replacing the previous and frequently mentioned military power discourse. Defined as “getting what you want by convincing others”, the concept has been used within Turkey's foreign policy by “convincing” other countries to pursue fair, rational and persuasive policies.⁹



Security-Freedom Balance

The security-freedom balance is a foreign policy principle that argues that Turkey's security can be realised by extending freedoms both in Turkey and abroad.¹⁰ Principally, it says that by employing freedom-based policies, Turkey can differentiate itself from the security-based perspective in the global freedom-security dilemma that was caused by the anti-terror policies that have been promoted by the USA since 9/11 and which have restricted freedom and enhanced security. Particularly between 2002 and 2005, known as the first period of the AK Party government, the security-freedom balance in Turkey's legal reforms changed as a result of the EU accession process and the EU's promotion of democracy in Turkey at the expense of security policies. The second aspect of this policy can be seen in Turkey's policies

Turkey can differentiate itself from the security-based perspective in the global freedom-security dilemma that was caused by the anti-terror policies that have been promoted by the USA since 9/11 and which have restricted freedom and enhanced security.

towards the Kurdish issue and its near abroad, particularly the Middle East. The policy argues that Turkey can move towards further democratisation and also pursue a security understanding that does not compromise freedom for security. In Davutoğlu's own words, "Turkey had been sentenced to a security-dominated life by some

circles on the pretext of the terror waves especially between 1991 and 2002. When we came to power in 2002 we decided to make freedom-based democracy dominant and this decision automatically brought us to level of zero problems with our neighbours".¹¹ The third aspect of the freedom-security balance pertains to Turkey's regional policies. Formulated as the main principle of Turkish foreign policy, especially in the Middle East, this concept has been seen in Turkey's promotion of and support for democracy in the region, and it can also be seen in Turkey's discursive and practical support for the civil uprisings that have led to power shifts in several Middle Eastern countries throughout 2011. In addition, Turkey's highlighting the significance of democracy in maintaining stability and security in the Balkans can also be an example for this principle.

Proactive Diplomacy

A proactive diplomacy is a kind of diplomacy that aims for Turkey to lead in resolving all crises in its neighbourhood and for it to develop good relations with other countries. Being one of the main principles of foreign policy in the AK Party era, proactive diplomacy has been accompanied by the concept of pre-emptive diplomacy. According to this latter concept, Turkey needs to adopt a foreign policy perspective that aims to prevent problems from occurring, primarily in its close geographical region, or to take a leading role in their resolution. The most practical results of this concept in foreign policy can be seen in Turkey's desire to mediate in the Arab-Israeli, Syrian-Israeli, Iranian-Western and Bosnian-Serbian conflicts. According to this foreign policy principle, Turkey's foreign policy can be realised not only among nation-states but also among actors and groups within the state with regards to preventing crises or resolving existing ones. Turkey's foreign policy that has been pursued in the Balkans can be seen as an example of this.

Being one of the operational foreign policy principles and envisaging a more active role for Turkey in international politics, rhythmic diplomacy sees Turkey as an actor in all international institutions and on all global issues.

Rhythmic Diplomacy

Although it has not found an exact conceptual equivalence in international relations theory, rhythmic diplomacy is a specific style of foreign policy practiced in Turkey. It is a tactical activity that envisages simultaneously and harmoniously using diplomacy in different fields. Being one of the operational foreign policy principles and envisaging a more active role for Turkey in international politics, rhythmic diplomacy sees Turkey as an actor in all international institutions and on all global issues.¹² It was initially thought of as a way for Turkish foreign policy to move from the Cold War's relatively stability to an international environment that is changing; in other words it would enable

Turkey to move “from a static diplomatic understanding to dynamic conditions”.¹³ This, therefore, would allow Turkey to take “the right steps day by day and under pressure”, in other words “making the right calculations progressively without losing concentration and making a tight pursuit underlie rhythmic diplomacy”.¹⁴ Another aspect of this diplomacy is the simultaneous operation of mobility and harmony: “What is meant by rhythm is the co-existence of mobility and harmony. If there is mobility but not harmony it might lead to chaos. Unnecessary leaps might bring along unnecessary risks. However, if you have rhythm but no mobility than you will not make any progress. There needs to be mobility as well. Yet, if you desire for the perfect harmony and wait for it there will be no mobility”.¹⁵

Multi-dimensional/Multi-layered Foreign Policy



Having a multi-dimensional foreign policy is one of the main foreign policy principles in the AK Party era, and it is also the most conspicuous discourse and practice in Turkey’s foreign policy paradigm. A multi-dimensional foreign policy is thought of as the necessary outcome of the activism that made Turkey a “centre state”.¹⁶ This foreign policy paradigm refers to having simultaneous and harmonious relationship with different international actors as well as approaching different issues

by following the same multi-dimensional principles. The paradigm grew out of the belief that Turkey could no longer follow an inactive, one-dimensional foreign policy based on a single parameter. A multi-dimensional foreign policy requires establishing “simultaneous” relationships with different foreign policy actors. In this sense, it does not view Turkey’s relations with both regional and global actors as alternative engagements; instead it considers them as complementary and as increasing mutual dependency.¹⁷ Within this framework, a multi-

dimensional/multi-layered foreign policy does not conceptualise Turkish foreign policy as limited to one country and region in terms of actors, and neither is it restricted to a single problem. Psychology is critical in the policy, and therefore while it is wrong to consider and represent relationships with different countries as offering alternatives, it is also vital for this approach to not disrupt the balance of power by giving more weight to one side. In foreign policy practices one can see the most notable form of this policy in Turkey's active policy, which is no longer restricted to Western countries but covers other regions and countries.

Active Involvement on the Global Scale

This is a general strategy of foreign policy that envisages Turkey's active involvement in international institutions and agreements.¹⁸ By seeing Turkey as an important player in regional as well as international systems, this strategy of active involvement seeks to redefine Turkey's role in the restructuring of the international order. Non-permanent membership in the UN Security Council for 2009-2012, its membership in the G20 and its observer status in the African Union and the Arab League can be seen as examples of this policy. It has been mainly used to define the activism of Turkish foreign policy.



Zero Problems with Neighbours

The approach of minimising existing problems with neighbours¹⁹ has become the most contentious foreign policy principle in the AK Party era. Put in more technical terms, the zero-problems policy is an approach built on the notion that "Turkey needs to improve its relations with all its neighbours by rescuing itself from the belief that it is constantly surrounded by enemies and the defensive reflex developing thereof".²⁰ In this respect, existing problems are acknowledged and attempts are made to

resolve them. Naturally, the concept implies the transformation of something negative into positive. The main purpose of this foreign policy principle is to form a line of stability around Turkey. Being directly related to other principles of foreign policy, the concept of zero problems with neighbours draws on six pillars: i) equal security for all, ii) economic integration, iii) the coexistence of different cultures in a respectful manner, iv) high-level political co-operation, v) a high-level of regional consciousness, and vi) understanding the relationship between security and stability and development.²¹ This concept, however, has become one of the most contentious principles in Turkish foreign policy in the AK Party's era. In principal, this concept aims to resolve existing problems with Turkey's neighbours and close countries; however, it has been criticised for its holistic approach. The critics believe that resolving problems with one country could lead to problems with another country, and therefore putting all countries under the same category is not a "realistic" policy.²² The most frequently used examples of this criticism have been the deterioration of relations with Azerbaijan after Turkey started the normalisation process with Armenia, the uneasy relationship with Israel and European countries after developing better contacts with Syria and Iran, and the severed relations with Syria after the civil uprisings in the Middle East.

Order-Building Actor

Being an order-building actor has been said to be one of the methodological macro-level objectives of foreign policy in the AK Party era. The concept of an order-building actor has Turkey's active involvement in international relations and international organisations. Principally it argues that an "order" on which all actors agree and whose principles are well-defined could not be established after the Cold War, and that Turkey now has to take a powerful role in the formation of a "new world order".²³ According to this principle, both in the formation of a regional and international order, Turkey is defined not as an "accommodating" country but as a leading country in the formation of such an order. The concept has two elements. The first is to avoid crises in the regional and global arena through a new diplomatic style as

well as a focus on preventive peace diplomacy that would enable Turkey to pursue constructive diplomacy that could guarantee stability and peace. The second element is to try to structurally change international organisations by taking part in them,²⁴ and with this change to promote order in the international system and in the creation of open space for its application. With this policy, Turkey is not just seen as a regional power/actor but as “a global actor”. While the most notable example of this policy was Turkey’s non-permanent election to the UN Security Council, Turkey’s expression of the need to transform the UN’s structure in line with the realities of the international system is an example of this foreign policy discourse. The most remarkable form of this principle can be noticed in the saying that “no order can be established without Turkey” within the general framework of Turkish foreign policy.

New Diplomatic Style

Turkey’s new diplomatic style has been mainly built on the idea that on Eastern issues Turkey needs to use its Eastern identity, while on Western platforms Turkey needs to discuss Europe’s future with a European perspective and as a country that has adopted Western norms.²⁵ In this sense this new diplomatic style forms the foundations of Turkey’s multi-dimensional foreign policy. Having seen a wide use, the concept has been defined as “the new vision of Turkish foreign policy with its methods, style and manner”.²⁶ This new style highlights “the civic-economic power of Turkey” instead of its military power, and therefore constitutes the main soft power mechanism in diplomacy.²⁷



Pre-emptive Diplomacy

Pre-emptive diplomacy generally means working to avoid crises by intervening before the crises start or just after the crises have

started in order to avoid more problems.²⁸ Secondly, in preventive diplomacy it is necessary to use diplomatic channels before any military intervention. Turkey's attempts to make peace between Shiite and Sunni groups in Iraq can be seen as an example of this policy, as well as the policy pursued by Turkey before the 2003 war in Iraq in order to minimise its effects on the region.

Shuttle Diplomacy

Shuttle diplomacy is a kind of diplomacy which is operated generally in times of crises and aims to reach resolutions to problems by organising a series of diplomatic talks between the parties and actors involved. Turkey has been involved in

shuttle diplomacy, such as in Turkey's determination to prevent the 2003 war in Iraq and the meetings between Iraq's neighbours during and after the war and the diplomatic efforts in made in organising these meeting are the foremost examples of this policy.²⁹

Foreign policy should not include concerns about domestic security, and what matters is not Turkey's response to crises, but that it takes an active role in the prevention and resolution of these crises.

Self-confident Foreign Policy

A self-confident foreign policy considers history a constant and fixed variable, and instead of dealing with domestic and international issues separately in the foreign policy-making process, it deals with both holistically. This policy has changed foreign policy in three ways. The first has been to expand strategic thinking by reducing the fear of Turkey's adjacent neighbours, something which had been ingrained in Turkish foreign policy. This change has allowed Turkey to make greater initiatives in its neighbourhood. With this in mind, foreign policy should not include concerns about domestic security, and what matters is not Turkey's response to crises, but that it takes an active role in the prevention and resolution of these crises.³⁰ The second way this policy has changed foreign policy has been the need

to increase the effect and determining power of public demands in foreign policy. The economy constitutes the third aspect of the self-confident foreign policy. In this sense, the economy is a supporting element that makes foreign policy self-confident. The concept of a self-confident foreign policy has been expounded most strikingly in Davutoğlu's own words: "Those who are not confident of themselves, their history will not be able to give them any historical role. When you commence foreign policy negotiations with someone and if you consider them as a determining source and yourself as the one who agrees to demands, you will have to leave the table either as defeated or dishonoured. It must be a negotiation between equals. Turkey has achieved this self confidence".³¹

Coherent Relations with Global Powers

This is a principle of establishing harmonious and balanced relationships with the global actors that are powerful in the international system, primarily the USA, in order to avoid any conflict in relations, and most importantly to ensure that better relations with one is not considered an alternative to good relations with the others. In other words, it is to avoid seeing foreign policy relationships and strategic cooperation as strict choices. For example, Turkey's EU membership is not an alternative to relations with Russia and the Muslim world, and similarly Turkey's strategic relations with the USA are not an alternative to relations with Russia and the EU. In this sense, it is one of the most pivotal pillars on which the notion of the multi-dimensional foreign policy is built.



Win-Win Strategy

In contrast to zero-sum strategies in which one party loses, a win-win strategy is based on the idea that agreements in which all

sides win will contribute more to peace and cooperation.³² It has been frequently used in Turkish foreign policy in the AK Party era, especially in such areas as the Cyprus problem, relations with both Greece and the Greek Cyprus administration, and the problems with Armenia.

Active Foreign Policy

Having an active foreign policy was presented as a prerequisite for continuing the level of activism in Turkish foreign policy. This policy is an approach for applying foreign policy and creates a framework of foreign diplomacy. Given that Turkey is an order-building actor, having an active foreign policy has been used to enhance Turkey's capacity to develop new policies, instead of following the policies that come out of the power structure in the international system. In this sense, rather than accommodating to the developments and changes within the international system, this policy calls for direct involvement with these developments in order to give direction to them. In this respect, Turkey is avoiding having a reaction-based foreign policy.

Basin of Peace

Known as the principle of peace and stability, the basin of peace concept has been used frequently in the AK Party era, yet it finds its fullest meaning in Davutoğlu's book *Strategic Depth*. According to Davutoğlu, the basin of peace concept defines regions based on inner strategic integrity and created by the convergence of geopolitical, geocultural and geoeconomic lines.³³ Giving meaning to the concept and making it operational are important when we try to understand the making of foreign policy. The basin of peace concept represents the limits of the room for manoeuvre for foreign diplomacy and leads to a foreign policy vision that envisions an end to the existing conflicts in these strategic regions, achieving peace and creating stability. It provides a conceptual framework and perspective for establishing a structural peace and eliminating ethnic, religious and political conflicts in the Middle East and Balkans, known as Turkey's near neighbourhood, and is one of the main objectives of Turkish foreign policy activism in these regions.

Maximum Cooperation

This principle refers to the goal of developing close relationships with regional countries, primarily with neighbours.³⁴ The multilateral treaties signed with Greece, Iraq and Syria and the agreements waiving mutual visa requirements with neighbouring countries are the most notable examples of this principle.

Economic Interdependence

Notwithstanding the fact that among the foreign policy principles of the AK Party era there is no principle in which the economy is directly cited, economic interdependence has become one of the fundamental elements of the policy that has been developed concerning Turkey's near neighbourhood. This policy is based on the assumption that countries with economic interdependence will be able to more easily resolve their problems and avoid conflict. Primarily used in terms of intense economic relations with neighbouring countries, this concept is considered to be one of the fundamental conditions for building sustainable peace and stability in the region.³⁵ In this respect, it is a move from a security-based foreign policy to one in which political and economic tools are highlighted, and which is based on economic interdependence among neighbouring countries.

In the geopolitical area Turkey is situated in, Turkey's historical legacy is one of the fundamental pillars that provide Turkey's strategic depth.

Historical Legacy

In the geopolitical area Turkey is situated in, Turkey's historical legacy is one of the fundamental pillars that provide Turkey's strategic depth. By using the Ottoman legacy and Turkey's current strategic depth, this concept mainly establishes cultural and historical connections between Turkey and the Middle East, the Balkans, East Asia and even Africa. By this means Turkey can culturally and historically connect to the geopolitical environment in which it is located.³⁶

Historical Responsibility

The historical responsibility concept is an outcome of historical legacy, and for this very reason deals with Turkey's responsibility to develop new policies in the Middle East, the Balkans and the Caucasus.³⁷ It was used by AK Party leaders as a reason for intervening in the Palestinian conflict and in Kosovo.

Security for All

Being one of the pillars of the vision-based approach, the security for all concept has been used when Turkey has demanded security for all countries and groups in the region. It is based on a perspective that does not view anyone as an enemy and does not discriminate against anyone in Middle East, no matter who they are, Israeli, Iranian, Shiite, Sunni, etc.

Public Diplomacy



Public diplomacy was put into practice during Davutoğlu's term as foreign minister. It enables high-ranking foreign ministry officials to give information regarding foreign policy directly to the public and to make announcements abroad on what they see as the agenda of foreign countries. In this respect it envisions an enhancement of the means and

methods of developing strategies in both internal and foreign affairs. It draws on the assumption that, in the post-Cold War world order, "communication and influence between societies/public spheres, and therefore diplomacy from one society to another, has gained as much importance as that of diplomacy between states". Different from propaganda, this type of diplomacy comes from "understanding, informing and influencing public, and it aims not only to tell and inform but also to listen and get feedback".³⁸ In this respect, it is an institutional mechanism which takes responsibility for enabling Turkey's adaption to the new international environment and the new multipolar world

order, increases its influence, uses all available means and methods to achieve its regional and global aims and manages perceptions of itself and how it is represented through factual messages.

Humanitarian Diplomacy

As a concept, humanitarian diplomacy means persuading decision makers and other related actors to respect human rights and other humanitarian values. When it comes to Turkey's foreign policy, the concept has been widely used since Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu's address at the fifth conference of Turkish ambassadors in January 2013. For Davutoğlu, the main priority of humanitarian diplomacy is not the state but citizens, and Turkey, as it follows humanitarian diplomacy, should be interested in urgent humanitarian crisis in conflict-ridden areas. As a corollary, according to Davutoğlu Turkey should pursue an active policy in the humanitarian policies of the UN. As an example, Turkey conducted humanitarian diplomacy in Somalia at the height of the famine in August 2011. More importantly, Turkish policy makers started to say that humanitarian diplomacy was part of Turkish foreign policy when Turkey needed to legitimise hosting Syrian refugees after the start of the civil war in Syria.

Under the mediation principle, Turkey will try to continue diplomatic dialogue between conflicting parties in countries, and between different groups within the same country, in order to stop crises and to avoid the further spreading the conflict.

Wise Country

The concept of the wise country, meaning that the country should be consulted, was first introduced by Davutoğlu at the third ambassadors' meeting in January 2011 in Ankara and was used to define a country "who is listened to on global matters, who predicts incidents in advance, takes precautions against these, and produces solutions for them". Presented as the fundamental foreign policy vision of Turkey in the 2010s, this principle establishes a mission for Turkey to be "the one who

finds solutions for global and regional crises, and not to be the one affected by crises or to become a party to them or instigate them”. In this sense, it is one of the objectives the global actor, order-building actor and action-based foreign policy perspectives aim to reach.

Normalisation

Normalisation is the one concept that has the longest history in Turkish foreign policy. It has been used in reference to the role



Turkish foreign policy plays in the normalisation of historical process interrupted by external interventions and it also refers to the change in traditional understandings that were based on threats and paranoia. It has become frequently used in Turkish-Middle Eastern and Turkish-Armenian relations. It generally means that a new way of dealing with the problems will be developed. Additionally, normalisation has been sporadically used in the context of Turkish-Israeli relations in order to underline the move from securitised relations to politicised relations.³⁹ Much as it overlaps with the principle of zero-problem with neighbours policies that have been developed with regard to countries with which relations have been historically troublesome and even with those with which they are hard to tackle are accounted for by this concept.

Mediation

Mediation is one of the main principles of the new Turkish foreign policy and it has started to become promoted as a practical means of conducting a proactive diplomacy. Under

the mediation principle, Turkey will try to continue diplomatic dialogue between conflicting parties in countries, and between different groups within the same country, in order to stop crises and to avoid the further spreading the conflict.⁴⁰ As a result of this principle, Turkey has tried to mediate between Al-Fatah and Hamas in Palestine, between political groups in Kosovo, and between Shiites and Sunnis in Iraq, as well as attempting to become a mediator in conflicts between Syria and Israel, Pakistan and Afghanistan and the EU and Iran.

Facilitator

Since mediation as a concept falls short in fully explaining Turkey's effort in bringing together countries which have historical or other problems in order to avoid any escalation of any conflict, concept of Turkey as a facilitator has been introduced instead. Frequently used in everyday foreign policy discourse, and also used in the government's statements, the concept of a facilitator country became important when between 2009-2010 Turkey tried to find a diplomatic solution to the tensions between Iran and the USA (and the EU) concerning Iran's nuclear energy programme. It is also a foreign policy approach and strategy which looks to Turkey's regional role, given that Turkey claims to not favour any countries and actors in the Middle East.

Foreign Debt Burden

Policy makers in the first term of the AK Party government viewed Turkey's foreign debt as the most significant hindrance to an active foreign policy. That Turkey has a "debt burden" is thought of as a "limiting factor" in the pursuit of an active foreign policy as a large debt can limit freedom of movement. The policy of looking at the foreign debt burden makes the economy a part of foreign policy making. The correlation between foreign debt and foreign policy making is explained as: "we need to act with self-confidence, as if we did not have a foreign debt burden, and we need to build our self-confidence. Yet, we need to be realistic enough to calculate how we will alleviate this burden".⁴¹

Alliance of Civilisations

Developed in reaction to the clash of civilisation thesis, which was put forward in the 1990s and was made popular following the 9/11 attacks, the alliance of civilisations initiative was built primarily on the idea that different civilisations can work together. The idea was proposed in the UN on 14 July 2005, and was co-led by Spain and Turkey. It was based on the idea that polarisation and alienation, tendencies which have become exacerbated in recent years, can be challenged by a coalition that will promote mutual respect across cultures, and was seen by Turkey as one of the most representative organisations after the UN itself. This alliance, which was often mentioned in the foreign policy agenda between 2004 and 2006, has lost its priority in Turkey's foreign policy.⁴²

Model Partnership



The model partnership is a framework concept concerning the level and quality of Turkey's relations with the US and the fact that a new phase in the relationship has started. The concept of a model partnership has been used to define the amount and content of military, economic and political relations between Turkey and the USA under the Obama

administration. First used in 2009 during President Obama's visit to Turkey, the concept has set a positive goal for the future of Turkish-US relations, and Turkey has used it as a general framework for the maintenance of mutual relationships at the highest level and for even greater strategic cooperation in security. As such, the model partnership concept emerged from the need to redefine the conceptual framework of the relations between the two countries after what has become known as the 1 March crisis, which refers to developments that led to a cooling of relations in 2003. Therefore, this new type of partnership, which is to replace the previous strategic partnership, was termed a model

partnership. Rather than providing a clear cut framework, the model partnership concept expresses a joint need to redefine the relations between the two countries, and represents the mutual will for this development.⁴³ From Turkey's perspective, the model partnership is the result of a desire to normalise the long asymmetric relationship between the two countries in the form of a "two equal partnership". In this respect Turkey wishes to move Turkish-American relations from the military and security level only to one from which both can view international matters on an equal basis and bring multi-dimensionality to this relationship. On the US's side, this model partnership can represent its ideals and values and can be an example for the Muslim world.

Multi-dimensional Enlarged Partnership

A multi-dimensional enlarged partnership is the framework that has been used to define the military, economic and political relationship between Turkey and Russia. It was introduced

in 2009 with a mutual statement by Turkey and Russia declaring that in the second of the first decade of the 2000s a "new phase" in relations between the two countries had been reached with the of signing mutual contracts, primarily in the field of nuclear energy.⁴⁴ This partnership was institutionalised with the establishment of a high-level cooperation council. Following on this partnership, a series of agreements ranging from security treaties to visa waiving agreements, were made between two countries.

The energy corridor idea will make Turkey one of the most important hubs in terms of increasing the number of routes and suppliers.

Energy Hub- Corridor

Although the energy hub and corridor ideas were first mentioned in the late 1990s, the idea that Turkey could become an energy hub in transporting Eurasian energy resources has been frequently mentioned in the AK Party era to signify the increasing importance of Turkey's energy policies and the role such policies can take in

ensuring a sustainable energy supply. The energy hub idea refers to the exporting of energy fuels to consumer countries after they have been imported into Turkey, and the corridor idea refers to the direct transmission of energy fuels via pipelines. These ideas are part of a foreign policy strategy that aims to increase interdependency between countries, thereby helping to maintain stability. In this respect it envisions a close relationship between the Turkish Ministry of Energy and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.⁴⁵ Given its geopolitical position, Turkey is geographically the “safest route” for the transportation of energy fuels between the East and West and the North and South, and as a result the energy corridor-hub concept can help maintain energy security

and build peace and stability in energy-producing countries. In addition, the energy corridor idea will make Turkey one of the most important hubs in terms of increasing the number of routes and suppliers. The Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline and the Ceyhan Energy Terminal are current examples of this policy.



Civilisational Geopolitics

The concept of civilisational geopolitics was used to define Davutoglu’s geopolitical thinking which he developed in his book *Strategic Depth*. Since then this concept has become one of the dominant discourses in foreign policy and the AK Party has constantly referred to this concept. This geopolitical understanding has also been used to define the new geographical imagination of Turkish foreign policy. According to this analysis, this new geographical imagination has allowed Turkish policy makers to develop new political rhetoric on Turkey’s regional and international position in world politics.⁴⁶ Contrary to the assumptions of geographical imagination, the concept of civilisational geopolitics argues that geopolitics, as a legitimisation instrument in the historical construction and reproduction of Turkish foreign policy⁴⁷, is built on various foundations that can be seen in Davutouglu’s writings and the AK Party’s political

discourses.⁴⁸ In contrast to *naturalised geopolitics*, which uses Darwinism and the application of biological metaphors to the analysis of human and political interaction, or *ideological geopolitics*, which says that international politics are determined by ideologies, *civilisational geopolitics* says that culture and civilisation are important and established determinants of international politics.⁴⁹ In this respect, the geopolitical discourse of Davutoglu and AK Party can be defined as civilisational geopolitics as they consider culture, religion and civilisation as the main determinants of world politics.⁵⁰ This point of view argues that Davutoğlu's dominant geopolitical perspective is formed through a holistic civilisational understanding, which mainly sees Turkish/Muslim/Ottoman interaction as important parts of Turkey's strategic depth.

Europeanisation

Europeanisation as a concept has two elements and generally follows general European Union policies. Used before the AK Party era, since the AK Party came to power this concept has been used in academic literature to account for the current relationship between Turkey's foreign policy term and the EU.⁵¹ Known also as EU-isation, this concept has been used to understand the ways foreign policy has adapted with regard to cultural, economic and political policies in the EU accession process. This approach was particularly influential between 2002 and 2005 and the similarities between Turkey's regional foreign policy and those of the EU represent the main aspect of this policy.



Trading State

The trading state concept means that a state runs its foreign policy in tandem with its trade policy and that it constructs its foreign policy in line with economic dynamics. The trading state

concept has been used to define Turkey's policy of improving its relations with its near neighbours, which is expected to increase bilateral trade volume, and hence lead to enhanced economic interdependency between countries.⁵² Although foreign policy makers do not directly cite this concept, they do approach foreign policy with a perspective that is informed by it. Advocating the thesis that "economic interdependency is the most important means for Turkey to achieve depth in its neighbourhood", the AK Party government considers economics, not politics or military power, as the determining force in relations. In addition this policy sees large private sector companies as leaders in foreign policy and "progenitors of the strategic vision".⁵³

Model Country

The idea of Turkey being a model country began to be discussed in the second half of the first decade in the 2000s. It was mainly built on the idea that Turkey can serve as a model for countries in Middle East as it has embraced Islam, democracy and secularism.⁵⁴ The concept found more coverage in Turkish foreign policy after groups in Egypt and Libya stated that Turkey could be a model during the civil uprisings in the Middle East. Also, the concept has frequently been seen as evidence by the opposition that there is a Greater Middle East Project, in which the AK Party government has also been involved that is trying to spread moderate Islam in the Middle East.

Shift of Axis

A shift of axis occurs when a country stops doing what it had been doing and breaks with existing alliances and joins other alliance systems. This term has been used by some to define the general tendency in Turkish foreign policy in the last quarter of the first decade of the 2000s. It largely draws on the thesis that Turkey's increasing engagement with and activism in the Middle East represents a break from Turkey's traditional Western-oriented foreign policy.⁵⁵ In its more general sense, it is a criticism against the alleged shift in Turkey's foreign policy from the West to the East, from secularism to Islamism and from the EU to the

Middle East. A wide range of groups, from the opposition parties in Turkey to international actors and even academics, argue that Turkey's foreign policy's increasing interest in the Middle East can be explained by the AK Party's Islamic roots. The AK Party, however, argues that policies with respect to the Middle East are not to do with ideology, and that they are part of the normalisation of history and the multi-dimensional foreign policy that replaced the Western-oriented single-dimensional policy.

Middle Easternisation

The term Middle Easternisation has been used to account for the increasing interest of the AK Party government in the Middle East.⁵⁶ Therefore, it is considered to be part of the normalisation of political relations and the concrete outcome of the shift of axis concept.

Greater Middle East Project

The Greater Middle East Project, also known as the Extended Middle East Initiative, is the name for a political project which aims to export democracy to the Muslim countries in the region, referred to as the Greater Middle East by the US government under George W. Bush, and to open up their economies to the global market. Nevertheless, in international circles this political project is more often used to describe the Bush government's hegemonic projects in the US's "war on terrorism". In Turkish foreign policy, however, it is presented as the main conceptual framework that brings together various arguments that foreign policy is under an American monopoly. As such, the Greater Middle East Project was one of the main arguments that opposition groups made use of when criticising Turkish foreign policy under AK Party in the first decade of the 2000s as they argued that Turkey was part of the hegemonic projects developed for the Middle East by the USA.⁵⁷ While opposition groups have accused the AK Party government of co-leading the Greater Middle East project, and therefore serving the US's interests rather than Turkey's interests, the AK Party government has denied all these accusations.

Endnotes

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Center for Strategic Research of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey (SAM) is a think-tank and a research center which is chartered by law and has been active since May 1995. SAM was established as a consultative body to provide Turkish Foreign Policy decision makers with scholarly and scientific assessments of relevant issues, and reviews Turkish foreign policy with a futuristic perspective.

SAM conducts research, organizes scholarly events relevant to the ever expanding spectrum of Turkish Foreign Policy in cooperation with both Turkish and foreign academicians, its counterparts from around the world as well as various universities and government agencies. SAM provides consultancy to the foreign ministry departments as well as some other state institutions in foreign policy issues while also establishing regional think-tank networks.

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