THE TURKIC WORLD AND THE ARAB GEOGRAPHY FROM THE TREATY OF KUTAHYA TO THE PRESENT
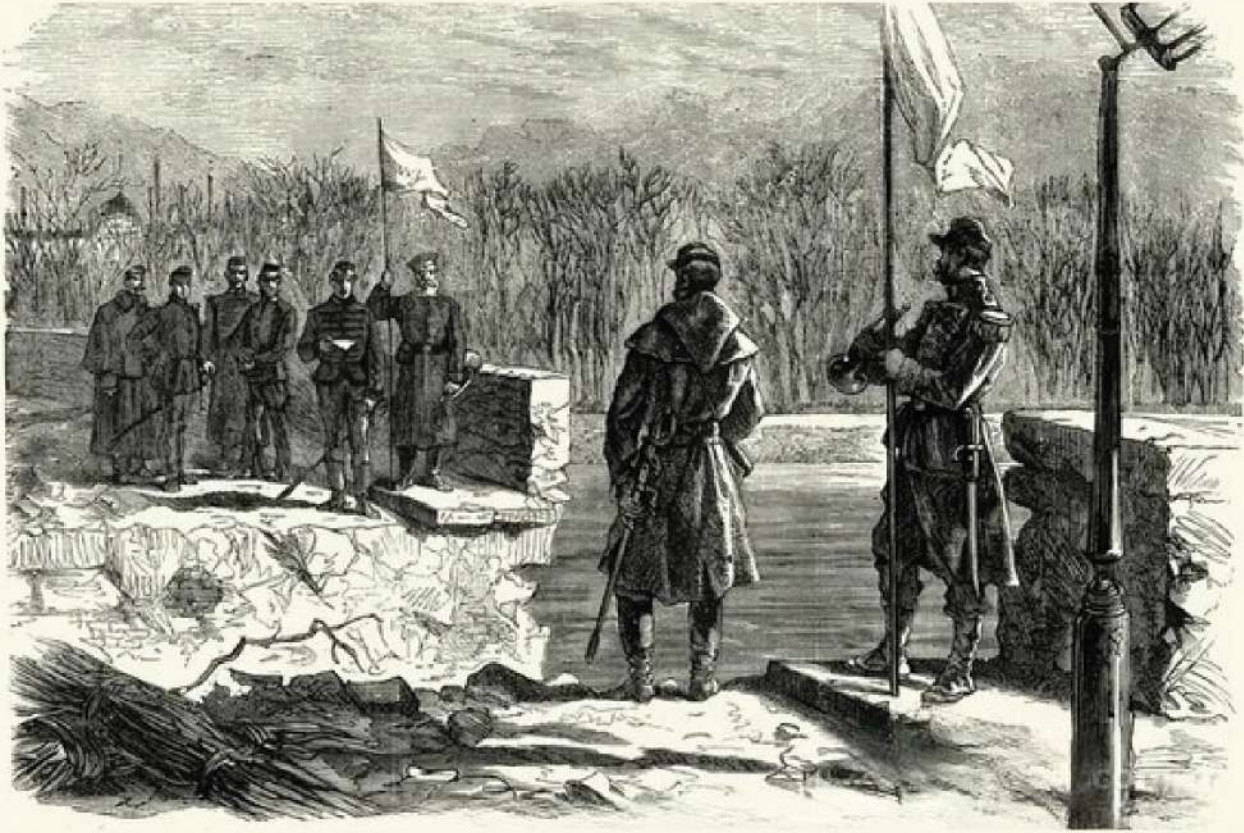
INTERACTIONS, TRANSFORMATIONS AND CONTINUITIES

EDITED BY

Prof. Dr. Süleyman Kızıltoprak
Prof. Dr. Hüsamettin İnaç

ÖZGÜR PRESS

The Turkic World and the Arab Geography From the Treaty of Kutahya to the Present

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Preface

Certain historical texts appear to conclude the moment they are signed, yet their consequences continue to shape political decisions, military arrangements, and diplomatic orientations for decades. The **Treaty of Kütahya of 1833** stands as one such document in Ottoman history. It revealed the fragility of central authority and exposed the extent to which the Empire's internal order and international position had become subjects of profound uncertainty.

The military developments during the rebellion of Mehmed Ali Pasha of Egypt, the strategic and psychological impact of the Battle of Konya, and the advance of Egyptian forces deep into Anatolia forced the Ottoman administration into a series of difficult choices. Within this context, the Treaty of Kütahya should be understood beyond the framework of a temporary settlement. It reflected structural weaknesses within the Ottoman state and signaled the growing influence of the Great Powers over imperial affairs.

The **Kütahya Treaty Symposium**, hosted by **Kütahya Dumlupınar University**, was organized with the aim of examining this historical episode without reducing it to a narrowly defined diplomatic event. The papers presented at the symposium addressed the military conditions that shaped the treaty, the transformation of center–province relations, the political preferences of the Mahmud II era, and the increasing exposure of the Ottoman state to external intervention. This approach enabled a more grounded discussion of the Treaty of Kütahya and its place within Ottoman history.

The present volume brings together revised versions of the papers delivered at the symposium, each prepared in accordance with established academic standards. The contributions deliberately move beyond repetition of existing scholarship and engage with archival materials, classical historiography, and contemporary debates in the field. Through this perspective, the book seeks to offer well-founded interpretations that will be of lasting value to scholars of Ottoman political and military history.

The decision to examine the Treaty of Kütahya in the city where it was concluded carries symbolic and scholarly significance. It reinforces the connection between historical space and academic inquiry. **Kütahya**

Dumlupınar University approaches historical heritage as a subject for critical examination rather than passive commemoration. This volume stands as a reflection of that academic commitment.

We extend our sincere appreciation to the members of the organizing committee, the scholars who contributed their research, the reviewers who ensured academic rigor, and all those who took part in the preparation of this publication. It is our hope that this work will contribute meaningfully to ongoing discussions on the Treaty of Kütahya and encourage further research within Ottoman studies.

PROF. DR. SÜLEYMAN KIZILTOPRAK

PROF. DR. HÜSAMETTİN İNAÇ

December, 2025

Contents

Chapter 1

The 1833 Treaty of Kütahya and the Question of Turkish-Arab Geo-Strategic Power: The Impact And Influence 🔓

Mohamed Abida[1]

Abstract

This study examines the 1833 Treaty of Kütahya as a critical historical turning point shaping the trajectory of Turkish–Arab geo-strategic power and regional security from the nineteenth century to the present. Rather than treating the treaty as a temporary diplomatic arrangement between the Ottoman central authority and the semi-autonomous Egyptian administration of Mehmed Ali Pasha, the article conceptualizes it as a structural rupture that weakened imperial cohesion, facilitated foreign intervention, and reshaped the balance of power in the Arab–Turkish space. By linking historical causality with contemporary geopolitical outcomes, the study argues that the Treaty of Kütahya contributed indirectly to the fragmentation of Ottoman territories, the erosion of sovereign decision-making, and the long-term vulnerability of the region to external domination.

Employing a holistic and interdisciplinary methodology that combines historical analysis, geopolitical assessment, legal interpretation, and content analysis, the article traces how the treaty altered the security architecture of the Ottoman Empire and created conditions conducive to colonial penetration, political dependency, and internal instability. The study further extends its analysis to the post-colonial period, demonstrating how the legacy of the Kütahya Treaty continues to influence patterns of political violence, state fragility, and development challenges in Arab societies, particularly in the Maghreb region.

By revisiting the Treaty of Kütahya through the lens of constant and variable dynamics in geo-strategic power, the article offers a critical reassessment of Arab–Turkish relations and underscores the necessity of historical awareness for rebuilding regional cooperation. It concludes that understanding the structural consequences of the treaty is essential for envisioning a shared Turkish–Arab geo-strategic framework capable of addressing contemporary security, political, and developmental challenges.

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1   Dr., Professor of Public Law and Political Science at Kadi Ayyad University Marrakech

Introduction

The main question of this research is the relationship between the 1833 Treaty of Kütahya and the question of Turkish-Arab geo-strategic power and the weakening and fragmentation of Arab societies.

Analyzing this issue will lead us to try to control the relationship between the Kutahya Treaty and the fate of geo-strategic power and security in these societies. This can only be achieved by answering a set of questions stemming from this issue, which can be summarized in the following points: "The Kutahya Treaty and the fate of geo-strategic power and security in these societies:

I. Addressing the 1833 Treaty of Kütahya and the question of Turkish-Arab geostrategic power: By analyzing the content of the agreement, explaining why it came down, and the most important manifestations of its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and risks for the region as a whole.

Second, the geopolitical factors at the time that made it imperative for Sultan Mahmoud II to sign it, and its implications for the Turkish-Arab geostrategic power.

Third - linking the past with the present, in order to benefit from the lesson of the Kutahya Treaty on the existing situation, to improve it and form an Arab-Turkish-Islamic union that serves the peoples of the region: security, economic, and geostrategic, by understanding how the treaty was formed and its implications on the geostrategic situation of the region.

Fourth, the exceptional phenomenon that most of our contemporary Arab societies are experiencing, the phenomenon of the Arab revolutions, as an indirect consequence of the Cotahya Agreement and the fragmentation of the Ottoman Empire into incompletely independent and sovereign states.

Century, First Decades.

"The world, all the world, in that shaky time, full of anticipation and possibilities, slow as a turtle, quick and changing as the lightning of the sky, is looking, wondering, listening intently for the next rumble, and fearfully anticipating the tomorrow that is to come.

In that time, everything is up for reconsideration, for re-division:

Ideas, regions, countries, even kings, sultans and princes.

Countries rise and fall.

Continents are divided according to longitude and latitude, regions and peoples are divided or annexed, according to the desires of the powerful who

make decisions, according to their interests and their ability to bargain and break promises and covenants." ²

"Every promising society that claims to be influencing history, not neglecting it, and writing history, not reading it, is a society that must first reinterpret its time and place, and crystallize a renewed awareness of its strategic depth: Geographical, historical and civilizational depth."³

It is known that the phenomenon of geostrategic transformation is not a recent phenomenon, but rather an ancient one, linked to the emergence of political societies. In other words, geostrategic power is as old as the formation of states, it is a global phenomenon, and it is not limited to one political community without another, as no strategic thinking is without it, with the aim of strengthening the power of the state, although its causes, levels, and forms differ from one country to another, and from one group to another.

The element of geostrategic power, which has multiplied in many forms and colors over the past centuries, and in various continents (European, African, American) and civilizations (Western, Arab and Islamic), is a natural result of the transformations that states and empires have undergone since the late 17th century, due to the French and American revolutions, as well as the scientific, technical, economic and political revolution. The French and American revolutions exerted a decisive influence and touched, on the one hand, the relations between states in all their political, military, economic, social and cultural forms. At the same time, technological progress has deepened the differences and contradictions between states and introduced new sources of tension and additional factors of control (Europe's past and present colonial history is conclusive evidence of these changes). That is, between the forces controlling economic decision-making and the means of production (political and economic power) and the controlled group (labor).

Indeed, the changing social, political, and economic functions of individuals and societies, and the reproduction of cultural, political, social, and even economic values, have led to the emergence of international violence with multiple goals, forms, and methods, as its causes and manifestations have diversified and expanded. In other words, we have become faced with the phenomenon of complex international violence (the first and second world wars, and the rest of the wars in Asia, Europe and Africa) and its

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2   About Cities of Salt, Taqasim al-Nayr wa al-Nahar, Part III by Abdulrahman Munif.

3   Ahmet Davutoğlu, former foreign minister of the Republic of Turkey.

various political, economic, social, educational, psychological, behavioral, value and cultural manifestations...

Turkish-Arab societies, as well as Western societies, have known, and continue to know, the behavior of seeking geostrategic power to protect their national and regional security. This behavior led to the emergence of wars and political violence, which made our Islamic world live exceptional phenomena from its contemporary political history: the Arab-Islamic/Israeli conflict, the phenomenon of revolutions and counter-revolutions (in Syria, Yemen, Sudan, Egypt), the Pakistani-Indian war, and the Iran-Israeli war. There is an element of surprise in these developments. Because of their unforeseen occurrence, the speed of their flow, and the difficulty of grasping their essence, understanding the essence of their manifestations and who is responsible for their launch? Why are they limited to the Arab-Islamic region? Does the rapidly changing Arab-Islamic reality confirm that we are facing a new era in the region?

To explain the phenomenon, there have been many seminars, various conceptualizations and approaches. Therefore, I have tried to link the current geopolitical outcomes to past inputs and explore the depths of past challenges that have hindered, and continue to hinder, the progress of the Arab Islamic region and its political independence in making various sovereign decisions .[4]

If the phenomenon of the search for geostrategic power, its forms and types in Islamic societies, especially in the stage of the "post-colonial" state until the 1990s, was simple and controlled, as it was practiced within these countries by the regimes and media forces and in different ways. Today, it has become a complex phenomenon in which all means and techniques are used: Scientific, military, media, psychological or behavioral to a multidimensional level, i.e. it has moved from the search for geostrategic power by simple methods to more modern and sophisticated techniques.

This diagnostic situation leads us to build a hypothesis about the relationship, interaction, or overlap between the keywords:

The 1833 Treaty of Kütahya, Turkish-Arab geo-strategic power: . In other words, the relationship between the fixed variable related to the 1833 Treaty of Kütahya and the question of Turkish-Arab geo-strategic power (the dependent variable), at a stage when most countries in the region are

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4   *Mohamed Al-Abda, Reform, Development, Democracy in the Arab World, An Introduction to Reading the Spring of Arab Revolutions, Dar Al-Salam Library, Rabat, Morocco, 2011, p. 8.
*Mohamed Al-Abda, "Protests in the Arab world are demands to consolidate the democratic project," Moroccan newspaper Alam, No. 21929, March 22, 2011.

experiencing patterns of political, economic and social transformations. Which may contribute in one way or another:

Either in strengthening and shaping the geostrategic power of the Turkish and Arab worlds. That is, if these societies understand that the challenges that may affect their geostrategic power are common and the same, and come from Western international powers.

Or in reducing the conditions conducive to the realization of Arab-Turkish geostrategic capital, if the objectives of the current international changes, which aim to subject the Turkish and Arab regions to Western control on several levels, are not grasped: Economic, political, military and value-based. This will inevitably contribute to fueling the conditions for the weakening of political and economic development. It also eliminates the reasons for the realization of the geostrategic power of these countries.

The feasibility of this hypothesis is evident because of the outstanding issues and questions that preoccupy Turkish intellectuals and intellectuals in the rest of the countries of the region, especially since there is a slow development of most of these countries, which were born by Caesarian birth by obtaining incomplete independence from the colonizing countries, due to, on the one hand, the direct and indirect consequences of the Kütahya Agreement, and on the other hand, the fragmentation of the states of the Ottoman Empire, as well as the backwardness of most of them in the global development scale. In addition, most of them have regressed in the global development scale, as their issues have become only at the level of survival (Yemen, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, etc.).

This brings us to the exceptional phenomenon that most of our Arab societies have been experiencing since 1833 until today. The phenomenon of instability starting from the colonization of these countries by Western powers, through their Tsarist independence, to the democratic spring and its repercussions that continue to this day.

The main question of this research is the relationship between the 1833 Treaty of Kütahya and the question of Turkish-Arab geo-strategic power and the weakening and fragmentation of Arab societies.

Analyzing this issue will lead us to try to control the relationship between the Kutahya Treaty and the fate of geo-strategic power and security in these societies. This can only be achieved by answering a set of questions stemming from this issue, which can be summarized in the following points: "The Kutahya Treaty and the fate of geo-strategic power and security in these societies:

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Second, the geopolitical factors at the time that made it imperative for Sultan Mahmoud II to sign it, and its implications for the Turkish-Arab geostrategic power.

Third - linking the past with the present, in order to benefit from the lesson of the Kutahya Treaty on the existing situation, to improve it and form an Arab-Turkish-Islamic union that serves the peoples of the region: security, economic, and geostrategic, by understanding how the treaty was formed and its implications on the geostrategic situation of the region.

Fourth, the exceptional phenomenon that most of our contemporary Arab societies are experiencing, the phenomenon of the Arab revolutions, as an indirect consequence of the Cotahya Agreement and the fragmentation of the Ottoman Empire into incompletely independent and sovereign states.

This topic requires a holistic approach (functional, legal, structural, historical, content analysis technique...) as it is a complex and analytical approach par excellence. The interrelationship between the 1833 Treaty of Kütahya and the question of Turkish-Arab geo-strategic power: Influence and Influence requires us to consider the theory of the constant and the variable. Is it a mathematical relationship whose causes and consequences apply to all societies in the study area, or does it differ from one society to another?

Since we will try to study this topic, according to the above-mentioned approaches, the spatial sample will include, on the one hand, the societies of Turkey, Egypt, the Maghreb, and other Arab societies whenever the study requires it, and, on the other hand, the time period extending from 1833 to today.

In addition to the aforementioned, the use of other approaches and methods in analyzing this study, such as the theory of systemic or relational analysis, is still very possible. This is in order to be able to approach the phenomenon of violence and politics (the indirect result of the Cotahya Agreement and the czarist independence of most of these countries) in the mentioned societies in a scientific and sober approach.

In order to cover this topic, I will address it from two perspectives: the first will deal with the Kütahya Institutes and the strategic status of the Arab-Turkish region: The first will deal with the Kütahya Institutes and the

strategic status of the Arab-Turkish region: formation and fate. The second will be devoted to development and political violence in the Maghreb countries: What is the relationship

Kütahya Institutes and the strategic status of the Arab-Turkish region: formation and fate

Understanding the region's geopolitical present cannot be done without reading the past from several angles: legal, security, economic, and diplomatic. Therefore, analyzing the content of the Treaty of Cotahia allows researchers and decision-makers to understand the present and anticipate the future.

The agreement will be read in order to draw conclusions through its historical context, its main provisions, and its signatories.

I. The Treaty of Kutahya: Historical Context and Content of the Agreement

The said agreement will be examined according to its historical context and the reasons for its conclusion (1), as well as the parties involved and the content of the agreement (2).

The historical context and background of the agreement:

The Treaty of Kutahya was signed in 1833 between the Ottoman Empire, where the official sovereign was Sultan Mahmoud II, and Muhammad Ali Pasha, the governor of Egypt. This was after a successful military campaign by the latter. His army reached the outskirts of Anatolia.

To clarify the background of the agreement and its historical context, we refer to Mohammed Ali Pasha, the governor of Egypt belonging to the Ottoman Empire, during the third decade of the 19th century, seeking to expand his influence and break away from the centralized authority of the Ottoman Empire. The desire to expand his influence and build a strong state, semi-independent of the Ottoman state.

One of the most important manifestations of Muhammad Ali's defection from the Ottoman authority was his request to grant him the Levant (Syria, Lebanon, and Palestine) in exchange for his help in suppressing the Greek revolution, but this request was rejected by Sultan Mahmoud II.

Mehmet Ali sent an army, led by his son Ibrahim Pasha, who invaded the Levant and defeated the Ottoman forces in successive battles, which brought him to Konya in Anatolia in 1832. After this defeat, Sultan Mahmoud II sought help from Tsarist Russia. This behavior caused concern for Britain and France, which feared Russian expansion into Ottoman territory.

As a preliminary summary of Muhammad Ali Pasha's futile war against Sultan Mahmoud II:

*It has had a negative impact on the region from 1832 to today.

*The governor of Egypt rebelled against the central authority of the Turkish state led by Sultan Mahmoud II.

*Muhammad Ali's behavior and its direct and indirect risks to the region's geostrategic power.

*Weakening the last Islamic caliphate in the countries of the Islamic world.

*Opening the way for hostile powers belonging to the War House (Britain and France) to interfere in the sphere of Dar es Salaam.

*The disintegration of the Ottoman Empire and the colonization of most of its territories (Egypt, the Levant, Algeria, Libya...).

2-The Treaty of Kutahya: Parties and text of the treaty:

The parties involved in the Kutahya Agreement were[5] respectively:

Sultan Mahmoud II of the Ottoman Empire.

Muhammad Ali Pasha, the Ottoman governor of Egypt, and his son Ibrahim Pasha, the military commander of the campaign against the Levant.

C- Indirect parties to the agreement: Russia, Britain and France.

The Kutahya Agreement, reached in May, 1833, includes the following clauses:

*Appointment of Muhammad Ali Pasha as governor of: Egypt, the Levant (Syria and Palestine), Crete and Adana in southern Anatolia [6]

*The appointment of Ibrahim Pasha as governor of Aleppo and Damascus.

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5   The Kutahya Agreement is sometimes written as "Kurtahya" or "Qutahya" for further elaboration see:
     *P.M.HOLT -Egypt and the Fertile Crescent, 1516-1922.
     *Sir Hamilton Gibb- The Encyclopedia of Islam.
     * WILLIAM l. CLEVELAND and Martin Bunton- A History of the Modern Middle East.
     * Stanford Shaw -History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey.
     * Feroz Ahmed - The Ottomane Empire and the World Around it.

6   ) The Adana region in southern Anatolia became the subject of conflict between the centralized authorities (represented by Sultan Mahmud II) and the decentralized Egyptian authorities (represented by Muhammad Ali Pasha).

*Nominal allegiance to the Ottoman Sultan [7]

Mehmet Ali's forces withdraw from Anatolia and stop marching towards Istanbul.

II. The Treaty of Kutahya and geostrategic power:

It is clear to say that the Treaty of Kutahya negatively affected the geo-strategic situation of the Ottoman state, which caused the weakening of the latter. It opened the way for foreign intervention in the territory of the empire by the major countries (Britain, France, Spain, Portugal...) What were the results of this agreement? What were the international reactions? What are the implications for the geo-strategic situation in the region?

The Kutahya Agreement and its impact on the security of the Ottoman Empire:

One of the most important immediate consequences for both sides of the agreement is that: Muhammad Ali Pasha, the governor of Egypt, was able to secure a large territorial expansion and an influential military power, which led him to impose a fait accompli on the Ottoman Sultan and to rule vast territories outside of Egypt.

By contrast, the Ottoman Empire lost many advantages:

*In terms of geopolitics: It has lost effective control over the Levant and most of Anatolia.

*In terms of sovereign decision-making: Increased dependence on major powers, such as Czarist Russia .[8]

One of the negative repercussions of the Kutahya Agreement on power in the Ottoman Empire was the intervention of Tsarist Russia to protect the Sultan in exchange for concessions, which caused the major powers (such as France and Britain) to worry about the consequences of Russian influence, and they began to provide indirect support to Muhammad Ali Pasha in order to create a balance. In addition, they put pressure on the Ottoman state in exchange for direct and indirect privileges.

The intervention of the major powers led to disastrous consequences for the Ottoman state, resulting in the so-called "Eastern Question", which means international competition for the legacy of the sick Ottoman state.

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7   ) The implication of this action is that Muhammad Ali is not declaring full independence.

8   ) A major consequence of the Honkar Eskilah Treaty of 1833 was the protection of the Ottoman Empire by Tsarist Russia.

2- The Kutahya Agreement and the transformation of the international geo-strategic situation:

To understand the main determinants of the Cotahia Agreement, it is necessary to be open to multiple and complementary approaches (sociological, historical, psychological, behavioral, political, managerial...) Among the many and varied inputs that led to such an agreement, the psychological and behavioral factor is one of them. Muhammad Ali Pasha's love of power and greed for expansion led to disastrous results, for which the region is still paying the price today.

The agreement did not fundamentally end the conflict, but rather became a pretext for foreign intervention in the Ottoman Empire. In 1839, the war erupted again in the Battle of Nazib, where Ibrahim Pasha defeated the Ottoman army for the second time, which led to the direct intervention of British forces. European powers imposed the London Agreement in 1840, under which Muhammad Ali was forced to withdraw from most of the territories he had acquired, except for Egypt, which he continued to govern independently.

If some believe that the Kutahya Agreement was a temporary victory for Muhammad Ali Pasha. In my estimation, it was a defeat for Muhammad Ali Pasha from the very beginning, from the moment he thought of going into battle and rebelling against the Ottoman central authority. The agreement did not establish a long-term peace; rather, it was one of the main elements that exposed the weakness of the Ottoman state. Thus, on the one hand, it incentivized European powers to intervene directly in the affairs of the Ottoman state. On the other hand, it was a prelude to the so-called "Eastern Question" that extended until the collapse of the Ottoman state after World War I. Its repercussions still affect the Ottoman state. Its repercussions continue to affect the geostrategic power of the region. The occupation of the Ottoman states (Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, the Levant, Algeria), the occupation of Palestine, and the illogical division of Arab countries, which led to conflicts and wars and fueled the political violence of these countries. Until the major countries became strategically planning on behalf of these peoples, the most important of which is the Greater Middle East project, working to weaken the countries of : Turkey, Iran, Pakistan, and the rest of the Arab countries. Most of them have become hybrid states, working to develop their own capabilities and eliminate the phenomenon of political violence, which is the indirect result of the Kutahya Agreement and the incomplete independence of these countries. This is what will be addressed in the second part of this study.

Development and Political Violence in the Maghreb: What is the relationship

If the concept of development refers to the renewed ability to build concepts, trends and methods to meet the current and future needs of the development process, it cannot be completely separated from the phenomenon of political violence in our contemporary Maghreb societies[9] , so we will try in this axis to question the relationship between development and political violence by dissecting the approaches to development in these countries.

I. The culture/identity development approach:

The relatively recent independence of Maghreb societies, the cultural-identity framework, and the struggle over an "agreed societal project" or "identity" itself are among the most important factors in explaining the phenomenon of political violence and political instability in these countries.[10]

Since its occupation of these countries, the colonizers (French, Italian and Spanish) have worked to distort their cultural identity and attempt to strike at their distinctive personality by stirring up ethnic and racial strife and attempting to Christianize their inhabitants (Kabylia region in Algeria and some regions of the Atlas Mountains in Morocco) and prevent their cohesion and intermingling, thus maintaining tribal and feudal structures that would protect their imperialist interests.

Since 1830, the peoples of this region have engaged in successive wars with the colonialist because they repelled his constant attempts to dismantle their cultural and civilizational system by favoring the French language and prohibiting the teaching of the Arabic language (State of Algeria: 1904 French law), encouraging the use of the vernacular as an entry point to address the people, and discriminating between Arabs and Amazighs as a way to stir up strife between them (the Berber Dahir in Morocco).[11]

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9   ) Muhammad al-Abida: Reform, Development, Democracy in the Arab World: An Introduction to Reading the Spring of Arab Revolutions, Volume 1, November 2011, Dar Al Salam Press, Rabat, Morocco, p. 54.

10   ) Mohamed Safieddine Kharboush: Political Violence in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Center for Research and Political Studies, Proceedings of the Fifth Egyptian-French Symposium, Cairo, November 19-21, 1993, The Phenomenon of Political Violence from a Comparative Perspective, p. 279.

11   ) Abdelbaset Dardour: Political Violence in Algeria and the Crisis of Democratization, Volume 1, 1996, Dar Al-Aman Press, Egypt, p. 39.

If we look at the ethnic composition in terms of the proportion of Arabs compared to Amazigh in the societies of the Maghreb countries ([12]), we find in first place Mauritania (Arabs: 3.364 million / Amazigh: 200 people), in second place Libya (Arabs about 6 million / Amazigh 100,000 people, 2% of the total population) and Tunisia in third place (Arabs: 10 million / Amazigh: 10 million/Amazigh: 100,000 people, between 5 and 10% of the total population). In fourth place is Algeria (Arabs: Between 18 and 22 million people, 72%, / Amazigh: 12-15 million, 27.4%), Morocco (Arabs: Between 10 and 13 million people, 25 percent / Amazighs: Between 15 and 20 million, 27.4 percent): 15-20 million, 75%).

With regard to the religious affiliation of the peoples of the Maghreb countries, 99% of the population professes Islam according to the Maliki school of thought, and tribal relations are the basis of the form of social relations in most of these societies.[13]

It is worth noting that although most of the constitutions of these countries, after they were colonized, stipulated that Islam is the official state religion and Arabic is the official language of these countries, all regimes did not give the constitutional requirements in this area any cultural, cultural, scientific and economic content. On the contrary, they applied positive laws in various fields (except for inheritance and personal status) and marginalized the Arabic language in state facilities and in the education system, so the cultural/identity scene in these societies today is represented by two conflicting and contradictory currents:

*The nationalist current with its Arab and Islamic dimensions, represented by a large group of national intellectuals who graduated from the Maghreb National School, defends the Arab/Islamic affiliation of these societies and calls for their cultural and civilizational independence.

*The Westernization or Francophone movement, a group that was educated and formed in form and content in the French language and infiltrated in the administration and the army. They advocate the Frenchization of the cultural and political life of this region, arguing that Arab-Islamic culture is a source of backwardness.

The ongoing conflict in most Maghreb countries today is, on the one hand, a struggle for identity and liberation from cultural dependence on the

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12   www.amazigh world.org/history/index.php.

13   ) The tribe is the owner of the means of production, such as land and water, in Libya (among these tribes are the Qaddafa and Magarha) and Mauritania, as well as in some southern regions of Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia

West in the modern sense of political, economic and cultural independence, and, if not managed properly, an entry point for political violence in the region.

II. The economic development approach:

Economic development is the most important dimension of the overall development process and is represented by a set of fundamental transformations that occur in the sectors and relations of production. As for the nature of the relationship between economic development and political violence, according to a number of studies, it is characterized by different forms:

Some research has concluded that there is a "negative relationship" between economic development and political violence, as the higher the degree of economic development, the lower the rate of political violence and vice versa.[14] The phenomenon of political violence decreases in democratic regimes that have succeeded in meeting the needs of citizens, and multiplies in underdeveloped autocratic regimes.

In this regard, we cite the case of Algeria, which in the 1970s was considered a model for Third World and Arab countries to follow in order to overcome the predicament of underdevelopment, as political violence diminished between 1965 and 1978[15] . This was due to the absence of a strong opposition on the one hand, and the significant economic developments that the country witnessed through high oil prices and the massive flow of oil money to the state, which contributed to the development of a pioneering national social development policy. However, after 1978, the economic policy of the state turned from development policy to rentier policy, and from a bureaucratic system to a corrupt system. Beginning in 1985, as oil prices began to decline and the economic crisis deepened, the situation exploded on October 5, 1988, followed by bloody events and terrorist operations .[16]

Other studies have concluded that there is a "positive relationship" between economic growth and political violence. Rapid economic development leads to an increase in the rate of political violence, as it affects

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14   (Seymour martin lipest/some social requisites of democracy American political sciences review. vol53 (1959) pp69

15   ) In their study on forms of political violence from a comparative historical perspective, conducted on about 60 countries between 1800 and 1960, Fogelman and Flangen confirmed the causal relationship between economic development and political violence, as the rate of violence doubled in countries with a low level of development, and tended to decline and decrease as the growth rate increased." In Hussein Tawfiq Ibrahim, op. cit. p. 282.

16   (Mancurolson (j.r) rapid growth as a destabilizing force. in Jason l. finkle and Richard w.gable. eds/political development and social change (new york.landan.john wiley1969..pp551.

the economic and social lives of individuals and groups. Some groups benefit from this development, while others are harmed, but both the beneficiaries and the harmed are a source of political violence. The harmed group will try to regain their rights and their previous status, while the beneficiaries will scramble for political participation in line with their new economic status. If the political system is unable to respond to the demands of both groups, this may motivate them to participate in political violence to confront the existing political system. The results of this research can be applied to the state of Libya, which witnessed various types of violence during periods of remarkable economic growth. It turned from an agricultural country to an oil exporter in 1961, and oil revenues rose from 3 million dollars in 1961 to 22.527 billion dollars in 1980, and oil exports represent 100% of Libya's exports.

[17]These changes led to the emergence of social forces, especially after the regime followed a radical socio-economic policy after 1977, which adopted the redistribution of housing, currency exchange and job distribution in 1981, which resulted in state control of the entire economic process (exports and imports), as well as the redistribution of wealth and power to different categories of the population, who turned towards political opposition by adopting new demands that put pressure on the political regime, which was unable to achieve real social justice because it was busy spending on worthless internal and external projects, and which resorted to a policy of violence to suppress the demands of these forces, which ended with the revolution on February 17, 2011, whose spectra are still pushing. Consequently, it resorted to a policy of violence to suppress the demands of these forces, which ended in the February 17, 2011 revolution, the spectra of which are still unfolding today.[18]

Some studies also concluded that there is a "curved line" relationship between economic development and political violence: we find that political violence decreases in economically stagnant societies while it increases as economic development increases, and violence decreases in traditional societies that have not been exposed to rapid change[19] . This situation is somewhat similar to the state of Mauritania, as it is characterized on the

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17   ) The Great Man-Made River Project has not yielded the desired results despite costing about $28 billion, and more than $230 billion has been distributed to arms deals and support for terrorism.

18   ) Zuhair Hamdi: Three Years after the Libyan Revolution: Challenges and Prospects, Arab Politics, Issue 7, March 2014, p. 88.

19   (Douglas a. Hibbs. Mass political violence/across-national causal analysis (New York- john Wiley new 1973/champs 3).

one hand by economic stagnation compared to the rest of the Maghreb countries, and on the other hand it is characterized as a traditional tribal society, and therefore the violence that Mauritania witnessed can be classified as elite violence or violence from within the system, as well as increasing and multiplying in society. It decreases in societies that have been able to develop effective political and social bodies and achieve socio-economic reforms that have enabled them to absorb the effects of the process of social change .[20]

Morocco was successful in managing the popular protest of the February 20 movement, accommodating the leftist political opposition (the government of Abdelrahman Youssoufi in 1998) and moderate Islamists (the government of Abdelilah Benkirane in 2011), and launching economic and political reform initiatives that sought to reform the political structure of the Moroccan regime.

4- However, some research has shown that there is no close relationship between economic development and political violence: The multiple forms of the relationship between the two phenomena are mainly due to many factors, including the different socioeconomic conditions of the societies under investigation, the differences between studies in terms of the indicators used, and the existence of intermediate variables that adjust the relationship between the two phenomena such as the GDP growth rate and the percentage of the contribution of manufacturing industries to GDP, for example.

III. The political development approach:

The Maghreb region is one of the regions criticized for its weak democratic structure, with no constitutional or legislative framework to support the emergence of real democratic situations, and even if they exist in some of them, they remain only a facade democracy.[21]

The political sphere in the region is characterized by diversity from a monarchical system (Morocco), republican (Algeria, Tunisia, Mauritania)

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20   (Michael C. Hudson, Condition of political violence and instability : A preliminary tests of three hypotheses (Beverly Hills, calif.: sage; 1970).

21   This state of affairs has prompted prominent scholars such as Elie Hourani, Ghassan Salameh, Burhan Ghalioun, Behjat Gourani, international governmental and non-governmental organizations such as the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), the Ibn Khaldun Institute for Civil Society Studies (Egypt), the Center for Arab Unity Studies (Lebanon), or countries such as the United States and the European Union to call for helping the Arab region, including Maghreb societies, to build democracy, beginning with Robert Plater's initiative in 1996 and continuing with the Greater Middle East Project (2004).
      Mhand berouk. the Arab world between oriental despotism and liberal democracy/an American perspective the diplomat. June/1996/pp21

and republican (Libya before the February 17 revolution), and the political participation that drives the democratic transfer of power is weak if not absent in most of these countries (Libya[22], Tunisia[23], Algeria[24]), while in Morocco, despite the pluralism of political parties, it has not reached the democratically acceptable ceiling(36). This observation applies to civil society organizations, which do not contribute to the production of conscious, independent and entrepreneurial human and social capital, but rather are rentier organizations that thrive materially and symbolically from the state and promote the latter's positions, ignoring the real protests and demands of the people.

This situation produces representative and executive institutions that are incapable of implementing ambitious social, economic, and cultural policies.

On the basis of the above, we conclude that there is a crisis of legitimacy in most of the Maghreb countries. Some of them derived their legitimacy from the acquisition of independence (Algeria), while others relied on the legitimacy of the coup (Libya and Tunisia, before the February 17 and Jasmine revolutions, and Mauritania and Algeria). On the other hand, most of these countries failed to maintain their countries' economic, political and cultural maintenance, and they also forgot that the legitimacy of exercising power today depends on the elements of legitimacy of choice and legitimacy of achievement.[25]

The Algerian regime did not recognize the outcome of the ballot boxes that were in favor of the Islamic Salvation Front and the decade of blood

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22   ) After the revolution, Libya witnessed a radical transformation in political life, characterized by a multiplicity of political actors, weak political and civil society, and challenges, such as:
      *The first challenge: Political consensus, building national political structures and imposing the prestige of the state.
      *The second challenge: Absorbing the armed brigades into a national and inclusive security system.
      *The third challenge: Providing basic services to Libyan citizens and paying attention to the economic file.
      *The fourth challenge: Achieving national reconciliation.
      Zuhair Hamdi, op. cit. p. 94.

23   ) Post-revolutionary Tunisia has laid the foundations for a second republic (2014 Constitution), but this cannot be achieved without the acceptance of dialogue and the principle of participation rather than domination. Anwar Al-Jamawi, Arab Politics, op. cit. pp. 64-69.

24   ) Sarhan Bin Dabil Al-Otaibi, The Phenomenon of Political Violence in Algeria: A comparative analytical study 1976-1998, Journal of Social Sciences, Kuwait University, Winter 2000, Vol. 28 No. 4, p. 15/ Eissa Ayachi, Sociology of the current crisis in Algeria - The Arab Future, No. 191, January 1995, p. 83/ Abu Jarrah Soltani, The roots of conflict in Algeria, Algerian Printing Corporation, Issat Abou Jarrah Soltani Idir Press, 1995, p. 136.

25   ) Al-Mahdi Al-Manjara, The First Civilizational War, The Future of the Past and the Past of the Future, Al-Najah Al-Jadida Press, Casablanca, Morocco, Volume 7, 2001, p. 263 et seq. See also: Johnson, G, revolutionary change, little brown Boston, 1970 p 27

that followed the white coup against the rule of Chadli Bendjedid. Most of these regimes have failed to gain the legitimacy of governance and to accomplish socio-economic and structural projects, which was termed by the Human Development Report 2004 as the legitimacy of achievement. The ideological foundations of these regimes, whether nationalist or unitary, have disappeared, and the option of

Possibility 1: The success of the Tunisian and Libyan revolutions and their reflection on motivating the rest of the Maghreb countries to carry out extensive reforms (Morocco: March 9, 2011 speech, 2011 Constitution/ Algeria: removal of the state of emergency that has prevailed since the 1990s: Removal of the state of emergency that has prevailed since the 1990s, and the President's speech on constitutional reforms on April 15, 2011.)

The second possibility is the circumvention of the Jasmine and February 17 revolutions, and its impact on the failure of the region's regimes to enact comprehensive and bold reforms.

The demand for development in these societies remains unattainable under the current internal and external conditions. However, the intense urgency of its peoples to reach the land of development remains the only factor for success in achieving development

Conclusions

In short, based on the aforementioned data, no one disputes that what the region as a whole is experiencing was historically founded on the internal conflict between the centralized authority represented by (Sultan Mahmoud II) and the decentralized authority represented by (Muhammad Ali Pasha).

The distinctive contradictions of the region constitute, in my view, the main incentive and support for linking the confrontation of the internal challenges of the countries of the region by reading and benefiting from history with the aim of achieving Turkish, Arab, and Islamic geo-strategic power, as well as undertaking comprehensive and courageous reforms in line with the requirements of the citizens of the region. It is also the catalyst for courageous, comprehensive reforms that are in line with the needs of the region's citizens.

As well as confronting external challenges that are a direct result of historical causes that led to:

*Diplomatic outputs: The Kutahya Agreement.

*Geostrategic outcomes: The fragmentation of the Islamic world, which was represented by the Ottoman Empire.

*Geographic outputs: Ottoman states transition from decentralized states to hybrid states

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*Mohamed Al-Abda, "Protests in the Arab world are demands to consolidate the democratic project," Moroccan newspaper Alam, No. 21929, March 22, 2011.

4) The Kutahya Agreement is sometimes written as "Kurtahya" or "Qutahya" for further elaboration see:

*P.M.HOLT -Egypt and the Fertile Crescent, 1516-1922.

*Sir Hamilton Gibb- The Encyclopedia of Islam.

* WILLIAM l. CLEVELAND and Martin Bunton- A History of the Modern Middle East.

* Stanford Shaw -History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey.

* Feroz Ahmed - The Ottoman Empire and the World Around it.

Chapter 2

A Global, Regional, and National Approach to The Palestine Issue After October 7 🔓

Hüsamettin İnaç[1]

Baha Rjoub[2]

Abstract

This study aims to examine the Palestinian issue in the aftermath of October 7 at the global, regional, and national levels. The Palestinian issue is a deep-rooted problem that has been ongoing for over a century and should be addressed not only as a regional conflict but also as a reflection of imperialism, colonialism, injustice, and the double standards of the international system. Israel's expansionist and occupying policies, along with the unconditional support of imperialist powers, primarily the United States, have been one of the fundamental obstacles to the Palestinian people's just struggle. The article examines the historical roots of the Palestinian issue in the context of the withdrawal of the Ottoman Empire, the British Mandate period, and the establishment of Israel in 1948. Within the scope of internal factors, it examines the negative impact of political divisions between Fatah and Hamas on the statehood process and the consequences of failing to achieve national unity. In terms of external factors, the weak and fragmented stance of the Arab and Islamic world, the comprehensive political and military support provided by the US to Israel, and the ineffectiveness of international human rights organisations are highlighted; the Arab-Israeli normalisation process is also assessed as a factor that further complicates the resolution of the Palestinian issue. The study states that two-state solution proposals are not actually feasible and are no longer considered realistic due to unilateral changes in the status of Jerusalem, settlement policies, and the denial of the right of return for refugees. Concluding that the Palestinian territories must be returned to

1   Prof. Dr., Dumlupınar University, Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences, Department of Political Science and International Relations, husamettin.inac@dpu.edu.tr, ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6922- 2010.

2   Master's Student, Dumlupınar University Graduate School of Education, Department of International Relations, baha.rjoub@ogr.dpu.edu.tr, ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0842-9883.

their rightful owners, the right of Palestinians to self-determination must be protected, and the unity and determination of the people and the international conscience must be mobilised. Furthermore, it is emphasised that due to the symbolic importance of Jerusalem and Al-Aqsa Mosque, the Palestinian issue should be addressed not only as the responsibility of the Palestinians, but as the shared responsibility of the entire Islamic ummah.

Introduction

The Palestinian issue is not a problem that has suddenly emerged; on the contrary, it is a deep-rooted issue that has gone through many conflictual and pivotal phases for over a century. At its core, it is a faith-based cause: an ongoing struggle between right and wrong, between landowners and those who have come from the diaspora. Those who initially came to these lands as guests gradually gained power, armed themselves, and attacked the indigenous Palestinian people, driving them from their homes and seizing their property.

There is no doubt that the "Palestinian Question" is one of the most deep-rooted, profound, and burning issues not only in the Middle East but also in the entire Islamic world. Until this issue is resolved, no step taken in the name of regional peace and stability will be lasting, and it will not be possible to establish a genuine atmosphere of peace in the Middle East. At the heart of this issue lie Israel's long-standing occupation policies based on racist, expansionist, colonialist, and Zionist ideology. With these policies, the Israeli state not only disregards the Palestinian people historically, geographically, and culturally but also fuels a constant environment of conflict and insecurity throughout the region. In this context, the stance of other imperialist powers, primarily the United States, which stands by Israel and supports it unconditionally, is one of the fundamental reasons why this problem remains unsolved. The Palestinian people's just struggle is being ignored in the name of imperialist interests, and international law and human rights principles are being systematically violated. This situation also reveals that the imperialist stranglehold based on pressure, siege, and external intervention, which is not limited to the Palestinian issue but is faced by the Islamic world in general, has not yet been fully broken. Therefore, the Palestinian issue is not merely a matter of land or borders; it is a symbol of a multidimensional and long-term resistance against imperialism, exploitation, and injustice (Deri, 2020, p. 116).

Before delving into the details of the Palestinian issue, it is necessary to examine the historical background of these lands, the history of Palestine, and its historical process; the period of Ottoman rule, followed by the British

Mandate period, and finally the Israeli occupation. The Palestinian issue did not begin on October 7, as some believe. On the contrary, this issue is the accumulation of the suffering experienced by the Palestinian people since the withdrawal of the Ottoman Empire from Palestine.

The Ottoman period is recorded as one of the brightest periods in which the Palestinian people lived in peace and tranquillity. This period was a time dominated by a religious Administration based on the principles of justice and equality, without distinction of race, colour, or sect. The common voice of the Palestinian people today asks: "Where is the Ottoman Empire? Where are our Turkish brothers?" Perhaps one day they will rebuild a strong, independent, and justice-based state.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has affected not only the Middle East region but also many different geographies around the world, causing great repercussions at the global level. The fact that this conflict has been going on for over a century reveals the complexity and depth of the issue, while also showing that powerful actors around the world who could bring about peace have been unable to unite to resolve this problem. This situation proves how challenging and obstacle-ridden the search for a solution is, not only regionally but also globally. Looking at the historical dimensions of the conflict, it is clear that the roots of this issue lie not in recent years but much deeper in the past, particularly in the final years of the Ottoman Empire. Claims of rights over Palestinian lands are based on a struggle that has been going on for centuries, not just in the modern era. Therefore, explaining the Israeli-Palestinian conflict solely in terms of current political and military balances would be insufficient; historical, religious, cultural, and social factors must also be taken into account. In this context, a proper analysis of this conflict is of great importance in determining possible solutions. It should be considered that this analysis can not only help understand the current situation but also enable steps to be taken for the future in light of the dynamics that have emerged from the past (Daban, 2024, pp. 1629-1630).

This study will examine the Palestinian issue at the global, regional, and national levels after October 7. Some solution proposals that have been previously voiced or considered reasonable from different perspectives will be discussed. In addition, the positions and roles of the Islamic world, primarily Arab countries, and the international community in this issue will be focused on. Furthermore, the ineffectiveness of international law, which the West has boasted about for centuries but has been unable to enforce against Israel, will be examined. Finally, the steps taken by some countries in

recent times towards recognising the Palestinian state will also be among the topics of discussion in this study.

1. The Origins of the Palestinian Problem

The fundamental issues of the Palestinian question can be examined in two main groups: The first group concerns internal factors, while the second group represents the effects of external factors on the course of this issue.

1.1. Internal Factors

1.1.1. The Collapse of the Ottoman Empire

World War I was one of the turning points that determined the borders and structure of the modern Middle East. During this war, the Ottoman Empire began to collapse, which directly affected the Arab world and paved the way for the establishment of the entity known as the "State of Israel" on Palestinian lands.

On November 9, 1917, following three major clashes with the British Imperial Army, the Ottoman army suffered a heavy defeat in Gaza and was forced to retreat. A month later, with the defeat in Jerusalem, the Ottomans withdrew completely from the region after also being defeated in the Battle of Nablus in 1918. As a result of these developments, Palestine, Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon came under British control, paving the way for the final collapse of the Ottoman Empire.

The Ottoman Empire officially ended in 1922, and two years before that, 1920, when Britain declared its mandate over Palestine, which was an extension of the 1917 Balfour Declaration and envisaged the establishment of a "national home for the Jewish people" in Palestine, fundamentally changed the historical and geographical structure of the Arab world (Daban, 2024, p. 1632).

1.1.2. British Mandate

Britain entered Palestine as a result of its colonial interests intersecting with the Zionist movement. In 1917, following fierce fighting in Palestine during World War I, the Ottoman Empire's four-hundred-year rule came to an end, and the British occupation began. This period constituted a historical phase characterised by oppression, exile, and forced displacement for Palestinians. Jewish immigration was encouraged during the British Mandate, gradually altering the region's demographic structure, a process that ended with the establishment of Israel in 1948 (Yıldırım, 2021, p. 3845).

The economic crisis that the Ottoman Empire fell into in the middle of the century paved the way for Britain to infiltrate Arab lands through "foreign missions" or, in the terminology of the time, "peaceful Crusades." British colonialism sought an ally to further its interests and, in this regard, viewed the Zionist movement as a suitable partner. The idea of establishing a national homeland for the Jews was supported by Britain in line with this strategic goal.

By encouraging Jewish settlements in Palestine, Britain sought to control the Asia-Africa connection and secure its interests in India. Although the Ottoman administration restricted Jewish property acquisition, European Jews overcame these obstacles through various means. In 1917, the Ottomans surrendered Jerusalem to the British for the protection of holy sites, thus beginning the British occupation. The Balfour Declaration was issued that same year, with Britain supporting the establishment of a national homeland for Jews in Palestine but stipulating that the rights of the existing population would be protected. Despite this, conflicts between Palestinian Arabs and Jews continued, with heavy losses in the Jaffa riots of 1921. The Palestinians voiced their national demands by organising congresses and sending delegations, but Britain did not consider them. The 1922 White Paper stated that Britain's goal was not to give Palestine entirely to the Jews, but only to establish a "national homeland" limited by economic capacity. Britain's real goal was to shift the balance of power in its favour, particularly by gaining the support of Jews in Germany. After the war, Jewish immigration to Palestine from Europe and America accelerated (Deri, 2020, p. 117).

1.1.3. Israeli Occupation

On June 17, 1946, Zionist groups launched organised attacks against the British in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. Following these attacks, the British government targeted certain elements within the Jewish community and carried out widespread arrests. In response, Jewish groups bombed various centres belonging to the British civil administration and organised new attacks.

In light of these developments, the British administration published another "White Paper," linking the Jewish Agency to terrorist acts. During this period, the United States also announced its support for the Jewish settlement plan in Palestine and, on April 20, 1946, accepted a partition resolution based on the "Morrison-Grady Plan," which envisaged the

Division of Palestine into four regions. The area allocated to the Jews under the plan corresponded to 17% of Palestinian territory.

The Jewish Agency demanded the establishment of a large Jewish state in Palestine based on the 1937 Peel Commission proposal. The US supported the search for a solution by conveying these demands to Britain. While Jewish groups continued to attack British targets, Britain transferred the Palestine issue to the United Nations on April 2, 1947. The UN proposed that a special committee called UNSCOP ( ) divide Palestine into Jewish and Arab states, grant Jerusalem international status, and end the British mandate (Doğan, 2015, pp. 70-72).

On April 9, 1948, 279 civilians, including women and children, lost their lives in the Deir Yassin Massacre carried out by Jewish armed groups. Britain announced that it would end its mandate in Palestine and transfer responsibility to the US. On May 15, 1948, the mandate officially ended, and both Jewish and Arab states were declared in accordance with the UN's recommendation. During this process, Zionist organisations declared the State of Israel; approximately 950,000 Palestinians were forcibly displaced, and the Nakba period began (Doğan, 2015, pp. 70-72).

1.1.4. Internal Political Divisions: The Fatah-Hamas Conflict

One of the fundamental dynamics of the Palestinian issue is the split between Fatah and Hamas. This split is seen as one of the biggest obstacles to the process of establishing a Palestinian state. Particularly during the Trump administration, policies aimed at perpetuating this division have deepened the political and geographical separation between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, effectively halting the statehood process. While the origins of the division in Palestine are often attributed to Hamas's takeover of Gaza in 2007, some researchers view this process as the result of ideological and political differences that began with the founding of Hamas in 1987. Ultimately, this division has both weakened the fundamental elements of the national liberation project and had negative effects on social, economic, and political life in Palestine.

The division is beneficial to Israel because Israel has always sought to divide and disrupt the Palestinian front. Initially, the United States only recognised the Palestinian Authority as a responsible power in the Palestinian territories, but did not take any real supportive steps. It made the provision of aid conditional on security cooperation between the Authority and Israel. Washington's view of the Hamas movement is that it is a terrorist movement that does not meet the conditions of the Quartet and aims to destroy Israel.

This makes it difficult for Hamas to come to power. However, the American and Israeli position is ready to secure a separate ceasefire with Hamas to prevent peace. For example, in response to Egypt's intensive efforts to resolve the division in 2018, Israel aimed to sign a ceasefire agreement separating Gaza from the West Bank. This situation reflects the division being used in two different ways (Sarı, 2018, pp. 25-26).

Israel has used the division within Palestine to its own advantage by increasing settlements in the West Bank, continuing its policies of Judaizing Jerusalem, and passing racist decisions such as the "National Identity Law" without facing international backlash. The Gaza- West Bank separation strategy, which began before the Oslo Accords, deepened with the 2005 Disengagement Plan, preventing the establishment of a Palestinian state and fueling internal conflicts. This division has reduced international interest in the Palestinian issue from a strategic level to one limited to humanitarian aid. The Trump administration, meanwhile, has sought to use the deteriorating conditions to obtain political concessions in exchange for humanitarian aid.

The continuation of the long-standing division within Palestine poses both an immediate and long-term strategic threat. This situation has created social, political, and economic transformations, whether intentional or unintentional, and these transformations have contributed to deepening the divide between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Furthermore, groups and parties that benefit from the continuation of the division have emerged, making it difficult to restore unity. This situation threatens the entirety of Palestine, and the US administration and the Israeli government are attempting to reinforce the separation between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip by exploiting it in different ways. As a result, a strategy is being pursued to prevent the establishment of a Palestinian state, particularly by using the humanitarian situation in Gaza to reduce the Palestinian issue from a matter of national rights to one of humanitarian aid and support (Sarı, 2018, pp. 37-38).

1.2. External Factors

1.2.1. The Islamic and Arab World's Stance on the Palestinian Issue

The Arab and Islamic world's stance on the Palestinian issue has weakened and even shifted towards a parallel axis with the Zionist project, contrary to its historical line. Palestine and Jerusalem have lost their priority on the agenda of Arab-Islamic governments; organisations also do not take Zionist attacks and the issue of Al-Aqsa Mosque seriously. In the current situation,

resistance is seen as the only option for the Palestinian people. In contrast, the normalisation process with Israel has gained momentum, and Israel has embarked on efforts to legitimise its occupation and reinforce its regional vision with statements such as Netanyahu's "New West Asia" rhetoric. These developments are taking place at the expense of the sovereignty of the Arab and Islamic world (Örtlek, 2023).

The Arab and Islamic will is no longer able to present a united front in this regard; there is no common stance on either regional or international issues. The Israeli occupation is not only a threat to Palestine and the Palestinian people; it also poses a danger to Arab and Islamic countries and the region in general. Everyone who has entered into a normalisation process with Israel, a process that dates back forty years, has failed to achieve political stability, economic development, or social welfare for their people. While everyone has weakened in the face of Israel, Israel alone has won. Israel has secured economic privileges, superiority in the field of security, and regional dominance, taking control wherever it has set foot. All of this is a result of the weakness of the Arab and Islamic world, and this situation stands out as one of the most important external factors perpetuating the Palestinian issue.

1.2.2. US Support for Israel

Since its establishment in 1948, Israel has been the United States' closest and most strategic partner in the Middle East. Between 1946 and 2023, the total amount of aid provided by the US to Israel was approximately $158.6 billion, according to official data, and some sources put it at $260 billion. The majority of this aid has been directed toward the military sector; military aid is recorded at $114.4 billion, while missile defence systems account for

$9.9 billion. U.S. support also covers civilian sectors such as education, health, energy, and scientific research, but its strongest form is political and diplomatic support. The US was the first country to recognise Israel, establishing diplomatic relations in 1949 and subsequently providing political support during Israel's conflicts with Arab nations. This support has Continued regardless of the political party in power, with all US presidents emphasising their commitment to Israel's security and stability (World, 2024).

Additionally, the US contributed to the resettlement of Israeli Jewish refugees, providing approximately $1.69 billion in aid in this area between 1973 and 2023. Aid increased with the collapse of the Soviet Union and decreased with the decline in the number of immigrants. All this political,

military, and economic support is seen as one of the fundamental reasons for Israel's settlement policies in the Palestinian territories and the Palestinian issue.

1.2.3. International Human Rights Organisations

The Palestinian issue is a complex international issue that has been a long-standing conflict attracting the attention of various organisations and actors. These actors can be examined in three main categories: First, the United Nations system, which reflects the international dimension of the issue and determines official positions; second, human rights organizations that defend the humanitarian, legal, political, and economic rights of the Palestinian people; and third, lobbying groups that influence public opinion and policy in the US and other countries. However, the failure of human rights organisations to respond quickly and forcefully enough to Israel's violations has undermined their credibility and created the perception among some that these organisations indirectly contribute to the continuation of the problem rather than its solution. This situation, combined with the failure of effective international intervention despite the reports of these organisations, reinforces the impression that the system plays a role in reinforcing the status quo in the Palestinian issue.

1.2.4. Arab-Israeli Normalization

The issue of Arab-Israeli normalisation is an extremely sensitive and dangerous topic in contemporary Arab politics. Particularly in the wake of the Arab Spring, with the emergence of governments that are more authoritarian and repressive than previous regimes, this normalisation process has become a serious threat to Arab-Islamic constants amid the weakening of Arab intellectual and cultural identity. Even the people who oppose and reject normalisation are unable to force their governments to sever ties with Israel or withdraw from this process. This is because Arab governance systems do not prioritise the demands of their citizens, a situation that serves the interests of Israel and the United States. For these two actors, it has always been preferable to cooperate with authoritarian regimes that act in accordance with regional interests and are guided by their own agendas.

The Palestinian issue has faced setbacks and disappointments throughout history due to various reasons presented by some Arab regimes; this situation has become more pronounced, especially in recent times, with rapid and undeniable tendencies towards normalisation with Israel. While the leaders of Arab states have crowned years of often covert security, economic, and military cooperation with various agreements, the year 2020 has been etched

in memory not only for the global Coronavirus pandemic but also for the wave of normalisation with Israel, which could be described as a "disaster of dignity and honour" in the Arab world. However, this dangerous trend cannot be legitimised at the expense of the legitimate and inalienable rights of the Palestinian people; for, with Israel receiving intense support from the United States and other Western countries, the new political balances in the region are deepening the threats to the Palestinian cause. In this context, no matter how varied the perspectives and understandings may be, the essence of the concept of "normalisation" from Israel's perspective remains unchanged; this concept aims to make the Jewish presence in Palestinian lands a natural and normal situation. Normalisation, in its forms and applications, serves as a strategic goal for Israel in the Arab-Israeli conflict, seen as the most effective way to eliminate the possibility of war and aiming for Israel to be accepted as a natural state in the region without addressing the historical roots of the conflict. In this process, Israel has succeeded in transforming the decades-long conflict into a process favourable to itself and has achieved significant strategic successes by shifting its relations with the Arab world from a phase of armed conflict to a phase of peaceful resolution, and then to normalisation in all areas (Akdoğan & Yılmaz, 2021: 77).

2. From the Al-Aqsa Flood to the Present

The "Aksa Storm," which began on October 7, 2023, should be considered not only as a military dimension of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict but also as a turning point that led to the redefinition of the Palestinian issue at the global, regional, and national levels. This event has shaken the long-standing balance of international diplomacy, creating new areas of debate regarding the nature of Palestinian resistance, Israel's security policies, and the stance of the Arab world. The humanitarian, political, and strategic developments that emerged after the Al-Aqsa Flood have transformed the Palestinian issue from merely a regional problem into a

Universal issue centred on global justice, international law, and human rights. This section analyses the current dynamics of the Palestinian issue in light of the developments following the Al-Aqsa Flood and assesses the effects of this process on regional balances.

2.1. The Emergence and Key Dynamics of the Al-Aqsa Flood

The Al-Aqsa Flood emerged as a natural reaction to the long-standing accumulation of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and the occupation policies in the region. The operation is not only a result of current political and military developments but also an expression of the accumulated reaction to the

experiences of occupation and colonialism endured by the Palestinian people since the early 20th century. Key dynamics include Israel's settlement policies in Palestinian territories, its claims of sovereignty over Al-Aqsa Mosque and holy sites, the blockades imposed on Gaza, and plans to liquidate the Palestinian cause. In this context, the attack on Israel on October 7 was seen as a necessary step and a natural response to Tel Aviv's "plans to liquidate the Palestinian issue"; there were calls for the "immediate cessation of the attack" on the Gaza Strip. The Palestinian people's struggle against occupation and colonialism did not begin on October 7, 2023, but 105 years ago, with 30 years of that process spent under British colonial rule and 75 years under Zionist occupation. The "Aksa Storm" was both a "necessary step and natural response" to Israeli plans that aim to liquidate the Palestinian cause, seize the land and Judaize it, unilaterally determine sovereignty over the Al-Aqsa Mosque and holy sites, and end the heavy blockade on Gaza, as well as a concrete expression of the strategic goal of "establishing an independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital" (Goodarzi & Izadi, 2024).

2.2. Global Reactions: Double Standards in the International Order

The Palestinian issue is a clear and vivid example of how double standards emerge in the international arena. For decades, the Palestinian people have lived under uninterrupted occupation characterised by the land-grabbing and continuous expansion policies of the occupying Zionist entity. This expansion is in clear violation of all international laws and treaties that criminalise occupation and altering the demographic and geographic reality of occupied territories. Despite the blatant violations, Palestinian resistance is labelled as terrorism, while the actions of the occupying entity are presented as "legitimate defence," legitimising all forms of violence and oppression. What is saddening is that many human rights are violated.

Organisations and media outlets that claim to defend freedom of expression and justice are giving Israel overt or covert support, ignoring the fundamental rights of Palestinians and the human suffering they endure. This contradiction demonstrates the selective application of international law, which is expected to guarantee the rights of all parties: a harsh attitude towards Palestinians and a tolerant and excuse-making attitude towards the other side, which makes it difficult to find a fair and inclusive solution and reinforces injustice (Şahin, 2024: 86).

2.3. Regional Implications: The Search for a New Balance in the Middle East

The Middle East region has witnessed comprehensive transformations that have reshaped both regional and international power balances. The collapse of the Bashar al-Assad regime has played a direct and decisive role in the redistribution of influence in the region. During this process, Iran lost a significant portion of its hard and soft power in Syria and Lebanon, while Israel weakened due to its failure to achieve a decisive victory in the military, political, and international spheres and its practices towards Palestinians; this led to the erosion of Israel's strategic power and an increase in its negative perception in the international arena. In contrast, Turkey has emerged as the actor benefiting most from these transformations. Turkey has increased its support for the Syrian opposition, signalled cooperation with the future Syrian government, and strengthened cultural, political, and economic ties as a host country for Syrian refugees, elevating Ankara to a leading position in the regional equation.

The attack on Israel on October 7 marked a new turning point in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. The attack weakened Israel's capacity to establish military superiority and exposed its fragility in controlling the security balance. This development has strengthened Turkey's role as a central actor in the region and, strategically, has deepened Iran's problem of losing influence in critical areas. In this context, it clearly shows that the balance of power in the Middle East is increasingly shifting in Turkey's favour, while Israel and Iran are facing increasing security problems.

2.4. Public and Media Perception After the Al-Aqsa Flood

Following the attack by Hamas on Israeli targets on October 7, which resulted in the killing and wounding of many Israelis, Israel carried out a systematic bombardment of all civilians in the Gaza Strip. These developments have clearly revealed that the Western media's The approach to crises is pro-Israel. Although this biased approach, particularly in the American media, is not new, it has become more visible and understandable with the proliferation of social media, allowing millions of Arabs to share examples and videos showing this bias on social media; this situation has created great anger in Arab societies towards the US and Western countries. Furthermore, it has been observed that Western European and American media publish false and misleading information about the Palestinian issue, the destruction in Gaza, and crimes committed against civilians, thereby legitimising the most brutal ethnic cleansing and racist practices against the

Palestinian people. While world leaders watch events in Israel under the banner of "human rights," leading to the presentation of distorted news as headlines in Western and American media.

Following the Gaza War on October 7, 2023, the boycott of Western companies supporting Israel around the world demonstrated anger and solidarity with Palestinians affected by the blockade and Israeli bombardment. During this period, global brands such as McDonald's experienced a 15% drop in revenue, while in some countries, such as Egypt, consumers turned to local alternatives and showed interest in brands such as "Spero Spatis." While global public opinion has largely been empathetic towards Palestinians, it has taken a negative stance towards Israel; many countries have characterised Hamas' attacks as acts of terrorism. The United Arab Emirates and Bahrain have called for a peaceful solution with a balanced stance, while Iran and Turkey have supported Palestine and condemned Israel. Public opinion polls in the US have revealed that citizens empathise with Israelis, while also highlighting concerns about the possibility of the conflict turning into terrorist acts within the country. In Africa, most countries showed solidarity with Palestine, while some countries that normalised relations with Israel adopted a more balanced stance. Reactions in Asia varied according to religious and political affiliations, with Pakistan and Indonesia supporting Palestine, while India and Japan called for restraint. Russia and China blamed the US for blocking the Security Council from issuing a joint statement. In Europe, while the public showed empathy for Palestinians through widespread protests, governments maintained a balanced stance, emphasising respect for international law and the right to self-defence, with some countries attempting to mediate a solution to the conflict. In Latin America, the situation differed between left-leaning countries that strongly criticised Israel and countries that did not.

Expressed concern about the humanitarian situation and called for a two-state solution and a ceasefire (İnaç, 2024: 36).

With the intensification and continuation of Israel's heavy attacks, the spread of horrific images and videos of the bombardment targeting Palestinian civilians, including children, women, and the elderly, coupled with the misleading narratives of the US and the West that relentlessly support Israel, it is clear that the shift in global public opinion will be largely in favour of Palestine. This shift has begun to manifest itself, particularly with the rise of economic boycotts against organisations supporting Israel, both in Arab countries and in the West. Furthermore, protest marches have increased in Arab and European capitals, as well as in the United States,

Latin America, and Asia. Global public opinion has begun to view the reality of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict with a more flexible perspective, becoming clearer about who is the rightful owner and who is the party violating rights. Furthermore, the perspective of many Western societies towards Islam and the determination and patience of the Palestinian people have changed. This situation confirms former US President Barack Obama's statements that "global support for Israel is beginning to erode."

Arab countries need to prepare a plan to counter the narrative of Western media and develop a counter-narrative that reflects the true face of the Palestinian issue and the historical rights of the Palestinians. In line with previous religious and national frameworks, the Arab and Islamic world must unite in supporting the Palestinian people in reclaiming their land, protecting their usurped resources, defending their honour, and preventing their forced displacement and the liquidation of their cause. The continuation of deep internal Arab disagreements that existed before the start of the Gaza war and the move towards normalisation by some countries, disregarding economic and social conditions, will have negative consequences for the regional system. It is important to support regional and international political and diplomatic efforts to defend the Palestinian cause fairly and strengthen the religious and historical rights of the people. In this context, Arab countries should use economic pressure tools against Western countries, particularly the US; steps such as boycotts or withdrawal of investments can be considered. Furthermore, all Arab countries should suspend any normalisation agreements with Israel until the situation in Palestine stabilises.

3. Ways to Resolve the Palestinian Issue:

The Israeli-Palestinian issue is a complex and intricate problem that has been ongoing for a long time, involving not only regional actors but also global powers.

Since its establishment in the Middle East, Israel has occupied Palestinian territories, expanded its borders, and continued its illegal activities. Although the Palestinian people and some Arab countries have fought against Israel for many years, unfortunately, no concrete success has been achieved. Today, it is observed that both sides are further away than ever from a two-state solution. The fundamental issues that have long remained unresolved between the parties are the status of Jerusalem, the existence of a Palestinian state, Israel's Jewish identity, border demarcations, the refugee problem, and settlements. Due to the positions of Israel and Palestine, none of these issues

have been resolved, and no common understanding or approach has been developed. While both internal and external factors shape the policies of the parties, constructive contributions from international actors, particularly those who avoid taking sides politically, can ensure a healthier progress of the process (Yıldırım, 2021, p. 3872).

The Palestinian issue is a complex matter that encompasses historical, faith-based, and political dimensions; as the original owners of their land, Palestinians refuse to relinquish their lands of their own free will. The Palestinian government has made various attempts to achieve peace through a two-state solution, but no concrete success has been achieved due to Israel's violation of these agreements. This situation demonstrates that the problem is linked not only to diplomatic channels but also to the balance of power and the influence of international support. The religious and cultural significance of Palestinian lands emphasises that Palestinians have no conflict with individuals of Christian and Jewish faiths, but that the right to governance belongs solely to the Palestinians. Governance must be provided through a system that upholds justice and equality. Furthermore, Arab and Islamic countries need to unite on a common understanding and principles of justice for the resolution of the Palestinian issue, and for the Palestinian people to resolve their internal divisions. Attempts at a two-state solution with Israel have been unsuccessful, and therefore discussions generally focus on the need to return Palestinian lands to their rightful owners; this approach is considered, in many respects, to be the fundamental framework of the problem and the only valid solution.

Conclusion

It addresses the Palestinian issue not merely as a regional or ethnic-religious conflict, but as a reflection of imperialism, colonialism, injustice, and the double standards of the international system; It emphasizes that for over a century, the Palestinian people have been subjected to policies of occupation, displacement, oppression, and erasure, and that Israel's settlement and expansionist practices, along with the unconditional support of certain powers, have reinforced the continuity of the conflict. The historical roots of the problem are identified as the withdrawal of the Ottoman Empire, demographic interventions during the British Mandate period, and the establishment process in 1948; it is claimed that today's tragedies are the product of planned and systematic policies. It is also stated that not only Israel's practices but also the fragmentation, political weaknesses, and disconnected governance in the Arab and Islamic world have contributed to the deepening of the problem; it is noted that the

normalisation processes of some Arab regimes have weakened the common nature of the Palestinian cause. It is also argued that the division between Fatah and Hamas harms the national struggle and that the formation of a united national will strengthen resistance against external intervention. The silence of the international community, particularly human rights organisations, is presented as an example of double standards; it is stated that violations of universal legal principles and disregard for the rights of Palestinians point to the power-driven functioning of the global order. It is stated that two-state solution proposals are no longer considered realistic due to the expansion of settlements, unilateral changes in the status of Jerusalem, and the denial of the right of return for refugees. Consequently, it puts forward the view that Palestinian lands must be returned to their rightful owners and that the right of Palestinians to self-determination is an inalienable right under international law and human rights; this right must be protected through political negotiations, together with the unity and determination of the people and the mobilisation of global conscience. Furthermore, due to the symbolic importance of Jerusalem and Al-Aqsa Mosque, it argues that the issue should be considered a shared responsibility not only of the Palestinians but of the entire Islamic ummah, and that a lasting solution is only possible through ending the occupation, eliminating oppression, and fully restoring all the rights of the Palestinian people.

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Chapter **3**

The Dynamics of Turkish-Arab Relations Between Stability and Interaction

Soufiane Dassi[1]

Abstract

Turkish-Arab relations have undergone significant transformations in recent decades, influenced by regional and international geopolitical changes. These relations began with cooperative tendencies in the post-Cold War period, then experienced tensions during the Arab Spring, only to return to partial normalization in recent years. This research paper examines the evolution of these relations, focusing on influential geopolitical factors, such as regional conflicts, competition for influence, and the role of international powers. The study also discusses the future of Turkish-Arab relations in light of current changes.

Introduction

Turkish-Arab relations are among the most complex alliances in the Middle East and North Africa, influenced by shared history, geopolitics, and economic and security interests. After the decline of the Ottoman Empire, relations were characterized by relative lukewarmness until the beginning of the twenty-first century. Turkish-Arab relations have undergone major transformations in recent decades, influenced by regional and international geopolitical changes. These relations began with cooperative tendencies in the post-Cold War period, when Turkey began adopting a more active foreign policy under the rule of the Justice and Development Party (AKP). This fundamental shift occurred in the third decade of the twenty-first century, transitioning from a state of near-complete estrangement due to geopolitical shifts resulting from the Arab Spring and a series of Arab crises in Syria, Libya, and Yemen, as well as competition with some Arab countries (such as Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE), to significant tensions, with a marked

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1   Assistant professor Class A Faculty Of Law and Political Science,Ibn Khaldoun University,Tiaret,(Algeria) Soufiane.dassi@univ-tiaret.dz

transition to a conciliatory path since 2020. This transformation is evident in several indicators, such as the exchange of official visits at the highest levels, the signing of strategic economic agreements, and the reshaping of security alliances. This shift calls for careful academic study in light of the growing importance of... The region is geopolitically significant, which lends the study importance in seeking to understand these new dynamics through a multi-level critical analysis, relying on a set of data and an integrated framework to explain this strategic shift in three key areas: highlighting the gains achieved from the relationship, revealing the decline of tension, and laying the foundations for rapprochement and rebalancing.

Based on this, the academic importance of the topic is highlighted by the scarcity of studies that combine geopolitical analysis with the economic-security dimension of Turkish-Arab relations, in addition to the political aspect in understanding the implications of these relations for regional stability, from three main perspectives:

- Theoretical perspective: seeks to develop analytical models of regional relations by combining the traditional geopolitical perspective (as reflected in the concepts of Halford Mackinder and Nicholas Spykman) with multi-level systems analysis, opening up new horizons for understanding these relations.

- Political perspective: aims to uncover the strategic shifts among emerging regional powers in light of the move toward a more multipolar world, enabling more accurate policy analysis.

- The prospective perspective: Provides a framework that helps anticipate the trajectories of these relations, taking into account major future challenges, such as energy crises, climate change, and identity conflicts.

From this perspective, the study reveals the research gap in most previous studies, which focused on a single dimension represented by the Turkish role in Syria (security) or economic relations with the Arabian Gulf, without a comprehensive vision that links internal factors such as the lira crisis, the Turkish elections, the rise of nationalism, and external factors such as the Ukraine war, the US withdrawal from the region, and Arab-Israeli normalization.

This research seeks to bridge this gap through an integrated analysis that links the local, regional, and international levels, relying in this regard on a set of research tools upon which the study is based in analyzing Arab-Turkish relations in light of current geopolitical transformations. It adopts a complex analytical theoretical framework that combines the theory of geopolitical

realism, which focuses on national interests and the balance of power, and the theory of interdependence by Keohane and Nye, which provides tools for analyzing the intertwining of economic and security interests, as no party can achieve its strategic goals in isolation from the other, and the theory of power transfer by Zarakol, which explains the shift in politics from a position of challenge to the search for regional partnerships, in light of the changing global balance of power, which Turkey embodied. In addition, the analysis is coupled with the adoption of the regional systems theory by Buzan and Wæver, to view Turkey and the Arab countries as active units in an interconnected regional system. There is also the interaction of the central powers (Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Egypt) with the semi-peripheral powers, and the role of cultural and security factors in shaping the regional structure. This leads us to resort to the approach Wendt's social constructivism explains the formation of shared identities across interactions, demonstrating the role of political discourse in shaping mutual perceptions, as well as the influence of cultural and religious factors on this process.

Arab-Turkish relations present a complex model of regional interaction in the twenty-first century, where fixed geographical factors intersect with changing power dynamics, and ideologies clash with calculations of national interests. Since the beginning of the new millennium, these relations have undergone sharp transformations, ranging from strategic alliances to periods of temporary estrangement, to phases of reconciliation. This reflects a deeper geopolitical competition for influence and the reshaping of regional roles. The fundamental problem of this study is to explore :

How have geopolitical transformations reshaped the strategic map of Turkish-Arab relations, and what are the implications of this transformation for the struggle over regional security architecture?

The study is based on a basic premise: geopolitical transformations in the regional system have reshaped Turkish-Arab relations through a three-dimensional interaction: competition for regional leadership, shifting alliances, and redefining security concepts. These transformations have created new balances in the struggle over regional security architecture, with Turkey becoming a central player in the power equation. This has led to shifts in Arab polarizations and alliances toward it, ranging from cooperation to competition, according to the interests of each party and the interventions of international powers.

Methodologically, the study adopts a multi-level approach that includes:

- Geostrategic analysis: to identify geographical constants and their long-term impact on bilateral relations.

- Regional systems analysis: to understand the dynamics of interaction between various actors on the scene.

- Historical comparison: to trace the transformations over time from the Ottoman era to the rise of the "New Turkish Republic." The basic structure of geopolitical relations between the parties is based on geographical constants and their influential role in shaping interactions between Turkey and the Arab states.

In this context, the duality of constants and variables becomes evident as a fundamental framework for analysis. On the level of constants, geography emerges as a decisive factor that cannot be ignored. Turkey enjoys an exceptional geographical location that connects continents and grants it control over vital waterways such as the Bosphorus Strait. On the other hand, Arab states possess a rich supply of energy resources and strategic coastlines that enhance their tools of regional influence and power. On the level of variables, the political transformations that followed the Arab uprisings in 2011 contributed to reshaping the region's geopolitical landscape. This phase witnessed Turkey's shift from a "zero problems" policy to a more interventionist approach, represented by its direct military interventions in Syria, Libya, and Iraq. Conversely, the Arab arena witnessed clear divisions between two main axes: the first led by Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Egypt, and the second uniting Qatar and Turkey in an opposing alliance.

Axis One: The Structure of Turkish-Arab Relations Between Geographical Constants and Geopolitical Variables:

First: Dynamics in Turkish-Arab Relations Between Stability and Interaction (2002-2025):

Turkish-Arab relations represent a complex model of regional interactions, combining elements of historical stability with remarkable flexibility in the face of regional and international transformations. To understand these dynamics, one can rely on a realist perspective on international relations, adding structural dimensions that highlight the influential identity and cultural factors. Theoretically, the dynamics of international relations reflect the state of continuous interaction between international actors, where internal and external factors contribute together to shaping these interactions (Waltz, 1979). Given the Turkish-Arab context, the scene appears to be governed by a clear tension between two main elements: the first is the existence of Turkish strategic constants toward the Arab world,

and the second is reflected in the high flexibility that allows for adaptation to regional and international variables.

This delicate balance between continuity and transformation makes studying these relations of great value, both academically and practically. (Davutoğlu, 2001)

Regarding the factors of stability in Turkish-Arab relations, several deeply rooted geopolitical and identity factors stand out. Since the Justice and Development Party (AKP) came to power in 2002, Turkey has pursued a clear strategy to consolidate its influence in the Arab region. This strategy has been embodied in a set of policies, most notably dam projects on the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, which have directly impacted its relations with Iraq and Syria (Aras, 2020). Furthermore, the identity dimension has remained a key component of its strategy, as Ankara has relied on historical symbols of the Ottoman Empire and political Islam to justify its regional policies (Tuğal, 2016).

In terms of interaction and change, Turkish policy has undergone radical changes as a result of the influence of internal and external factors. Internally, recurring economic crises, most notably the 2018 currency crisis and its continuing repercussions until 2023, played a decisive role in shifting Turkish priorities. This situation prompted Ankara to review its policies, as reflected in its reconciliation efforts with Saudi Arabia and the UAE with the aim of attracting Gulf investments (Reuters, 2023). Regionally, the events of the Arab Spring in 2011 represented a turning point, as Turkey shifted from focusing on economic cooperation to pursuing more interventionist policies, particularly in the Syrian and Libyan crises (Bank & Karadag, 2019).

A structural analysis of this relationship provides a deeper understanding of the balance between factors of stability and transformation. On the one hand, Turkey demonstrates a capacity to reshape its strategic principles with new, sophisticated tools, ranging from reliance on soft power to direct military interventions and arms exports. On the other hand, Ankara possesses a high degree of flexibility to adapt to regional changes while maintaining its core strategic objectives, as evidenced by its policies on energy issues in the Eastern Mediterranean (Öniş & Yılmaz, 2016).

Accordingly, Turkish policy toward the Arab world can be considered a model of "hybrid dynamics," combining continuity in long-term strategic goals with flexibility in the tools used to achieve them. This dynamic explains the paradoxes that sometimes appear in Turkish policy, such as its ability to support political Islamist movements on the one hand, and cooperate with

secular regional regimes on the other (Hinnebusch, 2022). This interaction remains a fertile area for future research, especially with the ongoing major regional transformations and shifting international balances of power.

Second - Geographical Constants and Geopolitical Variables in Turkish-Arab Relations:

Turkey is a prominent example on the global geopolitical map, located at a strategic point that connects the three major continents: Europe, Asia, and Africa. This geographical location has given it significant historical roles that have made it the focus of attention of major powers, from the Roman Empire, through the Ottoman Empire, to its current role within NATO. From a geopolitical perspective, Anatolia is considered the "heart of the world," based on the theory of Halford Mackinder (1904), as it controls land and sea trade routes between East and West. With recent transformations, Turkey's importance has increased as a strategic partner for the European Union, on the one hand, and as a distinct gateway to the Middle East, on the other. For example, Europe relies heavily on Turkey to manage migration and energy security issues, as Turkish territory represents a transit point for approximately 70% of European natural gas imports from Russia and Azerbaijan (IEA, 2022). However, this strategic location poses dual challenges. It makes Turkey a pivotal player seeking to be a bridge between East and West, while simultaneously facing conflicting pressures and demands from both sides, impacting its relations with neighboring Arab countries. In contrast, the Arab world is characterized by its geographic and demographic depth, extending from the Atlantic Ocean to the Arabian Gulf. It boasts vast natural resources (constituting 48% of the world's oil reserves) and a human resource estimated at approximately 430 million people. This geographic expanse and human capabilities create multiple entry points for interaction with Turkey, reflected in complex dynamics across several regions:

- The Gulf region: The Gulf states are an important source of investment for the Turkish economy, but they are also a theater for intense competition for influence. This competition has escalated, particularly after Ankara's support for the Muslim Brotherhood, which both Saudi Arabia and the UAE view as a threat to their security (Ulrichsen, 2020).

- The non-Gulf Middle East: In Syria and Iraq, there is growing competition between Turkey and Iran for influence. Furthermore, Egypt is a regional power opposing Turkish ambitions in the Eastern Mediterranean.

- The Maghreb: Relations between Turkey and North African countries are reflected in a mixed pattern of cooperation and competition. For example,

Türkiye cooperates with Algeria in the fields of energy and defense, while simultaneously engaging in a state of competition. with Morocco due to its support for the Polisario Front in the Western Sahara issue (Zoubir, 2022). These interactions indicate the complex nature of Turkish-Arab relations, which oscillate between shared interests and strategic conflicts.

The shared geography between the Arab world and Turkey is linked by strategic geopolitical characteristics, primarily centered on waterways that are vital levers of pressure. This region controls some of the world's most important maritime passageways:

- The Bosphorus Strait: A vital trade artery for Russia and Ukraine, with approximately 3 million barrels of oil passing through daily. Turkey exploited this leverage during the Ukrainian war by implementing the 1936 Montreux Convention, preventing Russian warships from passing through (Erşen & Köstem, 2022).

- The Suez Canal: The canal accounts for 12% of global trade, and the 2021 Ever Given crisis underscores its strategic importance. In this context, Turkish-Egyptian competition is evident through alternative projects such as the proposed Istanbul Canal.

- The Strait of Hormuz: Control over this waterway is divided between Iran and some Arab countries. However, Turkey seeks to strengthen its presence in the region through partnerships and alliances with Oman and Qatar, where it operates a military base (Calabrese, 2021).

These geographical features highlight an ongoing geopolitical paradox. On the one hand, geography offers potential for regional cooperation, such as enhanced economic integration in the energy sector. On the other hand, it deepens divisions due to conflicting security priorities among regional players. For example, Turkey's control of the Bosphorus represents a direct threat to the interests of Russia, an ally of Iran and Saudi Arabia. Conversely, the Arabs' use of the Strait of Hormuz gives them geopolitical leverage vis-à-vis Turkey, while grand initiatives such as Turkey's "Strategic Depth" project (led by Ahmet Davutoğlu) clash with the US-backed Arab vision for a reshaped Middle East. Despite challenges that are diminishing the importance of traditional geography with the emergence of technologies such as long-range weapons and cybersecurity, ongoing crises—such as the 2019 Gulf tanker incident—demonstrate that geography remains a pivotal element in shaping regional and international politics.

Third: Geopolitical Changes and Their Impact on Turkish-Arab Relations:

1- Transformations in Turkish Foreign Policy with the Rise of the Justice and Development Party (2002):

The Justice and Development Party's rise to power in Turkey in 2002 represented a pivotal turning point in the country's foreign policy trajectory, as policy witnessed fundamental changes in visions, tools, and objectives. These transformations can be analyzed through three interconnected levels: intellectual and ideological, geopolitical and regional, and practical and applied. On the intellectual and ideological level, the party's rise was the culmination of profound internal transformations in Turkey. The party adopted a new vision that blended political Islam with economic liberalism (Yavuz, 2003). This approach is entirely different from the traditional Kemalist principles that relied on strict secularism and engagement with the West. The party presented a "neo-Ottoman" framework, recognizing Islamic identity within the drive toward modernization. This shift was not limited to rhetoric (Davutoğlu, 2001), but also laid a new foundation for Turkish foreign policy. At the geopolitical and regional level, the party redefined Turkey's role in its regional environment. It adopted a new concept of strategic depth and focused on strengthening Turkish influence in areas previously under the control of the Ottoman Empire (Aras, 2020). This was clearly evident in the "zero problems with neighbors" policy, but it faced major challenges as the regional reality became more complex, especially after the Arab Spring in 2011. Turkey transformed from a regional mediator to a key player in numerous crises, such as Syria and Libya, revealing the contradiction between its ambitions. The large geographic and political constraints surrounding it. (Öniş & Yılmaz, 2016)

On the practical and applied level, Turkey has abandoned its unilateral reliance on traditional diplomacy to adopt a multidimensional foreign policy. Its tools have expanded to include soft tools such as soft power strategies (Tür, 2011), along with direct military interventions when necessary. Regional alliances have also changed, with Turkey growing closer to Qatar while its relations with Egypt and Saudi Arabia have become strained following the Arab Spring. However, these alliances were not permanent (Hinnebusch, 2022). Rather, they were influenced by regional changes and Turkey's emerging interests, as evidenced by the recent reconciliation with Saudi Arabia and the UAE.

These transformations have contributed to strengthening Turkey's regional and international standing, making it an important player in many

regional issues. However, these policies have raised tensions with its Western allies, particularly regarding human rights issues and its intertwined relations with Russia (Taşpınar, 2022).

These contradictions reflect the challenges facing Turkey. Turkish foreign policy faces a dilemma between its Islamic and regional aspirations and its affiliation with the Western order. The transformations that have occurred in Turkish foreign policy since 2002 can be considered a unique current study in international relations. They confirm the pivotal role of ideology in shaping foreign policy, but they also reveal the limits of this influence when it collides with geographic, political, and economic realities. Although Turkey has successfully transitioned from an isolated state to an effective regional player, this success has been accompanied by significant challenges, and the future of this policy remains open to many possible scenarios.

2- Shifts in the Map of Alliances after 2011 and the Reshaping of the Regional Landscape:

After 2011, the region witnessed radical shifts in the map of alliances and a profound transformation in the regional landscape, driven by the events of the Arab Spring and the subsequent political and security changes. This year represented a geopolitical earthquake in the Middle East, leading to the reshaping of traditional alliances based on new foundations and conflicting ideologies. In the first axis, we find that regional relations witnessed sharp differences, as Turkey shifted from the position of a neutral mediator to a direct and influential player in regional conflicts (Tüysüzoğlu, 2021). This shift was accompanied by a strategic shift in the policies of Arab countries, which were divided into two main camps. The first, led by countries such as Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Egypt, seeks to counter Turkish and Iranian influence. The second is represented by an axis comprising Turkey, Qatar, and political Islam movements. This change was not merely a tactical adjustment; rather, it ushered in a new era based on an ideological struggle between political Islam and traditional conservatism, alongside the complexities of various national interests. (Dalay, 2022).

2-1 The Rise of Non-State Powers and the Complexity of the Geopolitical Equation:

The civil wars and political unrest that followed the Arab uprisings after 2011 led to the emergence of a new phenomenon in the Arab world: the rise of non-state actors active in regional policymaking. This phenomenon has radically changed the rules of the traditional geopolitical game, which had been the exclusive domain of nation-states. In Libya, for example, armed

militias such as the Turkish-backed Fajr Libya and the UAE-backed Haftar's Special Forces have become major players in the conflict, transforming Libya into a proxy war arena (Wehrey, 2023). In Syria, forces such as Hayat Tahrir al-Sham and the Syrian Democratic Forces have emerged as influential players in the political equation, despite not being officially recognized by any regional parties. This new situation has created unprecedented challenges for Turkish diplomacy, as it has been forced to deal with unofficial entities to safeguard its interests, angering Arab governments who view this support as a violation of their sovereignty (Özkan, 2022).

2-2 Changing Priorities of International Powers and Implications for the Regional Balance:

With the rise of non-state actors, the rules of the geopolitical game have changed in an unprecedented manner, with actors such as armed militias and local forces redrawing the map of influence and conflict. In Libya, for example, groups such as Fajr Libya and Haftar's forces play a pivotal role, supported by countries like Turkey and the UAE. In Syria, non-state actors such as Hayat Tahrir al-Sham and the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) have added further complexity to the political and security landscape. This new rise has created an imbalance in regional countries' relations with Turkey, which is now reevaluating its policies regarding these parties. This has sparked tensions with other Arab countries, which view this relationship as a threat to their sovereignty. Internationally, we have witnessed a decline in traditional American influence amid changes in Washington's orientation over the past decade, such as its policy of "relative withdrawal" (Haass, 2021). This decline has opened the way for other powers such as Russia, which has strengthened its presence in the region following its military intervention in Syria in 2015, alongside the emergence of China as an economic player through the Belt and Road Initiative. These shifts have pushed Arab countries to oscillate between maintaining a partnership with the United States and leveraging Russian influence or cooperating with China.

All of this cast a shadow over the Turkish-Arab relationship, as this relationship became shaped according to complex balances in which local, regional, and international interests overlap (Fulton, 2022).

Studying these transformations reveals fundamental facts for understanding the nature of contemporary geopolitical dynamics:

- Flexibility of alliances: Alliances have become more flexible and susceptible to rapid change based on immediate interests. A prominent

example is the Turkish-Emirati rapprochement in 2021 after years of estrangement (Roberts, 2023).

- Multiplicity of actors and levels of conflict: Conflict is no longer limited to states alone but has also included non-state actors such as militias and local groups, increasing the complexity of crises, as is the case in Yemen, where the roles of local, regional, and international powers overlap.

- Intertwining the local, regional, and international: Internal events within states have become closely linked to broader geopolitical realities. The Syrian revolution, which began as a local movement, has transformed into a complex international and regional conflict in which Turkey plays an active role.

This new landscape reflects the changing nature of international relations in the region, where interests have become intertwined and ideologies have intersected, leading to increased complexity in both regional and global political calculations.

Axis Two: Factors Influencing the Dynamics of Turkish-Arab Relations:

First: Internal Factors Influencing Turkish-Arab Dynamics:

Internal factors are an essential part of understanding the transformations in Turkish policy toward the Arab world. Changes in political identity and internal transformations were important drivers that reshaped Turkish priorities and strategies toward its Arab surroundings. These factors can be analyzed through two interconnected levels: the transformation of political identity and the impact of internal situations and conflicts.

Regarding the transformation of Turkey's political identity, the transition from a "Western secularism" model to an "Islamic regional power" appears to be one of the most prominent structural changes that have affected Turkish politics since the Justice and Development Party (AKP) came to power in 2002. This represented a profound shift in Turkey's vision of its regional role and identity (Yavuz, 2003). The ruling elite adopted a new approach, moving away from the traditional Kemalist model, which was based on the separation of religion and state and an orientation toward the West, instead adopting a vision that blends political Islam with regional ambitions. This change was not merely a modification of political discourse; it was also reflected in concrete policies, such as intensive support for political Islamist groups in the Arab region, the revival of Ottoman symbols in official communications, and a reconsideration of Turkey's strategic priorities (Tuğal, 2016).

As a result of this shift, regional alliances were reshaped, with Turkey strengthening its relations with Qatar and political Islamist movements. However, its relations with secular Arab states such as Egypt and Saudi Arabia, however, witnessed tensions after the events of the Arab Spring. However, this transformation was neither stable nor free of contradictions. Turkey continued to maintain its strategic relations with the West and sought to join the European Union, demonstrating a degree of continuity with its traditional foreign policies (Taşpınar, 2022). At the same time, its new policy faced numerous geopolitical challenges that sometimes forced it to adopt pragmatic positions in line with the complexities of the regional reality. As for the impact of internal conflicts on the orientation of Turkish policy toward the Arab world, the political turmoil and crises within Turkey had a significant impact.

The failed coup attempt in 2016 was a pivotal point in this context (Sözen, 2020). This event led to the entrenchment of Islamic nationalism domestically and Turkey's adoption of a more assertive policy toward parties it accused of supporting the coup attempt, including some Western countries. In response, Ankara strengthened its relations with its Arab allies, such as Qatar, which played a major role in providing financial and political assistance to Turkey following the coup. The crisis also led to a shift in foreign policy approaches from a focus on diplomatic tools to a greater use of military force, evident in regional interventions in countries such as Syria and Libya.

On the economic front, recurring financial crises contributed to further changes in regional policy (Çetin & Öğütçü, 2021). With the worsening economic situation and the collapse of the Turkish lira, Ankara was forced to reconsider its alliances to enhance economic cooperation. This prompted it to improve relations with Arab countries such as the UAE and Saudi Arabia, despite previous political and ideological differences. Furthermore, the economic crises contributed to a reordering of Turkish foreign policy priorities, with economic issues becoming more prominent than ideological ones in some cases.

The complexity of Turkish policy toward the Arab world can thus be understood through the interplay of these internal factors. While the transformation of political identity has defined the basis for this policy over the long term, internal crises have served as a driving force or a brake on its direction, depending on the circumstances. This combination explains the apparent paradoxes that have characterized Turkish policy, such as its balance

between Islamic discourse and alliances with secular states, or between massive regional ambitions and domestic economic pressures.

The study indicates that domestic factors have always played a fundamental role in shaping Turkish-Arab dynamics. While identity transformation has been the general compass of Turkish policy toward the Arab world, internal conflicts and crises have contributed to a fluid and sometimes unstable character of this policy. This perspective represents a pivotal element for any future analysis of Turkish-Arab relations, especially given the ongoing economic and political challenges facing Türkiye domestically.

Second: Regional factors influencing Turkish-Arab dynamics:

Regional factors play a pivotal role in understanding the transformations that have occurred in Turkish policy toward the Arab world, as major regional changes have contributed to shaping Turkey's strategy in the Middle East. These dynamics can be analyzed through three main axes: the effects of Arab activism, regional competition for influence, and the role of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

1- The repercussions of the Arab Spring and the shift in the Turkish position:

The Arab Spring of 2011 brought about a fundamental shift in Turkish policy toward Arab countries, revealing contradictions in Turkey's vision of the region. Ankara initially welcomed democratic transitions as an opportunity to enhance its regional influence, clearly supporting the Muslim Brotherhood movements with which it shares ideological roots (Öniş & Yılmaz, 2016). This policy was particularly evident in Egypt, where Turkey provided significant political and financial support to the government of Mohamed Morsi, which later caused significant tension with the Egyptian regime following the 2013 coup (Kirişci & Kaptanoğlu, 2011). However, this alignment faced significant challenges, as political Islam failed to achieve stability or success in several Arab countries.

In Syria, the Turkish approach was more complex. Turkey sought to overthrow the regime of Bashar al-Assad, which it viewed as a direct threat to its security and regional interests. However, Ankara's efforts have encountered real obstacles, such as the lack of decisive international support to achieve this goal. (Aras, 2020) This resulted in a shift in Turkish policy toward direct military intervention through Operations Euphrates Shield and Peace Spring, which increased its involvement in the Syrian crisis and raised tensions with other regional powers such as Russia and Iran.

2- Regional Competition for Influence:

The changes brought about by the Arab Spring contributed to reshaping regional alliances, leaving Turkey in intense competition with two axes: Saudi Arabia and the UAE on one side, and Iran on the other. This competition was clearly evident in the Libyan situation, where Turkey supported the Government of National Accord, while Saudi Arabia and the UAE sided with Khalifa Haftar (Hürsoy, 2021). Tensions escalated to include a conflict over energy resources in the Eastern Mediterranean, as Turkey strengthened its negotiating position through its alliances with the Tripoli government.

In addition, Turkish competition has extended to the Horn of Africa, taking on an economic and security dimension. Ankara has competed with the UAE for influence in countries such as Somalia and Sudan, where Turkey has focused on economic investments and humanitarian aid, in addition to establishing a military base in Mogadishu to strengthen its strategic presence near the Red Sea (Özkan, 2020). However, this expansion has faced significant challenges, especially with the UAE's efforts to expand its military presence in locations such as Eritrea and Djibouti.

3- The Impact of the Arab-Israeli Conflict:

The Palestinian issue has long been a central focus of Turkish political discourse toward the Arab world. The Justice and Development Party (AKP) has used this issue to bolster its domestic credibility and position itself as an influential regional player (Türkmen, 2021). However, Turkish positions have fluctuated according to regional circumstances and national interests. For example, Turkish-Israeli partnerships in energy projects between 2016 and 2018 led to a softening of anti-Israel rhetoric. However, events such as the relocation of the US embassy to Jerusalem and the attacks on Gaza reawakened Turkey's enthusiasm for appearing as a defender of Palestine, even if support remained largely within the confines of political rhetoric, without concrete steps.

The normalization agreements between Israel and Arab countries (the Abraham Accords of 2020) also posed an additional challenge for Turkey, which suffered from isolation due to its rejection of these developments. However, Ankara has demonstrated relative flexibility; While maintaining economic and military relations with Israel despite their rhetorical differences, it sought to strengthen its relationship with Hamas to protect its influence on the Palestinian issue (Narli & Öztürk, 2022). An examination of these regional factors reveals that Turkish policy toward the Arab world is characterized by a difficult balance between its ambitious regional ambitions

and the structural challenges arising from the complexities of the surrounding environment. While Turkey attempts to present itself as a leader of the Islamic world and a defender of its causes, it finds itself forced to adapt to the new balance of power that emerged following the events of the Arab Spring. This ongoing tension between ambition and reality is a prominent feature of Turkish policy in the region and represents the fundamental challenge for understanding the trajectory of its future role in the Arab world.

Third: International Factors Influencing Turkish-Arab Dynamics:

Turkish-Arab relations represent a complex model of geopolitical interactions in the Middle East, intertwined with domestic, regional, and international factors. Since the Justice and Development Party (AKP) came to power in 2002, Turkish foreign policy has undergone a major shift from a conservative, secular Kemalist model to a more proactive foreign policy aimed at strengthening regional influence (Davutoğlu, 2013). The nature of these relations has been greatly influenced by international variables, particularly in light of the escalating competition among major powers for control and influence in the region.

1- The American Role: Between Mediation and Competition:

The United States has played a pivotal role in formulating regional alliances that have directly impacted Turkish-Arab relations. On the one hand, Washington has been keen to use Turkey as a strategic ally to counter Iranian influence, as evidenced by its early support for the "zero problems with neighbors" . (Aras, 2019). On the other hand, the absolute US support for Israel has caused tensions within the Turkish-American alliance, especially with the recurring crises related to the issues of Jerusalem and Gaza.

This tension escalated with the two countries' differing positions on the events of the Arab Spring, with Turkey supporting Islamist movements such as the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and Tunisia, while Washington adopted a more conservative stance. This Turkish position raised concerns among Washington's traditional allies in the region, especially Saudi Arabia and the UAE (Özkan & Akgün, 2018).

2- The Russian Role: Shifting Alliances and Conflicting Agendas:

Since its military intervention in Syria in 2015, Russia has become a significant player in the regional arena, creating new dynamics that have impacted Turkish-Arab relations. Turkey has found itself facing multiple challenges, competing with Moscow in Syria and Libya while simultaneously

relying on it economically and militarily, such as purchasing the S-400 air defense system (Trenin, 2021).

In the Arab context, Russia's rapprochement with countries such as Egypt and Saudi Arabia has complicated Turkish calculations. Moscow has relied on economic and military partnerships to bolster its influence in the Arab world, while Ankara has sought to balance its relations with Qatar and Libya (Allison, 2022). The features of this competition were clearly evident in the gas crisis in the Eastern Mediterranean, where Russia supported the Greek and Cypriot positions against Turkish demands.

3- The European Union: Between Integration and Confrontation:

The relationship with the European Union is an influential factor in shaping Turkish policy toward the Arab world. On the one hand, disagreements over human rights and democracy have caused a marked estrangement between Ankara and European powers, prompting Turkey to strengthen its alliances with Middle Eastern countries (Tocci, 2020). On the other hand, the European Union has exploited the Syrian refugee issue as a tool of pressure on Turkey, creating additional dynamics that have impacted its relations with Arab countries.

This reality has been reflected in the positions of Arab capitals toward Turkish policy. Some consider this approach an attempt by Ankara to exploit the refugee card to achieve political gains, while some countries, such as Libya and Syria, have taken advantage of Turkish-European conflicts to improve their negotiating positions (Fakhoury, 2021).

4- China, the Emerging Player in the Regional Equation:

China has emerged as a new influencer in Turkish-Arab relations through the Belt and Road Initiative, which aims to enhance economic and infrastructure cooperation in the region. China has exploited the relative US withdrawal from the Middle East to strengthen its presence, while simultaneously opening up to both Turkey and the Arab world (Scobell & Nader, 2021).

However, the issue of Muslim minorities, particularly the Uyghur issue, has cast a shadow over relations between Ankara and Beijing. Turkey has been more daring than several Arab countries in raising the Uyghur issue, negatively impacting its regional alliances and creating new tensions in its relations with China (Clarke, 2022). Analyses indicate that international factors will continue to play a decisive role in shaping the future of Turkish-Arab relations. While Turkey seeks to enhance its strategic independence by building flexible, multi-faceted partnerships, it faces significant difficulties

in achieving a delicate balance between its interests with global powers and its regional standing. Ankara's ability to maneuver diplomatically among various international powers will remain key to the success of its foreign policy within the Arab world.

Third Axis: Analysis of Interactions and Responses in Turkish-Arab Relations:

First: The Pivotal Regional Interactions of Turkish-Arab

1- The Gulf- Relations: Turkish Axis: Shifts in Alliances and Regional Rivalry:

1-1 The Saudi-Turkish Rivalry for Regional Leadership (2017-2021) The Struggle for Regional Hegemony:

This witnessed an unprecedented escalation, revealing a sharp struggle for regional leadership. The Khashoggi crisis emerged in 2018 as one of the most prominent flashpoints, along with Saudi economic measures such as the boycott of Turkish goods and increased investment pressure, which resulted in significant trade losses for Turkey (Hürriyet Daily News, 2019). On the geopolitical side, the rivalry took various forms in Yemen, where each side supported a different party, as well as differing visions regarding the future of the Syrian regime (Barany, 2021). These differences reflected a broader struggle between two models of regional leadership: Turkey's approach based on political Islam and populism, versus the Saudi model, which relies on traditional legitimacy and its Western relations. Document (Yegin, 2022).

1-2 The Qatari-Turkish rapprochement as a counter-alliance: An alliance of strategic necessity:

It was a strategic response to the Gulf blockade imposed on Qatar between 2017 and 2021. The relationship between the two countries transformed into a comprehensive strategic partnership, both through economic support and military cooperation, represented by the Turkish base in Qatar (Roberts, 2020). This alliance formed part of a shared vision to support Islamist political movements and oppose the Saudi-Emirati alliance (Reuters, 2021). However, this rapprochement was not without internal criticism in both Ankara and Doha, reflecting the complexities of the relationship despite its strategic importance (Ulrichsen, 2022).

1-3 Gradual Normalization with the UAE (2021-2023): Interests Above Ideology:

Its trajectory gradually shifted between 2021 and 2023 from a clash to a carefully calculated normalization. This normalization came as a result of a pragmatic vision of shared interests, including massive Emirati investments in Turkey and a shared interest in issues such as containing Iranian influence and promoting stability in Libya (Bloomberg, 2022). However, this shift remained limited by deep disagreements, most notably the Libyan and Egyptian issues (Katz, 2023), where the two sides stand on opposing sides. These dynamics reveal a set of key facts: (Yesiltas & Kusku, 2023).

- Regional alliances are no longer based on fixed ideologies; rather, they have become flexible, adapting to geopolitical and economic changes.

- The tools of conflict have evolved to include indirect means such as proxy wars and economic conflicts instead of direct military confrontations.

- International powers, especially the United States, played a prominent role in calming regional tensions in order to unify the Gulf front against Iranian and Chinese challenges. These facts reveal that alliances and conflicts in the region are subject to continuous transformations, reflecting the depth of the intertwined interests between regional and international players.

2- The Egyptian-Turkish Axis: The Regional Struggle for Influence on Three Strategic Fronts:

2-1 The Struggle for Influence in the Eastern Mediterranean: The Battle for Energy and Maritime Borders:

The Eastern Mediterranean has become a key arena for confrontation between Egypt and Turkey, as a result of the major natural gas discoveries since 2018. Tensions escalated after Egypt signed maritime border demarcation agreements with Cyprus and Greece, which Turkey viewed as an infringement of its rights in the Exclusive Economic Zone. In response, Turkey signed a memorandum of understanding in 2019 with the Libyan Government of National Accord to demarcate new borders, leading to a tangle of disputed areas (Tanchum, 2021). The conflict intensified when Turkey began gas exploration in areas that Egypt considers to be within its economic zone. This conflict extends to various levels:

- The economic level: The Eastern Mediterranean's gas reserves are estimated at approximately 3.5 trillion cubic meters, which could alter the regional energy balance (EIA, 2022).

- The legal level: This concerns the interpretation of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, which Turkey is not a signatory to. - Geopolitical level: This is represented by a broader competition between the axes of regional alliances.

This led to the formation of the "East Mediterranean Gas Forum" in 2019, with the participation of Egypt, Cyprus, Greece, and Israel, in an attempt to exclude Turkey, while Turkey sought to strengthen its relations with Libya and Qatar (Nakhle, 2023).

2-2 Competition over Libya: A Proxy War and the Reshaping of Influence:

In a proxy war and the reshaping of influence in Libya, Egypt supported Field Marshal Khalifa Haftar and the Libyan National Army, while Turkey supported the internationally recognized Government of National Accord. The conflict took on a direct military character, with Turkey sending thousands of Syrian fighters and military advisors to Libya, and Egypt providing intelligence and logistical support to Haftar. (Wehrey, 2023) Libya is of strategic importance to both countries:

- For Egypt: Libya is considered a vital national security area due to its long shared border.

- For Turkey: Libya is a gateway to Africa and a gateway to strengthening its regional influence. (Pamir, 2022)

This conflict has contributed to dangerous demographic shifts in Libya and exacerbated regional divisions, with Russia and the UAE siding with Egypt, and Turkey with the support of Qatar and Italy. (UNSC, 2021)

2-3 The Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam Crisis: Water Conflict and Regional Influence:

The Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam crisis represents a complex challenge in Egyptian-Turkish relations, as Turkey has supported Ethiopia in the face of Egypt's position, which views the dam as a threat to the Nile's water resources.

- Diplomatic level: Egypt has strengthened its alliances with Sudan, while Turkey has strengthened its relations with Ethiopia. (Vidal, 2022)

- Military level: The actions have included joint military exercises between Egypt and Sudan, and Türkiye has supplied Ethiopia with drones. (Bayraktar TB2 (International Crisis Group, 2023).

- Legal level: Egypt insists on historic Nile water agreements, while Turkey supports Ethiopia's right to development.

The three fronts of the conflict between the Egyptian and Turkish axis reveal several fundamental facts: (Turhan & Kibaroglu, 2023).

- Diversity of conflict tools: The competition between Egypt and Turkey is no longer limited to military or political spheres, but has expanded to include other areas such as energy, water, economics, and international law.

- Intertwining local and regional levels: Internal crises, such as the Libyan civil war, overlap with larger regional conflicts.

- The influence of international powers: The intervention of the United States and Europe is clearly evident in crises such as the Eastern Mediterranean and Libya, while Russia and China exploit this tension to strengthen their presence and influence in the region.

3- The Maghreb-Turkey Axis: Divergent Alliances Amid Regional Conflicts

3-1 The Strategic Partnership with Algeria: Between Energy and Security Alliances

Turkish-Algerian relations represent a unique model of strategic alliance in the Maghreb region, extending beyond traditional economic cooperation to encompass a multifaceted security and military partnership. In recent years, these relations have witnessed remarkable development, with Algeria becoming Turkey's second-largest trading partner in Africa, with a trade volume of $5.3 billion in 2022 (Turkish Statistical Institute, 2023). On the military front, Algeria has strengthened cooperation through a $500 million contract to purchase Turkish Bayraktar TB2 drones, in addition to projects related to defense manufacturing (Berkay, 2023). This alliance is based on three main axes:

- Energy integration: Algeria is a major supplier of natural gas to Turkey, importing approximately 4.5 billion cubic meters annually, covering 10% of its needs (IEA, 2022).

- Political rapprochement: The two countries share an anti-colonial discourse, particularly in the face of France's traditional influence in the region.

- Security coordination: Cooperation includes counterterrorism and border control, particularly given the ongoing threats posed by armed groups active in the Sahel. However, this partnership faces internal challenges, such

as fears in some Algerian circles of "subservience to Turkey," while some in Turkey express concern about strengthening ties with a country experiencing economic crises (Zoubir, 2023).

3-2 Volatile tensions with Morocco over Western Sahara:

Turkish-Moroccan relations are characterized by intermittent tensions and constant ups and downs, particularly regarding the Western Sahara issue. Since Türkiye's recognition of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic in 2020, relations have entered a diplomatic crisis, leading Morocco to withdraw its ambassador from Ankara (Middle East Eye, 2021). This tension has been reflected in several areas:

- Turkish support for the Polisario Front, which has included providing humanitarian aid and organizing training for cadres in the Tindouf camps (ICG, 2022).

- The Moroccan-Israeli alliance: In response to Turkish rapprochement with Qatar, Morocco signed a normalization agreement with Israel in 2020 with American support.

- The media war: The media war between the two countries has intensified, with Turkish outlets accusing Morocco of "following Western policies," while Moroccan media describe Turkish tendencies as "expansionist."

However, these tensions have not affected economic cooperation between the two countries, with trade volume reaching approximately $3.8 billion in 2022. Turkish companies have continued their activity in Morocco, implementing major projects such as the construction of ports and highways (Ahram Online, 2023).

3-3 The Turkish Role in the Libyan Crisis and Geopolitical Intervention:

Libya represents the most vocal and strategic arena for Turkey's actions in the Maghreb region, where it has become a pivotal tool for strengthening relations. Ankara's regional influence spans multiple levels:

- Military: By sending approximately 5,000 Syrian fighters and 350 Turkish military advisors to Libya (UN Panel of Experts, 2022).

- Economic: By controlling Libyan reconstruction contracts, worth up to $15 billion, particularly in the areas of infrastructure and communications (Daily Sabah, 2023).

- Political: By supporting the Government of National Unity in Tripoli, Ankara has gained a vital position in North Africa.

However, this intervention has sparked a wave of sharp reactions regionally:

- In Algeria, the Turkish presence is viewed as a threat to its strategic interests in the region.

- In Egypt, it is considered a violation of its vital space and national security.

- In the European Union, it is criticized as a form of "foreign interference" in Libyan affairs.

These interactions between the Maghreb and Turkish axis reveal several strategic dimensions:

- The diversity of Turkish roles: ranging from its economic partnership with Morocco to its strategic alliance with Algeria, from its role as an influential regional player in Libya to its support for some separatist movements in the Sahara.

- The struggle for influence with traditional powers: The Turkish project directly conflicts with French interests in the Maghreb, especially in light of France's loss of influence in regions such as Mali and Burkina Faso.

- Reshaping internal balances: The Turkish presence contributes to reshaping internal alliances within the Maghreb countries, as evidenced by Algeria's support for the Turkish position in Libya, in contrast to Morocco's opposing position.

Second - Geostrategic Dynamics in Turkish-Arab Relations:

1- The Struggle for Influence in the Arab Levant:

The Arab Levant is witnessing profound geostrategic transformations as a result of interactions between regional and international powers, with various interests vying for influence in a strategically important region stretching from Iraq to Syria and Lebanon. Syria is a clear example of this struggle, having become an arena for regional rivalry and limited coordination between major powers, particularly Russia and the United States, despite the persistence of major tensions. After more than a decade of civil war, Damascus has fallen under the influence of Russia and Iran, while the United States maintains a military presence in the northeast to ensure the protection of its Kurdish allies and prevent the resurgence of the Islamic State (Al-Abadi, 2023). However, the Astana and Sochi talks have demonstrated the potential for building a fragile consensus between

Moscow, Ankara, and Tehran, despite the ongoing competition over the future political and security landscape of Syria.

In northern Iraq, the growing Turkish presence raises questions about Baghdad's sovereignty and internal stability. Ankara is using its military campaigns against the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) as a pretext to expand its influence in areas such as Kirkuk and Nineveh, exploiting the disputes between the central government and the Kurdistan Regional Government (Ozturk, 2022). This intervention not only deepens internal divisions within Iraq but also complicates relations between Iraq and Turkey, especially given Ankara's water and energy projects.

Sectarian balances play a pivotal role in shaping regional alliances, with Sunni-Shiite divisions being exploited to advance geopolitical interests. While Iran relies on networks of Shiite militias in Iraq and Syria to gain influence, countries like Saudi Arabia counterbalance this influence by supporting Sunni groups or strengthening their ties with tribes (Al-Hamid, 2021). However, these polarizations appear to be fluid, as recently reflected in the rapprochement between Riyadh and Tehran, indicating the potential for shifts in the dynamics of regional alliances. The dynamics of influence in the Arab Levant represent a complex landscape in which the local and international are intertwined, and domestic agendas interact with global strategies. Despite some efforts toward coordination, the region remains a hotbed of fluid and unstable conflict, constantly shaped by shifting alliances and conflicting interests.

2- The Horn of Africa Crises:

Turkish-Arab relations are undergoing fundamental changes within the context of competition over the Horn of Africa, which has become a new arena for conflict and influence between Ankara and a number of prominent Arab capitals. This region is of particular importance to Turkey due to its geographical location linking the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean, making it a pivotal gateway for international trade and the realization of regional ambitions (Ozkan, 2023). Conversely, Arab countries, particularly the Gulf states, recognize the region's importance in safeguarding their national security and ensuring the continuity of energy flows. This has led to an escalation in competition with Turkey's expansionist policies.

2-1 Turkish-Arab Rivalry in the Horn of Africa:

This competition is evident in several key areas. Economically, Türkiye has invested heavily in developing infrastructure in Somalia, including rehabilitating Mogadishu's airport and port. In contrast, Arab countries such

as the UAE and Saudi Arabia have focused on strengthening their influence in Djibouti and Eritrea (Al-Omari, 2022). Politically, Turkey supports the Somali federal government, while some Arab countries cooperate with regional states such as Somaliland and Puntland, deepening internal divisions and further complicating the political landscape.

Militarily, this rivalry is becoming more dangerous with Turkey establishing its largest military base outside its borders in Mogadishu, while the UAE supports private military formations in Somaliland. This military deployment reflects power struggles and differing visions of the future of regional security. This, (Jalabi, 2023), negatively impacts the internal stability of African countries, which sometimes become an arena for larger external conflicts.

2-2 Military Bases in Somalia: A Hotbed of Turkish-Arab Tension

The military presence in Somalia represents one of the most prominent manifestations of tension between Turkey and Arab countries. The Turkish base in Mogadishu, which houses thousands of soldiers under the pretext of training Somali forces, actually aims to strengthen Ankara's influence in the region (Abdul Rahman, 2023). On the other hand, the UAE has a military presence in Berbera, Somaliland, while Saudi Arabia maintains close security cooperation with Djibouti.

This military deployment contributes to fueling internal divisions within Somalia between the central government and rebellious regions. Regionally, it reflects the intensification of competition between the Turkish and Arab axes; these bases could become sites of direct confrontation if proxy conflicts escalate (Mohammed, 2022).

2-3 Red Sea Security: Between Turkish-Arab Cooperation and Competition:

The Red Sea represents another arena for the complex interplay of Turkish and Arab interests. Despite the apparent shared need for all parties to secure vital maritime routes to counter piracy and growing terrorist threats (Al-Khalidi, 2023), limited cooperation stems from competition for influence.

Turkey is attempting to strengthen its presence through alliances such as its partnership with Qatar and its support for the Yemeni government in Sana'a. In contrast, Saudi Arabia is leading an Arab coalition to support the internationally recognized Yemeni government. This division in positions has hampered any joint efforts to address common security challenges. In addition, competing economic projects, such as Turkish ports in Sudan and

Emirati ports in Eritrea, have contributed to increasing the estrangement between the two sides (Bakr, 2023).

The crises in the Horn of Africa reflect the complexity of Turkish-Arab relations due to their unstable nature. Despite common interests, such as securing the Red Sea, competition for influence remains the decisive factor influencing the region's dynamics. Given this reality, the various parties need to find mechanisms for dialogue that prevent competition from escalating into direct conflict, while emphasizing the importance of supporting the stability of African countries affected by conflict. Therefore, the future of Turkish-Arab relations will depend on their ability to achieve a balance between their strategic interests and their contribution to comprehensive regional security.

3- Regional Energy Policies and Geopolitical Changes in a Changing World:

3-1 The Eastern Mediterranean Conflict over Gas, Influence, and Wealth:

The Eastern Mediterranean region has become an arena for strategic competition between regional and international powers thanks to the major natural gas discoveries of recent decades. Countries such as Egypt, Cyprus, and Israel possess vast gas reserves, making the region a focus of attention for international companies and major powers (Mitchell, 2022). However, this energy wealth has not come without challenges, as disputes over maritime border demarcation are on the rise, particularly between Turkey on the one hand and Greece and Cyprus on the other. Turkey refuses to recognize maritime border agreements signed by other countries and insists on its rights in areas such as the Black Sea and the Eastern Mediterranean (Özel, 2023).

The competition is not limited to the legal aspect only; it extends to the potential for military conflict. The region has witnessed repeated tensions, including joint naval maneuvers between competing countries and threats to cut off supply lines. In addition, the entry of international players such as the United States and Russia has further complicated the situation, as each seeks to enhance its influence by supporting its allies in the region (Finer, 2023). In this context, the Eastern Mediterranean represents a model of geopolitical conflict in the twenty-first century, where energy resources intertwine with regional conflicts and global strategies.

3-2 Alternative Energy Pipelines and Reshaping the Flow Map:

In light of the competition for Eastern Mediterranean resources, countries are seeking to develop alternative pipelines to secure their supplies and reduce reliance on traditional routes. The EastMed project is one of the most prominent of these efforts, aiming to connect Israeli and Cypriot gas fields to Europe via Greece (Christopher, 2022). However, the project faces significant technical and political challenges, including disputes over financing and environmental concerns, in addition to Turkish opposition, which views it as a threat to its interests. On the other hand, Turkey is promoting its own projects, such as the "Turkish Stream," which transports Russian gas to Europe through its territory. It is also promoting the idea of constructing a pipeline linking Eastern Mediterranean fields to Europe through its territory, a move opposed by Greece and Cyprus (Erdogan, 2023). In light of this competition, other options are emerging, such as liquefaction and export via Egypt, which has developed its infrastructure to receive and re-export liquefied gas. These moves demonstrate that pipelines are not merely economic projects, but rather geopolitical tools that reflect shifting alliances and conflicting interests (Huber, 2023).

3-3 Changing Energy Alliances: Between Cooperation and Competition:

Energy policies are facing radical changes in regional alliances, as new alliances are formed while others disintegrate according to market shifts and strategic interests. While Israel is approaching countries such as Egypt, Cyprus, and Greece to enhance energy cooperation, Turkey is working to strengthen its relations with Libya through maritime border demarcation agreements, irritating its neighbors (Al-Khouri, 2023).

Global developments, such as the war in Ukraine and the European energy crisis, have reshaped priorities. The European Union, which was heavily dependent on Russian gas, is now seeking to diversify its supply sources, giving Eastern Mediterranean countries an opportunity to strengthen their position as an alternative supplier (von der Leyen, 2023), while Russia is leveraging its relationships with some countries in the region to maintain its influence in the global energy market.

However, these alliances are not static. Domestic political changes, such as elections or shifts in foreign policy, can reshape priorities. For example, any change in Washington's position toward the region could impact existing energy alliances, especially with the US-China competition for global influence (Ziegler, 2023).

Regional energy politics demonstrate how natural resources can be a source of both conflict and cooperation. As countries compete for control of resources, they find themselves forced to cooperate to ensure market stability. With the increasing importance of the transition to clean energy, the Eastern Mediterranean will remain a center of geopolitical competition, where alliances will be constantly shifting to meet energy security needs and achieve strategic interests.

Third: Analysis of the regional actors within the axes of Turkish-Arab relations:

1- Turkish-Arab Relations and the Israeli Normalization Axis:

1-1 The Impact of the Abraham Accords and the Reshaping of Regional Alliances:

The Abraham Accords, signed between Israel and the UAE, Bahrain, Morocco, and Sudan in 2020, represent a fundamental shift in the geopolitical landscape of the Middle East, redrawing the map of regional alliances. These agreements, supported by the United States, were not merely a diplomatic move toward normalization; rather, they established a framework for a strategic alliance aimed at limiting Iranian and Turkish influence in the region. (Al-Kuwari, 2022) These alliances also strengthened economic and security cooperation between the signatory parties, particularly in the fields of technology, energy, and investment, opening up unconventional horizons far removed from past Arab-Israeli conflicts. (Al-Khouri, 2023)

However, the agreements were not without widespread criticism, especially from Turkey, Qatar, and Iran. Ankara considered normalization with Israel to undermine the Palestinian cause and a squandering of the rights of the Palestinian people, while Tehran viewed it as an indication of an alliance being formed against it (Ozel, 2023). Arab positions varied, with some countries supporting the agreements, while others, such as Algeria and Iraq, rejected them, reflecting the division over the course of relations with Israel and the future of the Palestinian cause (Al-Amari, 2023).

1-2 New Security Alliances: Between Coordination and Indirect Confrontations:

One of the most important outcomes of the normalization agreements was the emergence of new forms of security alliances. Israel and the Gulf states, especially the UAE, began broad security coordination that included combating terrorism, exchanging information, and developing military technology. A prominent example was the signing of security agreements

between the UAE and Israel, which included deals such as the purchase of advanced defense systems such as the Iron Dome, in addition to cooperation in confronting Iranian threats and thwarting the activities of armed groups in the region (Finkelston, 2023). However, these alliances have created tensions with Turkey, which is attempting to strengthen its regional influence by supporting factions such as the Muslim Brotherhood and Palestinian resistance movements. This conflict has been particularly evident in Libya, where Ankara and the UAE have diverged in their positions. The former supported the Government of National Accord, while the latter, along with Egypt, supported the Libyan National Army led by Khalifa Haftar. (Al-Turki, 2023) At the same time, security coordination between Israel and the Gulf states has escalated the rivalry with Iran, which sees itself as a direct target of this new axis.

1-3 Repercussions of the War on Gaza and Testing the Flexibility of Normalization:

The 2023 Israeli War on Gaza presented a major challenge to the normalization agreements, as the normalizing countries found themselves in a dilemma of reconciling their diplomatic commitments to Israel with the anger of the Arab street. Mass protests erupted in countries such as Bahrain and Morocco, denouncing the Israeli aggression and demanding the severing of relations with Tel Aviv. (Al-Ghanim, 2023) Turkey's strong condemnation of Israel and clear support for Palestine further complicated the position of the normalizing states and demonstrated the pressure public opinion exerts on official policies (Erdogan, 2023).

The war also revealed the limitations of normalization agreements in resolving the roots of the regional conflict. Israel's refusal to offer any serious solutions to the Palestinian issue raised doubts about their ability to achieve the desired stability. The absolute US military support for Israel during the crisis demonstrated that Washington remains the influential and pivotal player in the regional balance of power, limiting the ability of Arab states to maneuver independently (Haley, 2023).

Turkish-Arab relations and their interaction with the Israeli normalization axis stand out as a watershed in the reshaping of the regional order in the Middle East. The priority of the Palestinian issue is declining in the face of the rising economic and security interests of the influential states. However, the war on Gaza demonstrated that the Palestinian issue remains capable of mobilizing Arab public opinion, hindering the normalization process from becoming a fully stable approach. Turkey will remain a major player, using anti-Israel rhetoric to bolster its presence and influence in the Arab world,

while the normalizing states face the challenge of striking a difficult balance between their strategic alliances and the pressures of the Arab street, which sympathizes with the Palestinians.

The future of these alliances depends on their ability to overcome crises and build a cooperative model that maintains regional stability without neglecting Palestinian rights.

2- Turkish-Arab Relations and the Axis of Rising Regional Powers:

2-1 Qatar's Mediating Role between Turkey and the Arab Horizon:

Qatar plays a pivotal role in reshaping regional alliances, leveraging a flexible diplomacy that combines deep strategic cooperation with Turkey on the one hand, and maintaining balanced relations with various Arab parties on the other.

This approach is attributed to the policy pursued by Doha during the 2017-2021 blockade crisis, where it strengthened its alliance with Ankara to ensure its security and strategic stability, while remaining a key player in sensitive regional issues (Al-Ghanim, 2022).

This role was clearly evident in its mediation efforts between Palestinian factions and Israel, as well as in the Lebanese crisis, which earned Qatar a prominent position in the regional arena. However, Qatar faced some criticism from Arab parties who viewed its policies as biased toward the Turkish agenda, particularly in the Libyan conflict, where Qatar and Turkey supported the Government of National Accord against the coalition led by the UAE and Egypt (Al-Khalifi, 2023). However, Qatar's success in hosting the 2022 World Cup and the resulting boost to its international profile strengthened its position as an influential player that represents a bridge between Turkey and the Arab world, particularly in the areas of energy and security (Al-Zubaidi, 2023).

2-2 UAE Economic Influence and Soft Power Tools:

The UAE has succeeded in building a unique model for using economic power as a means of regional influence. Through massive investments and economic partnerships, Abu Dhabi has succeeded in reshaping the map of alliances in the region. The UAE relies on "political economic power" as an alternative to a direct military approach, as evidenced by its major investments in Egypt after 2013, its prominent role in the reconstruction of eastern Libya, and its growing influence in the Horn of Africa through port projects and economic zones. (Al-Kuwari, 2023).

Regional competition is witnessing a confrontation between the Turkish model, based on the ideology of military support and field alliances, and the Emirati model, which is based on economic hegemony. (Al-Najjar, 2023). This competition was clearly evident in Sudan, where the UAE supported the military council, while Turkey sided with the civilian government before the 2021 coup, reflecting the depth of the struggle for influence between the two parties (Abdullah, 2023).

Algeria's Regional Policies and the Search for a Role Amid Neighborhood Transformations:

Algeria's Regional Policies and Its Efforts to Maintain Balance Amid Neighborhood Transformations:

Algeria represents a special case in which it seeks to maintain the independence of its political decisions amid major geopolitical changes affecting its regional environment.

 Algeria adopts a clear stance against normalization with Israel, strongly supports the Palestinian cause, and rejects foreign interference in the affairs of Arab countries. However, this approach has sometimes placed it at a distance from the policies of some parties, such as Turkey and the UAE (Boumediene, 2023). In the Libyan context, Algeria seeks to maintain its position as a responsible mediator between the conflicting parties, balancing Turkish and Egyptian influence (Zian, 2023). Its relations with both Qatar and Iran appear carefully calculated to avoid joining any axis at the expense of its direct interests.

In the energy sector, Algeria is a key player in the European gas market, especially after the Ukraine crisis, which increased the importance of Algerian gas as an alternative to Russian gas. However, the use of this leverage remains conditional on domestic considerations and pressing development challenges. Visions for the Future (Qasimi, 2023).

The interactions between Turkey and the emerging Arab powers reflect a profound shift in the structure of the Arab regional system, which has become more complex and intertwined, moving away from traditional classifications. Between the Qatari model, which relies on active mediation and diplomacy, the Emirati model, which is based on economic hegemony, and the Algerian model, which seeks to preserve independence and sovereignty, we find that Turkey continues to be an influential regional power, seeking to expand its influence through multiple tools. The future of the region remains tied to the ability of these powers to manage their rivalries in ways that avoid destabilizing the region. Given the common security and economic

challenges they face, partnership and cooperation in areas such as energy and food security may offer a glimmer of hope for avoiding the continuation of conflicts that have burdened the region for decades.

3- Turkish-Arab Relations and the Shifting Alliances Axis in the Middle East:

3-1 The Alliance Axis (Iran-Turkey-Qatar): An Ideology in the Face of Regional Isolation:

The tripartite alliance between Iran, Turkey, and Qatar constitutes a unique model of regional cooperation, based on a shared vision to challenge the prevailing regional order. This axis brings together three players facing relative isolation from traditional Arab powers, which has prompted them to consolidate their cooperation in the areas of energy, security, and foreign policy (Al-Jaafari, 2023).

Turkey represents the most vital element in this alliance, adopting a "revolutionary" discourse against the status quo on some issues, such as the Palestinian issue, while maintaining pragmatic calculations on others, such as its ties with Russia. For Iran, this alliance represents an opportunity to break the Gulf isolation, especially after the Qatar blockade crisis, which strengthened the rapprochement between Doha and Tehran (Al-Nouri, 2023).

This alliance is not without contradictions; deep disagreements persist between Ankara and Tehran regarding the Syrian file and the conflict in Azerbaijan. The Turkish-Iranian relationship is characterized more by competition than by a strategic alliance. Qatar, on the other hand, maintains a delicate balance between its partners, avoiding its alliance with Turkey turning into an open confrontation with the Gulf axis (Al-Ghanim, 2023).

3-2 The Status Quo Axis (Saudi Arabia-UAE-Egypt) Defending the Existing Regional Order:

The Saudi-UAE-Egyptian alliance represents the main force maintaining the status quo in the region, with a focus on combating Iranian influence and limiting the spread of Islamist movements. These countries adopt a vision based on "regime stability" rather than "revolutionary change" (Al-Khalifi, 2023).

This practical push has been evident in several regional issues, such as supporting the Libyan National Army against the Turkish-backed Government of National Accord (GNA), confronting the Iranian-backed

Houthis in Yemen, and normalization with Israel as a strategy to counter Iran (Al-Ammari, 2023).

However, this axis faces internal challenges, such as diverging priorities between Riyadh and Abu Dhabi, particularly regarding the war in Yemen, and the economic crisis in Egypt, which limits its ability to play an active regional role. The recent Saudi-Iranian rapprochement may also reshape regional alliances. (Al-Zubaidi, 2023)

3-3 The Central Axis (Algeria-Kuwait-Oman) Quiet Diplomacy in the Face of Changes:

Algeria, Kuwait, and Oman represent a model of countries that refuse to engage in conflicting axes, focusing on mediation and peaceful solutions. These countries adopt a strategy based on positive neutrality, preventive diplomacy, and consensual solutions. (Boumediene, 2023) This approach is evident in prominent positions such as Kuwait's mediation in the Gulf crisis, Oman's role in the Iranian nuclear negotiations, and the Algerian initiative to resolve the Libyan crisis. (Al-Najjar, 2023)

However, the influence of this axis remains limited due to the weakness of economic and military tools compared to other axes, in addition to the focus on diplomatic roles rather than direct intervention. These three axes reflect a profound shift in the regional order in the Middle East. The current situation has transcended the traditional (Arab-Iranian) dichotomy. To understand the current complexities, three key observations stand out: (Zayan, 2023)

- The fluidity of alliances, as demonstrated by the recent Saudi-Iranian rapprochement.

- The pragmatism of interests that overtakes ideological considerations over time.

- The growing importance of the role of non-traditional players such as Turkey and Qatar.

The future appears to depend on the ability of these axes to develop mechanisms to manage their differences, especially in light of the common economic and security challenges facing the entire region.

Fourth Axis - Current Geopolitical Challenges and Their Implications for Turkish-Arab Relations:

First: Security Challenges in Light of Geopolitical Transformations:

1- A Complex Landscape of Intertwined Threats:

Turkish-Arab relations are undergoing radical changes due to escalating security challenges that have reordered priorities for all parties. Cross-border militias are among the most significant of these challenges, as Turkish intervention in Syria and Libya has contributed to complicating regional security. In Syria, Ankara supports opposition factions such as the Syrian National Army, while Arab countries accuse it of providing a safe haven for foreign fighters who pose a threat to their national security. (Ozel, 2023) Turkey's presence in northern Iraq without full coordination with the central government in Baghdad is causing increasing tensions, especially with the escalation of military operations against the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). (Al-Jaafari, 2023)

In the field of cybersecurity, cyberattacks have become a new tool in the regional conflict, with Turkey and Arab countries trading accusations of supporting hacking groups targeting critical infrastructure. In 2022, Turkish government institutions were subjected to cyberattacks attributed to groups linked to several Arab countries. For its part (Technomir, 2023), Ankara accuses Qatar and the UAE of using cyber surveillance tools against Turkish dissidents abroad, exacerbating bilateral tensions (Al-Khalifi, 2023).

2- Irregular Migration Crises: Between Humanitarian Pressures and Political Exploitation

- Irregular migration crises: Between Humanitarian Pressures and Political Exploitation

Irregular migration crises are another challenge in Turkish-Arab relations. Turkey uses the refugee issue as a political and economic pressure card, as it hosts the largest number of Syrian refugees in the world (approximately 3.7 million), which has become a domestic crisis with rising anti-refugee sentiment (Ocak, 2023). In contrast, Arab countries such as Egypt and Lebanon accuse Turkey of directing illegal migration flows towards their territories, especially after President Erdoğan's 2020 statements regarding opening the doors for refugees to Europe. This situation has led to clear tensions: (Al-Zubaidi, 2023)

- Disputes with Greece over the borders of the exclusive economic zone.

- Arab accusations that Turkey is exploiting the migration crisis for political gain.

- Escalation of anti-Turkish rhetoric in some Arab countries. (Al-Amari, 2023)

3- Regional Implications between Competition and Coercive Cooperation:

Regional Implications between Competition and Coercive Cooperation:

Despite these challenges, geopolitics imposes a form of coercive cooperation between the parties on some security issues. In the field of counterterrorism, there are common interests between Turkey and Arab countries in confronting organizations such as ISIS and Al-Qaeda, despite differing views on dealing with other Islamist groups. The energy and food security crises resulting from the war in Ukraine have also necessitated a security dialogue to ensure the security of sea lanes and supply lines. However, these commonalities remain fragile given: (Shaw, 2023)

- Continuing competition for influence in Libya and Syria.

- Disagreements over the future of the Muslim Brotherhood in the region.

- Escalating nationalist and religious rhetoric. (Bakr, 2023)

Turkish-Arab relations are being tested in light of these intertwined security challenges. While shared threats push for greater security coordination, strategic differences over regional influence remain an obstacle to any comprehensive security partnership. The future of these relations will be determined by the parties' ability to separate urgent security issues from long-standing political disputes, as the region's need for a comprehensive cooperative framework to confront transnational threats grows.

Second - The Economic Challenges of Turkish-Arab Relations in Light of Geopolitical Transformations:

1. The Pipeline Conflict and the Battle for Regional Energy Hegemony:

Energy pipelines are one of the most prominent points of economic friction between Turkey and Arab countries, as they have become a tool used to achieve geopolitical influence in the region. Three major projects are at the forefront of this conflict: the "Turkish Stream" project, which transports Russian gas to Europe via Turkey; the "EastMed" pipeline, supported by Egypt, Cyprus, and Greece; and the "Nabucco" project, promoted by the

United States. This competition embodies different strategies: (Ozcan, 2023).

- The Turkish strategy: seeks to transform Turkey into a regional energy hub, capitalizing on its unique geographical location.

- The Arab strategy: focuses on strengthening alliances with Israel and Europe to reduce Turkish influence. (Al-Khouri, 2023).

The most prominent repercussions of this conflict are:

- Escalating tensions in Turkish-Cypriot relations over exploration rights.

- Competition to secure gas contracts in the Eastern Mediterranean. European sanctions that have affected Turkish companies operating in the energy sector. (Finkelston, 2023)

2- The global food crisis between cooperation and competition:

The repercussions of the Ukrainian war have complicated the economic landscape between Turkey and Arab countries, as competition over wheat and fertilizer resources has intensified. Turkey occupies a strategic position in this crisis thanks to:

- Its mediation in the "grain deal" between Russia and Ukraine.

- The heavy reliance of Arab countries on wheat imports from the region. (Oglu, 2023)

However, the crisis has revealed several points of contention, including:

- The race for market share: Turkey, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia are competing to secure their global grain supplies.

- Conflicting policies: Ankara supported the Russian-Ukrainian agreement, while Arab countries seek to diversify their import sources. (Al-Zira'i, 2023)

- The financing crisis: Arab countries face challenges in securing hard currency for food imports, while Turkey's flexibility in dealing with Russia in local currencies (Karadeniz, 2023)

3- Competition for African Markets and the Battle for Economic Influence:

The African continent is witnessing a fierce race between Turkey and Arab countries (especially the UAE, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia) for economic influence. This competition is reflected in three different strategies:

- The Turkish model: Based on medium-sized investments in infrastructure, military and security cooperation, and an anti-colonial discourse.

- The Emirati model: Focuses on massive investments in ports and economic zones, major real estate projects, and economic diplomacy (Al-Najjar, 2023).

- The Egyptian model: Centered on security cooperation to combat terrorism, joint agricultural projects, and investment in the energy sector (Al-Rifai, 2023).

The main conflict zones are:

- The Horn of Africa, such as Somalia and Djibouti

- The Sahel region (most notably Sudan and Chad)

- West Africa, Nigeria and Senegal (Belhassen, 2023).

The economic challenges between Turkey and Arab countries reflect a clear contradiction between the parties' need for cooperation to address global crises, such as food security and energy prices, and the ongoing strategic competition for regional influence. The future of relations depends on the parties' ability to develop effective mechanisms to manage economic disputes and capitalize on the shared opportunities offered by emerging markets, while striking a delicate balance between national interests and regional priorities.

Third: Political Challenges to Turkish-Arab Relations in Light of Geopolitical Transformations:

1- The Rise of Local Nationalisms and the Reshaping of the Domestic Political Landscape:

The Arab region and Turkey are witnessing a rapid transformation in their nationalist affiliations, as this new trend is redefining the political dynamics within states and in their foreign relations. In Turkey, this is clearly evident through the rise of Turkish nationalist discourse, which blends secular heritage with Islamic elements, along with the strengthening of a foreign policy orientation based on what is known as neo-Ottomanism, with a prominent focus on ethnic issues, particularly the Kurdish issue. (Aydin, 2023)

In the Arab world, local nationalisms take various forms. In the Levant, the emergence of sectarian and ethnic identities can be observed, as is the case in Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon, alongside an increase in Arab nationalist discourse in the context of confronting Turkish influence. In North Africa,

attempts to highlight Amazigh identities are on the rise, as is evident in Morocco and Algeria, while the Egyptian scene is witnessing a trend toward reviving Pharaonic identity. (Al-Khoury, 2023).

These characteristics negatively impacted bilateral relations. Turkey's relations with Iraq witnessed tension due to the Kurdish issue, while anti-Turkish positions escalated in some Egyptian circles, making the resolution of regional crises more complex due to divergent historical perspectives. (Özel, 2023)

2. Changing regimes amid profound geopolitical transformations:

With the major transformations witnessed in the region, its countries redefined their regional alliances. Domestically, Turkey entered a period of relative political stability due to the consolidation of the presidential system, which centralized decision-making and reordered priorities on the foreign policy map. In contrast, the Arab transformations after 2011 reflected a complex landscape; while some countries, such as Tunisia, transitioned to hybrid regimes, major powers, such as Egypt, restored their old authoritarian models. Conversely, some countries, such as Libya and Yemen, continue to suffer from the repercussions of civil wars. (Qara Khan, 2023)

In the Arabian Gulf specifically, notable transformations have emerged, such as the transfer of power to a new generation in Saudi Arabia, the strengthening of constitutional monarchies in countries such as Morocco and Jordan, while traditional systems persist in the UAE. (Al-Ghanim, 2023)

All these changes have impacted Turkish-Arab relations, confronting a reality in which regional alliances have multiplied at an accelerating pace, compounded by coordination challenges due to ambiguity and political instability. (Fahmy, 2023)

3. Pressures from Major Powers and the Promotion of New Nations:

Turkish-Arab relations are clearly influenced by the pressures of major powers struggling to expand in the region.

- US policy: Focuses on unrestricted support for Israel and directs attention toward the Eastern Mediterranean, sometimes marginalizing relations with Turkey, in addition to using sanctions as a political bargaining chip. (Davidson, 2023)

- Russian policy: Russia achieves a delicate balance by strengthening its alliance with Turkey on issues such as Syria and energy, while simultaneously engaging in supporting key Arab regimes such as the Egyptian and Syrian regimes. (Petrov, 2023)

- Chinese policy: China is entering the region through economics rather than political competition, relying on the Belt and Road Initiative and enhancing infrastructure investments, while avoiding direct involvement in Middle Eastern conflicts. (Li, 2023)

Turkish-Arab relations face unprecedented challenges that require strategic flexibility and the ability to adapt to internal and external transformations. This phase can only be overcome through political dialogue based on a shared vision capable of overcoming historical differences and promoting mutual interests. This requires developing solid institutional frameworks for dialogue and focusing efforts on managing relations with major powers in a balanced manner that protects the interests of all parties and maintains regional stability.

Conclusion

An analysis of Turkish-Arab relations reveals a fundamental shift in the region's geopolitical landscape, where internal, regional, and international factors intersect to reshape the paths of influence and alliances. Turkey has transcended its traditional role as a peripheral state to become an undeniable pivotal player, thanks to an active, multi-dimensional foreign policy that combines military, economic, and cultural power. Ankara has strengthened its military presence in various regions, while expanding its cultural and economic presence through major tools such as infrastructure investments and the widespread distribution of cultural products.

Conversely, the Arab world is witnessing fundamental changes in its traditional alliance patterns, as familiar relationships can no longer explain current complexities. New alliances are crossing lines previously considered unbridgeable, as is the case with the Emirati-Israeli rapprochement, while traditional alliances that have prevailed for decades are declining. This shift embodies a shift from ideological solidarity to a focus on national interests and maximizing gains in a competitive regional context.

Amid these developments, security and economic issues emerge as crucial factors. The lines between security and economics are blurring, as conflicts transform into competing investment arenas and economic projects themselves become tools of geopolitical influence. Furthermore, a new area of competition is emerging: cybersecurity, with the rise of mutual cyberattacks, adding a complex dimension to the region's conflicts.

However, these dynamics face enormous pressures resulting from demographic shifts and environmental challenges. Young people under the age of 35 constitute the majority of the population in Arab countries and

Turkey, while unemployment rates are rising to alarming levels, reaching 28% in some cases. This phenomenon creates significant social and political pressures that may reshape national and regional priorities. Furthermore, climate change poses a serious threat to essential resources such as water and food security, a situation evident in countries such as Iraq, Egypt, and Syria, which are facing worsening crises.

Against these circumstances, three main scenarios for Turkish-Arab relations can be envisioned. The first scenario is optimistic, as shared interests prevail and an institutional framework for cooperation is established that strengthens regional security and the economy. The second scenario takes a more pessimistic turn, with increased polarization and open conflicts through proxies. The third scenario is an unstable intermediate state, relying on intermittent crisis management without finding sustainable solutions. The parties involved today need a comprehensive strategic vision that goes beyond temporary calculations.

This requires establishing permanent institutional tools for dialogue and building mechanisms that transform integration trends from mere slogans into tangible reality. The choices currently available to countries will determine not only the future of Turkish-Arab relations, but also the contours of the region for decades to come.

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Chapter 4

The Political and Military Impacts of the Kütahya Treaty on the Ottoman Empire ⊋

Sevim Nur Aydın[1]

Summary

The 1833 Treaty of Kütahya was signed between the Ottoman Empire and the Governor of Egypt, Kavalalı Mehmed Ali Pasha, at the end of the war that lasted from 1831 to 1833; it had lasting consequences on both the internal balance of the empire and its international position. The victory achieved by the Egyptian army under the command of Ibrahim Pasha in Konya and its advance to Kütahya forced the administration of Mahmud II to seek help from Russia; the Hünkar İskelesi Treaty, which emerged as a natural consequence of this request, narrowed the Ottoman Empire's room for maneuver against the great powers. The Kütahya Treaty, which granted Mehmed Ali Pasha broad powers over Egypt, Syria, and Crete, and his son Ibrahim Pasha over Jeddah and Adana, accelerated the dissolution of the classical eyalet system, created a new rupture in central-provincial relations, and made the "Egyptian Question" one of the permanent topics of European diplomacy.

This study examines the process leading up to the Treaty of Kütahya, the terms of the treaty and its political and military effects on the Ottoman Empire, the relationship between central authority and provincial powers, the structural transformation of the army, and the competition among the great powers. The aim of this study is to position the Treaty of Kütahya not merely as a "post-war arrangement" but as a critical link in the chronological chain leading to the proclamation of the Tanzimat, the defeat at Nizip, and the 1840 London Conference.

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1   PhD Student, Kütahya Dumlupinar University, Institute of Graduate Studies, Department of Political Science and International Relations, sevim.bircan0@ogr.dpu.edu.tr

Introduction

The first half of the 19th century was a period in which the Ottoman Empire sought to rebuild its central authority internally while also feeling the heavy effects of great power rivalry externally. The Vaka-i Hayriye, which resulted in the abolition of the Janissary Corps in 1826, created a radical break in the military structure; however, the institutionalization of the newly established Asâkir-i Mansûre-i Muhammediye army took time (Keleş, 2006). In the provinces, the âyan and local dynasties, which had been gaining power since the late 18th century, emerged as new actors challenging central authority.

In this context, the rise of the Governor of Egypt, Kavalalı Mehmed Ali Pasha, constitutes one of the most radical examples of transformation in the Ottoman provinces. Seizing power in the complex environment following the Napoleonic occupation, Mehmed Ali Pasha quickly established his own military, financial, and administrative order, effectively rising to a semi-independent position (Kocaoğlu, 1995). His role in suppressing the Greek War of Independence and recapturing Crete earned him significant prestige at the center; this prestige, combined with his expectation of becoming governor of Syria, triggered the process that would lead to the Ottoman-Egyptian war in 1831.

The Treaty of Kütahya is the written record of the balance of power that emerged at the end of this war. While the treaty declares the sultan's legal supremacy on the one hand, on the other hand, it grants Mehmed Ali Pasha's dynasty de facto autonomy over a vast territory (Keha, 2016). Therefore, Kütahya is a turning point that reveals both the state of central-provincial relations and the fragility of the Ottoman Empire within the international system.

I. The Process Leading to the First Treaty of Kütahya: The Transformation of Center-Periphery Relations and the Egyptian Question

1. The Transformation of Central-Provincial Relations in the Ottoman Empire

The localization trends observed in the Ottoman periphery at the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century eroded the center's traditional means of control. Although initially conceived as cooperating with central authority, the institution of the ayan gradually gave rise to local power centers that became the de facto decision-makers in tax collection, military conscription, and judicial matters (Özdemir, 2018). This structure

led to the emergence of local actors who "recognized the center but bargained with it," particularly in the Balkans, Anatolia, and the Arab provinces.

Egypt was no exception to this general trend. In an environment dominated by the remnants of the Mamluk regiments and the local notables, where tax collection and military influence were fragmented, Napoleon's invasion created a new power vacuum. Filling this void, Mehmed Ali Pasha quickly eliminated his rivals and established his own dynastic order, maintaining ties with the center but pushing the boundaries of de facto autonomy (Kocaoğlu, 1995).

2. The Rise of Mehmed Ali Pasha and His Modernization Program

Kavalalı Mehmed Ali Pasha's rule in Egypt went beyond that of a classic Ottoman governorate. The Pasha eliminated old military structures such as the Janissary Corps and created a modern army through compulsory conscription of the local fellah population. He employed French and Italian officers to train this army, modeling it on European armies in terms of discipline and training (Bay, 2023).

Mehmed Ali Pasha's modernization efforts were not limited to the military sphere; they also reflected in the economy through steps such as increasing cotton production in agriculture, establishing industrial facilities, and organizing foreign trade under state control (Kocaoğlu, 1995). To sustain this structure, the Pasha needed both new areas of taxation and military manpower resources. Regions such as Syria and Adana became the natural targets for this need.

The Third Moroccan Campaign, Promises Made, and Expectations for Syria

Mehmed Ali Pasha's appointment to suppress the Morea Revolt on behalf of the Ottoman Empire opened a new chapter in central-Egyptian relations. The Egyptian navy and army played a significant role in suppressing the uprising; however, the burning of the Ottoman-Egyptian fleet at Navarin dashed the expectations of both the Pasha and the center (Bay, 2023).

The Pasha expected to be appointed governor of Syria in return for his services in Morea; this expectation is clearly evident in the correspondence and memoirs of the period (Kocaoğlu, 1995). The central government, however, was reluctant to grant this request due to Syria's strategic location and revenues, and pursued a policy of postponing the issue. This discrepancy between expectations and reality can be seen as the psychological groundwork for the crisis that would erupt in 1831.

II. The 1831–1833 Ottoman–Egyptian War and the Road to Kütahya

1. The Start of the War and the Initial Phase

In the autumn of 1831, when Mehmed Ali Pasha sent his army, commanded by his son Ibrahim Pasha, to Syria, he officially justified this move with the rhetoric of "establishing order" and eliminating corruption in the region. However, developments on the ground showed that this was a well-planned expansionist move by (Kutluoğlu, 1997). Ibrahim Pasha's forces quickly captured important centers such as Acre, Damascus, and Aleppo, facilitating their advance by forming temporary alliances with local elements.

The Ottoman Empire initially viewed the Egyptian army's actions as a limited "provincial conflict," only belatedly recognizing the magnitude and persistence of the situation. However, Syria's complete fall under Egyptian control and Ibrahim Pasha's turn towards Anatolia showed that the issue now directly targeted the central authority (Uzunçarşılı, 1983, pp. 5–10).

2. The Battle of Konya and the Advance to Kütahya

The turning point of the Ottoman-Egyptian war was the Battle of Konya on December 21, 1832. The Ottoman army, commanded by Reşid Mehmed Pasha, was not at a disadvantage numerically compared to the Egyptian forces; however, it had serious shortcomings in terms of command unity, discipline, and artillery power (Kutluoğlu, 1998, pp. 71–75).

Ibrahim Pasha deployed his modern, well-trained troops against the central forces using flexible tactics; taking advantage of the disarray in the Ottoman army's command structure, he achieved a decisive victory in a short time. Reşid Mehmed Pasha's capture during the battle completely demoralized the Ottoman army and led to its retreat from Konya to Kütahya (Rifaat Bey, 1947, pp. 32–37).

The defeat at Konya was not merely a military setback for Mahmud II. It called into question the security of Istanbul and raised the real possibility of the Egyptian army marching on the capital from within Anatolia. In this context, faced with an Egyptian army that had advanced as far as Kütahya, the central government reached the limits of its military capacity and turned to seeking new allies.

3. Request for Assistance from Russia and the Intervention of the Great Powers

Sultan Mahmud II's request for assistance from Russia after the defeat at Konya signaled a fundamental shift in Ottoman foreign policy. The fact that a state that had fought successive wars with Russia throughout the 18th century and suffered extensive territorial losses requested military assistance from its greatest rival demonstrated the desperation of its situation.

The rapid deployment of the Russian navy and ground forces to the Straits region caused concern for Britain and France, which had interests in the Eastern Mediterranean. This situation gave rise to fears that Russia could gain sole influence over the Straits and place the Ottoman Empire under a de facto "protectorate regime." For this reason, London and Paris intervened to defuse the crisis between Istanbul and Cairo through diplomacy.

The mediation of the great powers made it possible to establish a basis for compromise in Kütahya; thus, Mehmed Ali Pasha, who was superior in the military field, obtained concessions that would strengthen his position at the diplomatic table (Kutluoğlu, 1998, pp. 80–82).

III. Provisions and Legal Framework of the Kütahya Agreement

1. Main Provisions of the Treaty

Although the articles of the Kütahya Treaty have not survived to the present day in a single official text, archival documents, chronicles of the period, and subsequent historical research reveal the main framework of the treaty (Kutluoğlu, 2000, pp. 330–333; Uzunçarşılı, 1983, pp. 1–5). According to this framework:

Mehmed Ali Pasha was granted the governorship of Syria (Damascus) in addition to Egypt and Crete, thus uniting a vast territory stretching from the Nile to the Levant coast under his rule.

Ibrahim Pasha was granted the governorship of Jeddah and the tax collection rights for Adana; the financial resources of the Adana region were effectively left under the control of the Pasha dynasty.

The presence of Egyptian troops in Egypt and its affiliated provinces was accepted; in return, Ibrahim Pasha's army was expected to withdraw from Kütahya and the interior of Anatolia.

The text of the treaty emphasized that Mehmed Ali Pasha was a governor loyal to the sultan and that these provinces legally belonged to the Ottoman Empire, thus preserving the discourse of legal sovereignty.

Although these articles were presented as a "governorship appointment," in practice they created a dynasty-based regional power area above the classical provincial order (Kutluoğlu, 1998, pp. 80–82).

2. The Tension Between Legal Sovereignty and Actual Power

The most striking aspect of the Treaty of Kütahya in terms of the Ottoman legal order is that it reveals the tension between the discourse of legal sovereignty and the actual power on the ground. While the text repeatedly states that the sultan is the highest authority and that the governors serve as his officials, the concessions made effectively place Mehmed Ali Pasha outside this hierarchy.

Mehmed Ali Pasha enjoyed extensive autonomy in areas such as tax collection, conscription, local administration, and establishing economic relations with European states in Egypt and Syria. The central government's capacity to intervene in these areas was extremely limited (Rifaat Bey, 1947, pp. 32–37). Consequently, Kütahya became an example of the extent to which the model of "provinces dependent on the center," which upheld the classical Ottoman order, could be flexible in the face of the concentration of power in the provinces.

3. Connection to the Hünkar İskelesi Agreement

Reading the Kütahya Treaty solely within the context of Ottoman–Egyptian relations is insufficient. Forced to seek help from Russia after the defeat at Konya, Mahmud II signed the Treaty of Hünkâr İskelesi on July 8, 1833, binding the Ottoman Empire to a mutual defense alliance with Russia (Treaty of Hünkâr İskelesi, n.d.). The secret clauses of the treaty arranged for the closure of the Straits to warships in favor of Russia and brought the Ottoman Empire's foreign policy into line with Russian interests.

The concessions made to Kütahya and Mehmed Ali Pasha, along with the privileges granted to Russia at Hünkar İskelesi, can be seen as two sides of the same crisis. On the one hand, the central authority granted broad powers to a provincial governor in order not to lose control in the provinces; on the other hand, it was forced to rely on a major external power to balance this situation (Kutluoğlu, 1998, pp. 80–82). This dual dependency made the Ottoman Empire more fragile both internally and externally.

IV. The Political Effects of the Treaty of Kütahya

1. The Legitimacy Crisis of Central Authority

The most obvious political impact of the Treaty of Kütahya on the Ottoman Empire was that it opened up the legitimacy of central authority to debate. Historically, the provinces, which were united under the shadow of the sultan as the "shadow of God," were redistributed based on the military success of a governor, which was not a situation foreseen in classical political culture.

A governor's conquest of vast territories by defeating the central army set an example that was closely watched by other elites in the provinces. Local power centers in the Arab provinces, some regions of Anatolia, and the Balkans saw an opportunity to exploit Istanbul's military and financial weakness (Uzunçarşılı, 1983, pp. 10–15). Although this observation did not directly lead to rebellion, it left a lasting legacy of distrust in central-provincial relations.

2. The Internationalization of the Egyptian Question and the "Eastern Question"

The Treaty of Kütahya took the Egyptian Question beyond the bilateral relations between the Ottoman Empire and Egypt, making it one of the key issues in European diplomacy. Britain and France assumed the role of mediators to prevent Russia from establishing a foothold in the Levant via the Straits; thus, a crisis that could be considered an internal matter for the Ottoman Empire became a subject of negotiation among the great powers (Kutluoğlu, 1998, pp. 80–82).

This process is also part of the debate known in the literature as the "Eastern Question." The future of Ottoman territories, the empire's capacity for reform, and the spheres of influence of the great powers were concretized through the Egyptian Question (Egyptian Question, 2025). The 1840 London Conference and the 1841 Straits Convention are examples of this internationalization process, which matured after Kütahya, reflected in legal texts.

3. The Search for Balance in Ottoman Foreign Policy

After Kütahya and Hünkar İskelesi, the Ottoman Empire realized that it could not continue its foreign policy by relying on a single great power. Excessive dependence on Russia strained relations with England and France, while the Egyptian Question led to an undesirable situation in the long term.

Therefore, the commercial privileges granted to Britain in the 1838 Balta Limanı Trade Agreement were not merely an economic choice; they also represented a search for a new balance in foreign policy. The practical results of this balance were the forced withdrawal of Mehmed Ali Pasha from

Syria at the 1840 London Conference and the recognition of Egypt as a governorship that could only be transferred by inheritance (, The Egyptian Question, 2025). During this process, the Ottoman Empire found itself in the position of an actor whose room for maneuver had narrowed, trying to survive by taking advantage of the competition between the great powers.

V. Military Effects of the Kütahya Agreement

The military process that led to the signing of the Treaty of Kütahya laid bare the structural weaknesses of the Ottoman Empire in the first half of the 19th century. The military implications of this treaty are not limited to the failure of the Ottoman army on the battlefield. They also reveal how Mehmed Ali Pasha's modern military structure created a power asymmetry with the Ottoman order, how it strained the central authority's capacity for reform, and in what ways it forced the state's long-term security architecture to transform.

This section examines the military effects of the Treaty of Kütahya on the Ottoman Empire under three headings: (1) the emergence of the Ottoman army's weaknesses, (2) the rise of the Egyptian army as a regional power, and (3) the acceleration and nature of Ottoman military reforms.

1. The Emergence of Structural Weaknesses in the Ottoman Army

The heavy defeat suffered in the Battle of Konya revealed that the Ottoman army was seriously inadequate in terms of technology, logistics, and command structure. The Asâkir-i Mansûre-i Muhammediye army, established after the abolition of the Janissary Corps in 1826, was not yet mature in terms of modern training and discipline (Rifaat Bey, 1947, pp. 32–37). The majority of the officer corps struggled to adapt to the new system, and Western-style military training had to be tested on the battlefield before it had become institutionalized.

This situation highlighted three fundamental problems facing the Ottoman army:

a. Lack of coordination in the command structure

During the Battle of Konya, the Ottoman army's weakest point was the disorganization in the command structure. Reşid Mehmed Pasha's capture on the battlefield not only shattered the morale of the Ottoman army but also completely disrupted coordination between units, giving the Egyptian army a decisive advantage (Kutluoğlu, 1998, pp. 71–75).

This weakness in the Ottoman army has been attributed, in the long term, to the lack of an institutionalized general staff system, inadequate officer training, and the inability of provincial forces to integrate with central units.

b. Inadequate logistics and field support

Unlike the Egyptian army, Ottoman troops lacked modern logistics systems throughout the war. Ammunition supplies were irregular, and supply lines could not be maintained effectively. Egyptian troops advancing from Syria to Anatolia were able to meet their needs thanks to the relationships they established with the local population and the taxes/supplies they collected (Uzunçarşılı, 1983, pp. 15–20). In contrast, the Ottoman army lost its logistical superiority due to both limited economic resources and disorganization in the management of the war.

c. Incompatibility with modern warfare techniques

Mehmed Ali Pasha's European-style army had a triple combination of modern artillery units, light infantry mobility, and disciplined training. This structure was the product of a military doctrine that the Ottoman army had not yet developed (Rifaat Bey, 1947, pp. 32–37). As a result, the Ottoman army lost its maneuverability against the Egyptian forces, which used modern tactics on the battlefield, and was unable to maintain its defensive line.

These shortcomings were not limited to the loss of a single battle; they had long-term effects on how the military power of the Ottoman Empire would be perceived by European and regional actors. In this sense, the Treaty of Kütahya was a turning point that made the need for modernization of the Ottoman army inevitable.

2. The Rise of the Egyptian Army as a Regional Power

One of the most notable military consequences of the Treaty of Kütahya was the official recognition of the Egyptian army as a regional power. The advance of the troops under Ibrahim Pasha into Anatolia and their decisive victory in Konya demonstrated that the Egyptian army was not merely a provincial force, but had become a regional power with modern warfare capabilities (Kutluoğlu, 1998, pp. 61–82).

a. Military Fortifications in Syria and Adana

The deployment of Egyptian garrisons in Syria and Adana following the treaty changed the strategic balance in the Eastern Mediterranean. These regions were of vital importance to the Ottoman Empire due to their location controlling both land and sea passageways. The establishment of the

Egyptian army in these regions created serious weaknesses in the Ottoman Empire's traditional lines of defense (Uzunçarşılı, 1983, pp. 12–18).

b. Expansion of military manpower and tax resources

The transfer of Syria to Egyptian rule created an important resource for Mehmed Ali Pasha's military reforms. Tax revenues from the region were used to finance the modern army; at the same time, the young population in the region was mobilized as a military manpower resource (Kutluoğlu, 2000, pp. 330–333). This situation strengthened the Egyptian army both numerically and qualitatively.

c. The strengthening of the perception of internal threat for the Ottoman Empire

The most critical consequence for the Ottoman Empire was that the Egyptian army became an "internal threat" rather than an "external threat." This is because a force that occupied a large part of Ottoman territory and defeated the central army, advancing towards the capital, posed not only a military but also a political challenge. This situation forced decision-makers in Istanbul to adopt a more cautious defense strategy in the years to come.

3. Acceleration of Ottoman Military Reforms

Following the Treaty of Kütahya, Ottoman military modernization became an unavoidable necessity. The reforms initiated by Mahmud II took on a more systematic framework after Kütahya.

The main ones are as follows:

a. Inviting military experts from Europe

Military advisors brought in from Prussia and England played a critical role in restructuring the army. These experts were active in a wide range of areas, from officer training to the modernization of the artillery corps ( ), from internal disciplinary regulations to field exercises (Rifaat Bey, 1947, pp. 32–37).

b. Strengthening the reserve forces in the provinces

Reserve units were designed to support the regular army in wartime; however, they had experienced organizational difficulties prior to Kütahya. After Kütahya, the training level of the reserve units was increased, their numbers were expanded, and they were intended to take on a more central role in terms of provincial security (Uzunçarşılı, 1983, pp. 20–25).

c. Modernization of the artillery corps

The weakness of the Ottoman artillery was clearly evident in the Battle of Konya. For this reason, the Tophane-i Amire was reorganized, European-style cannon casting techniques were applied, and new artillery schools were opened (Kutluoğlu, 1998, pp. 75–80).

d. Establishment of a modern military logistics system

In the period following Kütahya, new roads, storage networks, and food supply mechanisms were created to organize the army's supply lines. These steps gained importance, especially before the 1839 Nizip Campaign.

e. The limitations of military reforms

Despite all these efforts, the Ottoman Empire's insufficient financial resources prevented the reforms from progressing at the desired pace. Moreover, Mehmed Ali Pasha's modern army was still more disciplined and experienced than that of the Ottomans (Kutluoğlu, 1998, pp. 80–82). Therefore, the structural weaknesses of the Ottoman army were not completely eliminated after Kütahya; these shortcomings reemerged dramatically with the defeat at Nizip in 1839.

V. Long-Term Consequences: Nizip, London, and the Road to the Tanzimat

Although the Treaty of Kütahya seemed to halt armed conflict between the Ottoman Empire and Mehmed Ali Pasha in the short term, it actually only postponed the crisis. The order established by the treaty did not fully satisfy either party; it paved the way for new calculations in both Istanbul and Cairo. Therefore, the real impact of Kütahya becomes clearer when considered alongside the defeat at Nizip, the London Conference, and the Tanzimat reforms that took shape in the late 1830s ( ) and early 1840s.

1. From Kütahya to Nizip: From Temporary Compromise to New Conflict

Following the Treaty of Kütahya, Mehmed Ali Pasha sought to consolidate his rule in Syria and Adana, attempting to align the tax collection and conscription systems in these regions with the model in Egypt. This process meant heavy pressure on local power centers and populations in the region (Kutluoğlu, 1998, pp. 80–82). While the Egyptian administration attempted to establish central discipline, particularly in the areas of military service and tax collection, uprisings and local protests were also seen in Syria.

On the Istanbul front, Mahmud II and the bureaucratic elite around him saw Kütahya as an opportunity to "take a temporary breather." The belief that Mehmed Ali Pasha's expanding power was intolerable in the long term for the integrity of the empire remained strong in the palace circles (Ünal, 2010, pp. 45–50). The central authority aimed to gain time to reorganize the army and consolidate financial resources; preparations were made to recapture Syria and Adana at an opportune moment.

As a natural consequence of this tension, a new Ottoman–Egyptian war broke out in 1839, and this time the Battle of Nizip went down in history as a defeat as heavy as the defeat at Konya on December 21, 1832. Although the Ottoman army appeared modernized on paper, it still lagged behind the Egyptian army in terms of command unity, morale, and discipline (Rifaat Bey, 1947, pp. 32–37).

The defeat at Nizip signified a harsher return of the crisis that had been postponed at Kütahya. However, this time there were two factors that changed the picture: the youth of Abdülmecid, who ascended the throne immediately after the death of Mahmud II, and the reluctance of the European powers to allow Egypt to become even stronger. These two factors paved the way for the de facto order established by the Treaty of Kütahya to be rewritten at the London Conference.

2. The London Conference, the Straits Convention, and the New Status Quo

After the defeat at Nizip, the Ottoman ruling class clearly saw that it could no longer claim to resolve the Egyptian issue on its own. As in the Kütahya period, the intervention of the great powers ( ) became inevitable. However, unlike in 1833, the priorities of the European states had changed this time.

Britain, particularly concerned about the security of the route to India and its commercial interests in the Mediterranean-Red Sea corridor, began to view the excessive strengthening of Egypt as undesirable. Mehmed Ali Pasha's control of Syria meant the establishment of a permanent independent regional power center in the Eastern Mediterranean (The Egyptian Question, 2025). France, while wishing to maintain its cultural and political influence over Egypt, could not risk direct conflict with Britain. Russia, meanwhile, was concerned that the influence it had gained over the Straits would be shared with other states through multilateral agreements (Treaty of Hünkâr İskelesi, n.d.).

Ultimately, the 1840 London Conference resolved this complex equation by placing the Egyptian Question within an international framework. Mehmed Ali Pasha was granted a viceroyalty status over Egypt, transferable by inheritance, on condition that he withdraw from Syria and Adana. The Pasha initially rejected these conditions; however, due to the military pressure of the British navy in the Eastern Mediterranean and the increase in internal uprisings, he was forced to accept London's terms (Kutluoğlu, 1998, pp. 80–82).

The 1841 Straits Convention established the balance of power in the Straits, which had been shaped in Russia's favor by the Treaty of Hünkar İskelesi, within a multilateral legal framework; the passage of warships through the Straits was prohibited in peacetime, to the detriment of all states. Thus, the security of the Straits came under the joint guarantee of the European powers as well as Ottoman sovereignty (Treaty of Hünkâr İskelesi, n.d.).

The Treaty of Kütahya is the first link in this chain: it marks the starting point of the Egyptian Question moving beyond the internal borders of the Ottoman Empire and becoming an agenda item for London and Paris. The defeat at Nizip and the London Conference represent the reshaping of the de facto situation that emerged in Kütahya through international legal texts.

3. The Nurturing of the Tanzimat Ideology and the Imperative of Modernization

The Treaty of Kütahya and the developments that followed provided concrete lessons showing the Ottoman ruling elite that the survival of the state could no longer be secured by classical means alone. The fact that a provincial governor defeated the central army, advanced into Anatolia, and established de facto control over a large geographical area caused a profound shock to the central bureaucracy (Kutluoğlu, 2000, pp. 330–333).

The proclamation of the Tanzimat Edict in 1839 cannot, of course, be attributed solely to the Treaty of Kütahya. However, experiences such as Kütahya and Nizip gave concrete form to the concern of "delaying the collapse of the state" that underpinned the idea of reform. The Tanzimat's emphasis on the security of life, property, and honor, the desire to rationalize the tax system, and the goal of establishing a more orderly framework for military service all, in a sense, reflect the intention to compensate for the weaknesses seen in the Egyptian Question (Egyptian Question, 2025).

Furthermore, the Tanzimat was also a product of the Ottoman Empire's desire to present a "reformist" image to the European public in order to

relatively soften the interventions of the great powers. The picture that emerged with Kütahya showed that Ottoman crises were now being taken to international conferences, where the state's internal arrangements could also be discussed. Therefore, the Tanzimat was a political program that took into account not only internal social and administrative needs but also the chain of external pressure and intervention stretching from Kütahya to London.

From this perspective, the Treaty of Kütahya ranks among the foremost "negative experiences" that paved the way for the Tanzimat. In an environment where the state could not act independently even against a governor from its own subjects and was forced to seek Russia's protection in times of crisis, embarking on a comprehensive legal and administrative reform program became not a choice but a necessity.

VI. General Assessment and Conclusion

The Treaty of Kütahya is a pivotal point of central importance for understanding the political and military transformation of the Ottoman Empire in the 19th century. Although the treaty was ostensibly drafted as an "end-of-war settlement," its provisions and consequences reshaped the empire's domestic and foreign policy.

From a political perspective, Kütahya is one of the most prominent examples of the dissolution of central authority over the provinces. It was unthinkable in the classical Ottoman order for a provincial governor to defeat the sultan's army, establish control over vast territories, and have this confirmed by a treaty. This development both called into question the legitimacy of the ruling elite in Istanbul and sent a powerful message to local power centers in other provinces that they could act independently of the center.

Kütahya also marked the turning point when the Egyptian Question took on an international dimension. The involvement of major powers such as England, France, and Russia demonstrated that the Ottoman Empire's internal crises had now become a subject of negotiation in European diplomacy. Texts such as the Hünkar İskelesi Agreement, the London Conference, and the Straits Convention are subsequent links in the chain of events that legalized the de facto situation that emerged in Kütahya from different angles. Taken together, these developments form the concrete basis for the long-running debate known in the literature as the "Eastern Question."

From a military perspective, Kütahya is a dramatic example of how unprepared the Ottoman army was for modern warfare. The defeat in the

Battle of Konya and the advance of Ibrahim Pasha's army as far as Kütahya revealed that the Asâkir-i Mansûre-i Muhammediye had not yet acquired an institutional structure, that command unity was weak, and that modern artillery and logistical support were inadequate. In contrast, Mehmed Ali Pasha's army, organized in the European style, clearly surpassed the Ottoman army in terms of discipline, artillery power, and mobility.

In this respect, the Treaty of Kütahya is one of the milestones of Ottoman military modernization. The accelerated reform efforts after the treaty—inviting experts from Europe, strengthening the reserve forces, reorganizing the artillery corps, and developing the logistics network—demonstrate the state's intention to compensate for its shortcomings in this area. However, limited financial resources and the late start of reforms prevented these efforts from yielding decisive results in the short term. The defeat at Nizip was a painful reminder that the military weaknesses that had become apparent at Kütahya had not yet been remedied.

In the long term, the Treaty of Kütahya is also closely linked to the fears and calculations behind the Tanzimat. The state's inability to prevail even against one of its own governors without external support meant that the idea of reform took on not only the meaning of "renewal" but also that of "survival." The regulations introduced by the Tanzimat Edict combined the goals of establishing internal peace and creating an image of a "reformist state" in the European public sphere, while bearing the traces of experiences such as Kütahya and Nizip.

Ultimately, the Treaty of Kütahya crystallizes the three fundamental structural problems the Ottoman Empire faced in the 19th century:

1. Central-peripheral tension and concentration of power in the provinces,

2. Delays in military modernization and imbalances in the field,

3. Increasing foreign policy dependence on major powers.

The Kütahya experience, which emerged at the intersection of these three problems, can be interpreted not only as a crisis limited to the Mehmed Ali Pasha rebellion, but also as an early harbinger of the empire's disintegration process. The temporary resolution of the Egyptian Question at the 1840 London Conference merely prolonged this process; it did not eliminate the depth of the structural problems facing the empire.

Viewed from today's perspective, the Treaty of Kütahya is not an "incidental" event in Ottoman history, but one of the central links in

the transformation process that marked the entire 19th century. With its political, military, and diplomatic consequences, this treaty serves as a historical laboratory that reveals both the imperatives and the limits of Ottoman modernization. Therefore, a detailed examination of Kütahya is indispensable not only for understanding the Egyptian Question but also for grasping the general logic of the empire's final century.

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Chapter 5

Algerian-Turkish Relations in Flux: Political and Economic Cooperation Amid Shifting Global Landscapes ⚊

Senkadi Abdelkader[1]

Belkhira Mohamed[2]

Abstract

This paper examines emerging political and economic relations between Turkey and Algeria against the backdrop of wider regional and global transformations. In terms of changing geopolitical realities, economic interdependencies, and strategic partnerships, the study identifies how both countries have been struggling against challenges and have exploited opportunities to deepen their bilateral relationships. Politically, the cooperation is marked by common interests in regional stability, collaboration in multilateral institutions, and a common position on such central issues such as the Palestinian cause and what is happening in Gaza strip. Economically, trade, investment, and infrastructure projects have become the foundation of the relations, fueled by Turkey's proactive economic policies and Algeria's strategic location in North Africa. However such relations are not completely immune to outside pressures, including competition with the world power, regional instability. The paper concludes with an assessment of the resilience of Algerian- Turkish relations in the face of these intricacies, offering perspectives on their probable trajectory amid ongoing regional and international changes.

Introduction

In an era marked by unprecedented global shifts, the relationship between Algeria and Turkey has emerged as a notable partnership in political and economic arenas. Their political and cultural history dates back to the Ottoman Empire. In order to combat European powers during a time of

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1   Prof. Senkadi Abdelkader , a.senkadi@univ-chlef.dz , UHBB Chlef

2   Prof. Belkhira Mohamed , m.belkhira@univ-chlef.dz, UHBB Chlef.

regional dynastic collapse, the Barbarossa brothers established the Ottoman presence in Algeria in 1516, and it continued until 1830. Both States have maintained a cordial relationship shaped by their shared experiences as post-colonial states. Following Algeria's independence from France in 1962, Turkey expressed its support for the Algerian struggle and later established diplomatic relations. This historical context forms the bedrock of their contemporary relations, characterized by political cooperation and cultural exchanges (Kaya, 2021).

Since the early 2000s under the premiership and later presidency of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Turkey has sought to activate an ostensibly neo-Ottoman policy. Turkish foreign policy has sought to strengthen its diversified collaboration with the Arab world, North Africa, particularly Algeria. A common interest motivated by geo-economic, geopolitical, and cultural considerations. Frequent high-level meetings and expanding economic deals have been the outcome of bilateral visits of both heads of States, the Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and the Algerian President Abdelmadjid Tebboune. These interactions highlight the escalating political and economic cooperation between Turkey and Algeria, two nations pursuing mutual benefits through strategic partnerships. But in recent years, The geopolitical landscape of the globe has witnessed significant regional security concerns , transformations , changes , and conflicts: for instance the Palestinian – Zionist Entity conflict –in Gaza- that has lasted more than 620 days; The collapse of Bechar system in Syria and the advent of a new "untrustworthy" system of a new Syrian State; The Russian – Ukrainian war; The Iranian-USA escalations on the nuclear weapons possession; the regional insecurity along the Algerian – Libyan borders of more than 982 kms; the critical situation in the Sahel region; in addition to the Pakistani-Indian recent declared war. These conflicts and hot states of main States have created a global disequilibrium among the shifting alliances, and economic uncertainties. This troubled geopolitical landscape has placed the Algerian –Turkish relations at a crossroads prompting the two nations to reevaluate their diplomatic relations and economic partnerships Understanding these changes helps us see where the future might lead for Algerian-Turkish cooperation.

This research paper tries to shed the light on the Algerian-Turkish economic and political cooperations amid those global shifts. And In order to enhance and foster future relations, this question is underlined: On what basis are Algerian-Turkish relations assessed?

Our hypotheses to understand the core of the situation may be as follow:

- The rapprochement of Inter-State relations is linked to the reflection on what influencing factors may achieve in terms of interests throughout these relations.

- As a theoretical framework, the Algerian-Turkish relations are underlined on the basis of 3I's approach: Ideas, Institutions, and Interests. (Helen Milner and Peter Rosendorff)

1. Historical context and shared heritage of Algeria-Turkey relations

Algeria and Turkey share a long and complex past. The Ottoman Barbarossa brothers established the Ottoman presence and ruled Algeria from the early 16th century until the French took over in 1830, which left its mark on everything from local architecture to legal institutions. This historical legacy is a double-edged sword. For some Algerians, it is a reminder of colonial times, mainly they remember that Turkey voted against Algeria's independence in the United Nations (UN) General Assembly in 1955, and abstained in 1957, 1958, and again in 1959. For others, it sets the stage for shared interests in the Muslim world. In 1962 the bonds between Algeria and Turkey began to strengthen after Algeria gained independence. Both countries had similar struggles with colonial powers and shared a desire for regional influence. In recent years, economic ties, shared memberships in groups like the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), and collaborations on regional issues have added depth to their relationship.

Over the decades, their relations have included diplomatic visits, military cooperation, and cultural exchanges. This shared past provides a smoother path for diplomatic contacts and opens doors for cultural exchanges and joint projects. The Ottoman legacy acts like a bridge, linking the old with the new.

Modern diplomacy leans on these ties. Turkey has restored Ottoman-era buildings in Algiers and other cities, signaling more than just historical pride—it's a message of friendship and a reminder of shared history. Today, both countries use symbols and stories from this past to frame joint statements and agreements. Leaders, including President Erdogan, often call Algeria a "brotherly nation," which helps both countries present a united front in the international arena.

2. Economic cooperation: opportunities and challenges

Algeria, with its vast natural resources and strategic geographical position in North Africa, has become a focal point for many global powers, like Turkey, seeking influence in the region. Also , being a member of the African Union and the Arab League, Algeria represents a strategic partner for Turkey in Africa. Turkey is becoming one of Algeria's main trading partners outside Europe, buying gas and building factories. Turkish businesses now employ thousands in Algeria, making textiles, steel, and more. At the same time, both countries compete with Egypt and Morocco for similar regional markets and foreign investors. Energy brings them closer. Algeria wants to send more natural gas to Turkey, giving Ankara another supplier beyond Russia and Iran. The economic relationship between the two States has evolved significantly over the past two decades, reflecting both countries' aspirations to boost trade and investment.

According to recent statistics, Turkey is one of Algeria's primary trading partners, ranking fourth after China, France, and Italy (Turkish Statistical Institute, 2022). In 2021 alone, bilateral trade between the two countries reached approximately USD 4.5 billion, a significant increase from USD 2.5 billion just five years earlier (Algerian Ministry of Trade, 2022). Turkey primarily exports machinery, automotive parts, and textiles to Algeria, while importing natural gas, crude oil, and agricultural products.

2.1. "Their excellencies" economic shared visions and strategies

President Erdoğan's visit to Algeria in July 2023 marked a significant moment in the history of Turkey-Algeria relations. The visit was focused on enhancing bilateral trade and investment, emphasizing Turkey's growing interest in African markets (Küçük, 2023). Erdoğan underscored the potential for collaboration in sectors such as energy, construction, and technology, stating that "Turkey and Algeria have the potential to elevate their cooperation to new heights" (T24, 2023).

In tandem, President Tebboune's reciprocal visit to Turkey shortly thereafter signified Algeria's commitment to fostering a more robust economic partnership. During his trip, the two leaders discussed plans to double bilateral trade to $5 billion by 2025, a goal deemed ambitious yet attainable by both parties (Algeria Press Service, 2023). The establishment of joint ventures and economic agreements was a focal point of these discussions, demonstrating a willingness to engage in cooperative economic ventures that could substantially benefit both economies.

One of the pillars of this burgeoning partnership is the energy sector, where Algeria serves as a crucial provider of natural gas to Europe. Turkey, on the other hand, is keen to secure energy resources to sustain its growing economy. The bilateral meetings explored avenues for energy cooperation, particularly in natural gas and renewable energy. Tebboune's emphasis on Algeria's role as a stable energy supplier reflects a strategic understanding of the current geopolitical climate, especially in light of Europe's search for alternative energy sources (Hürriyet Daily News, 2023).

2.2. Major economic initiatives and projects

One of the pivotal aspects of this relationship is the strong Turkish investment flow into Algeria. The Turkish Government has encouraged investments in crucial economic sectors such as construction, building hospitals, roads, and factories. Turkish construction firms, for instance, have taken the lead in modernizing Algerian cities. Looking ahead, both nations see potential in working together on renewable energy projects. Solar power and wind farms are promising areas where they could expand cooperation, especially with global energy prices rising. Recently, the Turkish Ziraat Bank was established in Algeria is intended to facilitate the creation of strategic partnerships and stimulate the transfer of skills and technologies.

Notably, Turkish companies like Enka and Limak have undertaken significant construction projects in Algeria, amounting to nearly USD 5 billion since 2010 (Turkish Contractors Association, 2022). This influx of investment has created thousands of jobs and contributed to Algeria's infrastructural development.

In terms of agricultural cooperation, Turkey's strategic initiatives have focused on increasing agricultural exports to Algeria, which can help balance trade disparities. Given that Algeria has significant unused arable land, collaboration in agricultural technology and practices presents mutual benefits. Turkish firms are increasingly exploring investments in agro-business, promising a more stable economic exchange between the two nations.

2.3. Responses to global crises: energy markets and security

Events far from North Africa can swing the balance of power overnight. The Ukraine conflict rattled energy markets, making Algerian gas more attractive to Turkey and the EU. Rising food and fuel prices put pressure on both economies, forcing them to rethink old deals and build new trade routes. Security threats overseas, like cyber attacks or wars in the Middle East,

make both countries review their defense and intelligence sharing. Whether working together on a pipeline or facing the fallout of a war abroad, these crises make their partnership more valuable, but also more strained.

Table: 01   Algeria–Turkey trade data (2023–2024)

Category	Value (USD)	Notes
Total Trade Volume (End of 2023)	$6.3 billion	Full year 2023
Exports from Algeria to Turkey (2023)	$3.6 billion	Part of the 2023 trade volume
Imports by Algeria from Turkey (2023)	$2.5 billion	Part of the 2023 trade volume
Trade Volume (Jan–May 2024)	$2.7 billion	8% increase compared to Jan–May 2023

2.4. Targeting $10 billion trade volume

Trade relations between Turkey and Algeria have soared to new heights in recent years. In 2023, the bilateral trade volume reached an impressive $6 billion, marking a significant milestone in their economic partnership. This figure nearly doubles the $3.5 billion recorded back in 2018. According to Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan and his Algerian counterpart Ahmed Attaf, this achievement showcases the strong commitment both nations have towards economic integration. However, the current trade figures are just the beginning of their ambitious plans. The presidents of both countries have set a clear goal to elevate bilateral trade to $10 billion in the near future . This target has been a recurring theme in high-level meetings throughout 2024 and 2025, highlighting the strategic importance both nations place on their economic ties. As Algerian Foreign Minister Attaf pointed out, "Our ambitions surpass current levels," emphasizing that reaching this target remains a top priority, even amidst global economic uncertainties.

2.5. Confronting economic challenges

The economic partnership has not been without challenges. A key concern has been the trade balance, heavily favoring Turkey, which has led to calls for more diversification in the types of products traded. Turkish economists suggest that Algeria could benefit from enhancing its export-oriented industrial base to improve this dynamic (Öztürk, 2022). Such an initiative could also help Algeria reduce its over-reliance on hydrocarbons, which still account for about 95% of its total export revenue (Algerian National Office of Statistics, 2022).

Despite their growth, hurdles remain. Political uncertainties and different regulations can slow down investments. International competition from China and Europe also complicate the market. Recent global economic turmoil, like inflation and supply chain issues, has made business more uncertain. But regarding the strong political will of both countries, these challenges may bee confronted to turn their relationship into a stronger economic partnership.

3. Political relations: shifting alliances and diplomatic strategies

In recent years, the political landscape of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region has been marked by instability, particularly following the Arab Spring and ensuing conflicts. Both Algeria and Turkey find themselves facing these turbulent waters, which have prompted them to strengthen their diplomatic ties. This intriguing relationship which does not shape just their own futures, but also affects regional balance and international strategies. Recent years have seen frequent high-level meetings and expanding political and security deals. At the same time, competition and shifting alliances across MENA region and Europe put extra weight on every policy decision the two countries make. Both countries have aligned on several regional issues, especially regarding security and counter-terrorism. Both Algeria and Turkey have faced threats from extremist groups, and their cooperation in intelligence sharing and military training has strengthened their alliance. Moreover, their joint stance on issues such as the war on Gaza, the Libyan conflicts, the Sahel, and the Western Sahara. These conflicts illustrate shared commitments to respect the sovereignty of nations, which drives their diplomatic relations (Benmoussa, 2023).

3.1. Factors shaping Algerian-Turkish political relations

From cooperating on security to growing trade ambitions, Algerian-Turkish recent diplomatic moves ,for example, summits held in 2019 and 2021 focused on security, trade, and regional stability. Both nations also work through global groups like the United Nations and African Union (AU) to build regional coalitions , are shaping how outside powers and neighbors reacts. As shifting alliances and new global challenges test old relationships, understanding the main factors driving their common politics gives insight into what's next for this vital partnership.

3.1.1. The Gaza issue in Algerian-Turkish political relations

After more than 620 days of war on Gaza, this genocide has profoundly influenced international relations in the Middle East, especially between

countries known for their support of the Palestinian cause. Among these nations, Algeria and Turkey have joined forces, but their political relationship has become increasingly complex due to evolving domestic and regional dynamics.

Historically, Algeria has been a staunch advocate for Palestinian rights, rooted in its own struggle for independence. Since its independence in 1962, Algeria's foreign policy has consistently emphasized solidarity with oppressed nations, particularly Palestinians suffering under Zionist entity occupation. This stance positions Algeria as a moral leader in the Arab world, advocating for Palestinian statehood at international forums, including the United Nations (Riyad, 2020).

Turkey, on the other hand, has its own historical and ideological ties to the Palestinian cause. Under President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Turkey has shifted its foreign policy to focus more on assertive advocacy for Palestine, especially during humanitarian crises. Turkey's active role emerged strongly after the Gaza flotilla incident in 2010, when Israeli forces killed several Turkish activists aboard a ship attempting to break the blockade of Gaza. This event galvanized public opinion and led Turkey to adopt a more confrontational stance against Israel (Gürcan, 2021).

The Gaza issue acts as a rallying point for Algeria and Turkey, creating a platform for mutual collaboration. Both countries have expressed their solidarity through various diplomatic channels, often condemning Zionist entity actions and calling for international support for Gaza. For instance, during the escalations in May 2021, both nations called for emergency meetings of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) to address the violence and advocacy for Palestine (Benani, 2021).

As Algeria continues to grapple with its domestic economic issues and political transitions, its relationship with Turkey may evolve further. The Gaza situation remains an essential litmus test for this partnership. The ability of both nations to maintain a unified front relying on their historical commitment to Palestinian rights will depend on their capacity to balance their respective national interests against a backdrop of changing geopolitical realities.

As the Gaza conflict remains an enduring crisis, the position of Algeria and Turkey in the international arena will likely draw attention. Their joint endeavors reveal both the potential for solidarity among countries advocating for the Palestinian cause and the complexities that challenge such

alliances. Future developments will determine whether they can navigate their differences while upholding their shared commitment to Palestine.

3.1.2. Joint approach on the Libyan and Sahel political insecurity

The ongoing security challenges in Libya have far-reaching consequences that transcend its borders, fundamentally impacting regional dynamics, particularly Turkish-Algerian relations. The deterioration of security in Libya has created a complex web of political and military involvements among various actors in the North African landscape. This situation demands a closer examination of how instability influences diplomatic relations, economic collaborations, and security strategies among neighboring states.Following the fall of Muammar Gaddafi in 2011, Libya was plunged into chaos, experiencing a persistent struggle for power among rival factions, militias, and political entities. These security vulnerabilities have produced significant ramifications for Algeria and Turkey, both of which have vested interests in maintaining stability and influence in Libya. Turkey has emerged as a key player since its support for the Government of National Accord (GNA) in Tripoli, formalized through a military memorandum and a maritime boundary agreement in 2019 (Korkut, 2021). This alliance was intended to strengthen Turkey's geopolitical stance in the eastern Mediterranean and enhance its influence in North Africa (Al Jazeera, 2020).

Algeria, on the other hand, has traditionally upheld a policy of non-interference and neutrality, emphasizing the necessity of a Libyan-led solution to restore peace. The Algerian government maintains a significant concern regarding the spillover effects of Libyan instability, especially given its shared, 982 kms, border with Libya, which poses security risks such as terrorism and illicit trafficking (Boubekeur, 2021). Consequently, Algeria has sought to mediate between rival factions in Libya, positioning itself as a stabilizing force in the region.

The contrasting approaches of Turkey and Algeria toward the Libyan crisis present a complex challenge for bilateral relations. Turkey's military involvement has raised suspicions in Algeria, which fears that such activities could exacerbate tensions and violence in Libya, potentially destabilizing Algeria itself (Khan, 2022). Furthermore, the Algerian government is wary of Turkey's expanding influence in North Africa, which could lead to a shift in regional power dynamics that may not favor Algerian interests. Her involvement in the Libyan conflict highlights its aspirations to expand its influence in the region. Algeria's neutral stance in foreign interventions,

coupled with its role as a mediator, presents an opportunity for both nations to collaborate in fostering stability (Yilmaz & Guven, 2022).

Additional threats faced by both countries are terrorism in the Sahel, illegal migration to Europe, and organized crime networks. These problems don't respect borders, so Algeria and Turkey often meet at regional forums to find solutions. The two nations are focusing on defense and military collaboration, as evidenced by recent agreements for cooperative training and arms trade. Erdoğan and Tebboune reiterated their determination to collaborate on security issues, particularly in combatting terrorism and ensuring regional stability, which has been a concern for both nations (Middle East Monitor, 2023). Furthermore, their police and border agencies have signed deals to fight smuggling and terror threats. Both want stability in these regions as it spills over into neighboring areas, affecting everybody's security.

3.1.3. Influence of great powers: US, EU, Russia, and China

Algeria and Turkey must weigh the interests of major global players. The US and EU want stability in North Africa and see both countries as partners, but sometimes complain about human rights or political freedoms. Russia and China push for new trade routes and long-term energy deals. Algeria buys weapons from Russia and opens its doors to Chinese infrastructure projects. Turkey's close ties to Russia and recent tensions with Western allies make the triangle even more complex. Both Algiers and Ankara try to keep friendly terms with all sides, using their value as energy suppliers or regional power brokers to stay in the center of global talks. Global shocks like the ongoing war in Ukraine and pandemic-driven supply chain disruptions have changed the rules for energy and security. Algeria, as a big oil and gas exporter, suddenly found itself in the spotlight as European countries raced to find alternatives to Russian gas. Turkey, always on the lookout for stable energy sources, started buying more Algerian gas and investing in joint projects.

Both countries have used international turbulence as a reason to push for stable supply routes and energy security, building shared infrastructure and expanding bilateral political links.

3.2. Political divergences between the two nations

However, the relationship between Algeria and Turkey is not without its challenges. Algeria, with its non-aligned policy, is traditionally cautious about aligning too closely with Turkey, which has been assertive in its

geopolitical ambitions, particularly in the Eastern Mediterranean. The Algerian leadership has occasionally expressed skepticism regarding Turkey's regional aspirations, fearing they might undermine Algeria's own influence in North Africa and the Arab world (Tazdaït, 2022). As regional strategies shift, both nations must adapt to protect their interests. Experts see this relationship as dynamic and flexible. One regional analyst notes, Algeria and Turkey are finding common ground but are also cautious not to step on each other's toes, and this is because of the following political issues:

3.2.1. Israeli-Turkish relations: a misunderstanding amid the Arab world

Misunderstanding the Israeli-Turkish relationship frequently arise, particularly within the broader context of Arab politics. Established formally in the early 1990s, this partnership was driven by mutual interests, including military cooperation and economic ties. However, the relationship has waned since the early 2000s, particularly under the leadership of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, who has adopted a more vocal stance against Israeli policies in the Palestinian territories (Altunışık, 2019).

One critical misunderstanding surrounding Israeli-Turkish relations is the perception among many Arab states, among them Algeria, that Turkey's opposition to Israeli policies equates to solidarity with the Palestinian cause. While Turkey emphasizes its support for Palestinian rights and sovereignty, this stance often oversimplifies its motivations. Ankara's geopolitical ambitions and desire to assert itself as a leader in the Muslim world significantly influence its foreign policy decisions (Kirk, 2021). For instance, Erdoğan's rhetoric is frequently seen as populist, aimed at bolstering his domestic political standing rather than purely altruistic support for Palestinians (Gürkan, 2020).

Some Arab countries view Turkey's growing assertiveness in the region with skepticism, perceiving it as a threat to their own influence. This perception can exacerbate misunderstandings about the nature of Turkey's relationship with Israel. Certain Arab leaders may leverage anti-Israel sentiment to consolidate their power, thereby complicating the narrative surrounding bilateral ties between Israel and Turkey (Abed, 2022).

Despite fluctuations in public sentiment, the economic ties between Israel and Turkey remain substantial. Both nations continue to engage in trade and energy partnerships, indicating that cooperation persists even when political rhetoric grows tense. This pragmatic element of their relationship often goes

unnoticed, leading to assumptions that political discord signifies a complete breakdown of bilateral relations (Özkan, 2023).

3.2.2. Concerns over Turkish arms sales to Morocco

Turkey's basically playing both sides of the fence here. On one hand, they're cozying up to Algeria—boosting defense ties and all that jazz. But at the same time! They are selling drones to Morocco, like, no big deal. Morocco shelled out something like $70 million for those Bayraktar TB2 drones , and now they are eyeing the fancier Akıncı models too. Guess you never have enough drones, right? Naturally, this isn't sitting well with the deciders in Algiers. Especially after a Moroccan drone allegedly took out three Algerians in Western Sahara. The incident prompted Turkish diplomats to adopt a more balanced approach, offering drone sales to Algeria as well.

The arms race between these North African neighbors continues intensifying, with both countries substantially increasing their defense budgets in 2022. Ultimately, Turkish defense exports to both nations reflect Ankara's pragmatic approach to regional diplomacy—maintaining productive relationships with rival powers while advancing its own strategic and economic interests.

3.2.3. Drone incident and airspace violations

The incident in April 2025 involving a Turkish-made drone really brings to light some deep-seated tensions. Algerian air defense forces shot down what they described as "an armed surveillance drone" that had crossed into Algerian airspace near Tin Zaouatine, close to the Mali border. This drone, identified as a Turkish Akinci model operated by Mali's military, reportedly strayed into Algerian territory before being intercepted. This event sparked a significant diplomatic rift between Algeria and Mali, leading both countries to recall their ambassadors and shut down their airspaces to one another. For Turkey, this situation is quite tricky, as Ankara has military ties with both nations. Algeria has voiced concerns that "Turkish involvement is dragging the region towards more instability and armed conflict," which puts additional pressure on Turkey's strategy in the region.

4. Conclusion

Algerian-Turkish relations are marked by change and adaptation amid a shifting global scene. This relationship is more than politics or trade; it's about balancing interests, managing risks, and seizing opportunities. Economic collaboration represents the most concrete achievement of

the partnership. The ambitious objective of attaining a $10 billion trade volume, which builds on unprecedented exchange levels in recent years, underscores the dedication of both nations to fostering deeper economic integration. Concurrently, defense cooperation has been significantly bolstered through the exchange of drone technology and sales, though Turkey must adeptly navigate the intricate dynamics of supplying both Algeria and Morocco. From a political standpoint, aligned perspectives on the Palestinian issue and analogous strategies concerning Libya provide robust diplomatic underpinnings. However, contrasting opinions regarding the situation in Syria and Turkey's expanding involvement in the Sahel region present friction points that necessitate meticulous oversight. The recent " vicey versey" visits of Erdoğan and Tebboune represent a pivotal chapter in the evolving relationship between Turkey and Algeria. Their discussions not only seek to enhance economic cooperation but also aim to solidify a strategic partnership that could have lasting implications for the region. The alignment of their national interests, particularly in terms of energy security and economic diversification, positions Turkey and Algeria as key players on the African and Mediterranean stages. As both leaders continue to pursue deepened collaboration, the potential for a thriving partnership appears bright, creating a template for other nations seeking to forge similar alliances in a rapidly changing geopolitical environment. The future of this relationship will depend on how both countries manage their neighbors, handle global pressures, and translate economic wins into lasting cooperation. Listening carefully to regional and international shifts will be essential. Tomorrow depends on their ability to work together, even as the world continues to change around them.

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Chapter 6

Geopolitical Analysis of the Durand Line as the Main Factor in Tensions Between Afghanistan And Pakistan ⊃

Hüsamettin İnaç[1]

Samaruddin Gawhary[2]

Abstract

This study examines the historical development of the Afghanistan–Pakistan border issue. In particular, it analyzes the formation of the Durand Line, British colonial policies toward tribal areas, the status of the border following Pakistan's establishment, and diplomatic correspondence during the Cold War era. The future of relations between the Taliban, once seen as a strategic asset for Islamabad, and Pakistan is becoming increasingly uncertain and tense. The failure of the Istanbul talks has led to a new phase in the crisis of confidence between the parties and brought border-based tensions back to the forefront. This study examines the historical course of Taliban-Pakistan relations and analyzes how Pakistan's strategic depth policy in Afghanistan has become a factor threatening its own security and stability. The support given to the Taliban since the 1990s has provided short-term geopolitical gains but has dragged Pakistan into a "strategic quagmire" in the long run. This process presents an ironic case to the regional security literature as a classic example of state-sponsored militia policies backfiring. Given the long-standing experience of intense conflict on both sides, repeated recourse to military options increases the likelihood of a broader war and enables a conflict-retaliation scenario that will deepen the cycle of violence. The experience of the Istanbul talks has revealed the depth of mistrust between the Taliban and Pakistan, while also demonstrating once again that the most

1   Prof. Dr., Dumlupınar University, Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences, Department of Political Science and International Relations, husamettin.inac@dpu.edu.tr, ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6922- 2010.

2   Phd Student, Dumlupınar University Graduate School of Education, Department of International Relations, baha.rjoub@ogr.dpu.edu.tr, ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0842-9883.

difficult step in resolving this crisis remains "taking the first step." This article examines Türkiye's position in the Afghanistan–Pakistan crisis, its diplomatic behavior patterns, and its strategic choices in the context of regional power balances. Increased military and political tensions around the Durand Line following the Taliban's return to power in 2021 have made Ankara's quiet but multi-channel foreign policy approach more visible. Türkiye, thanks to its historical ties, credibility capital, and regional multi-engagement strategy, is positioned as an indirect mediator and balancing actor during the crisis process. The recent conflict between Afghanistan and Pakistan stems from multidimensional and complex causes. Among these causes, the issue of the Tehrik-i Taliban Pakistan (TTP), disputes over the Durand Line, the refugee crisis, cross-border security threats, and economic tensions stand out. This study aims to address the fundamental factors behind this conflict in detail and comprehensively examines the historical, political, and security dimensions of the tensions between the parties.

Introduction

Following the Westphalia treaties, historical and geopolitical border developments emerged. However, in the case of the Durand Line, Westphalia's principle of non-intervention and the right to self-determination were disregarded. The border was imposed by Britain, a foreign colonial power, and was determined without the participation of the Afghan people and the tribes living along the border. In this respect, the Durand Line is considered an example of a post-Westphalia border that is contrary to the spirit of the Treaty of Westphalia and incomplete. The Afghanistan–Pakistan border is the product of a geopolitical design shaped by the British Empire in the 19th century from the perspective of "India's security." Defined by the 1893 Durand Agreement, this border divides ethnic and tribal communities and has been a constant source of tension between the two states in the modern era.

When viewed from a historical perspective, political relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan can be examined in two main periods: the period from Pakistan's founding to 1979 and the post-1979 period. During the first period, bilateral relations were unstable, particularly due to disagreements over the status of the Durand Line and the political and cultural rights of the Pashtun population living on both sides of the border. During this period, Afghanistan accepted Pakistan's establishment but maintained its policy of not recognizing the Durand Line as an international border, leading to continuous diplomatic tensions between the two countries. In the second phase, i.e., the post-1979 period, political relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan improved at times and witnessed serious tensions at others, parallel

to changes in the international system. Between 1979 and 1992, relations between the two countries were largely tense due to the effects of US-Soviet competition on the region. During this period, Pakistan acted as an ally of the United States for strategic reasons, while the government in Afghanistan aligned itself closely with the Soviet Union. Thus, the two states found themselves in opposing blocs that were regional extensions of the Cold War, leading to bilateral relations being shaped in an environment of deep conflict. In the mid-1990s, before ISIS emerged on the scene, relations between the two countries took on a relatively close and cooperative character during the early years of the Taliban-led Islamic Emirate's rule in Afghanistan (1996–2001). Pakistan was among the few states that recognized the Islamic Emirate, and strategic coordination between the two countries was notable during this period. However, bilateral relations generally followed a tense course during the period of the Republic of Afghanistan, spanning 2001–2021. The main reasons for this tension included mutual distrust, Pakistan being accused by Afghanistan of pursuing a "double policy," the destabilizing effects of drug trafficking on Pakistan, border security issues, and the close relations developed by the Afghan Republic administration with India. These factors have systematically hampered diplomatic communication between the two countries and reinforced mutual suspicions.

When examining the political relations between the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan and Pakistan, distinct differences emerge over time. During the Islamic Emirate's first period in power, from 1996 to 2001, relations between the two countries were relatively close, friendly, and based on strategic cooperation. During this period, Pakistan was among the few states that officially recognized the Islamic Emirate, along with the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia. Pakistan's decision to recognize the Islamic Emirate and the diplomatic support it provided fostered a relationship based on mutual dependence between the two sides. Despite this positive backdrop, the Islamic Emirate's first period in power ended following an international intervention in which Pakistan was involved through covert cooperation, and the Republican era began in Afghanistan. During the transition years preceding the Republic, relations between Pakistan and the Islamic Emirate were tense and characterized by mistrust.

Following the Taliban's return to power in 2021, expectations arose that relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan would develop within a framework of close cooperation, as in previous periods. However, despite these expectations, bilateral relations have deteriorated significantly in recent years due to the refugee crisis, border security issues, and particularly the issue of Tehrik-i Taliban Pakistan (TTP). Allegations that the TTP is operating

in Afghanistan and Pakistan's security concerns have increased diplomatic tension between the two countries, ultimately leading to encounters that have sometimes resulted in direct military clashes. This study aims to analyze the background of these conflicts. In this context, the fundamental causes of the recent conflict, its consequences for regional and bilateral relations, the ceasefire process achieved between the parties, and possible scenarios for the future of Afghanistan–Pakistan relations will be examined in detail.

Relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan have been shaped by constant tension, mistrust, and mutual accusations since Pakistan's founding in 1947. At the heart of this tension lies the Durand Line, drawn by the British colonial administration in 1893. Afghanistan has never recognized this line as a legitimate international border, while Pakistan has defended it as an integral part of its national territorial integrity. The Durand Line has become not just a line between two countries, but an issue at the heart of regional instability with geopolitical, ethnic, strategic, and historical dimensions. Britain's Historical Footprint in the Pakistan-Afghanistan Border Tension. The roots of the border dispute between Pakistan and Afghanistan lie in the colonial power balances of the 19th century. Britain positioned Afghanistan as a "buffer state" to protect its Indian colony from Russia's advance in Central Asia. This strategy was a product of the geopolitical competition known as "The Great Game."

In this context, the Durand Agreement, signed in 1893 between Sir Mortimer Durand on behalf of British India and the then Emir of Afghanistan, Abdurrahman Khan, formed the basis of the current Pakistan–Afghanistan border. However, Britain's aim in establishing this border was not to create a fair border between the two countries, but to divide the region ethnically and strategically, thereby establishing a long-term control mechanism. The Durand Line divided the Pashtun tribes in particular, which became central to debates over identity and sovereignty in the years that followed. The Durand Line is a historical turning point in Afghanistan–Pakistan relations. Recognized by Pakistan as an internationally valid border, this line has never been officially recognized by Afghanistan and has become the most significant legal obstacle to a lasting settlement between the two countries. This study examines the historical background of the drawing of the Durand Line between Afghanistan and Pakistan and questions the reasons behind the Taliban's insistence on debating the legitimacy of this border in its negotiations with Pakistan to achieve a permanent ceasefire.

The long-standing tensions between Afghanistan and Pakistan have recently resurfaced in the form of border clashes and military interventions.

Undoubtedly, the Durand Line issue lies at the heart of these tensions. Therefore, in this article, we analyze the aforementioned border line from a geopolitical perspective, examining its historical background, regional impacts, and current implications. Understanding the Durand Line actually means understanding the power geopolitics in South Asia, the legacy of colonialism, and the dynamics of the formation of national identities. The relationship between Pakistan and the Taliban is one of the most complex and contradictory examples of South Asian politics. Pakistan has viewed Afghanistan as its "backyard" for many years; particularly since the 1990s, it has placed the Taliban at the center of its "strategic depth" policy. However, the Taliban's return to power in Afghanistan in 2021 has had unexpected consequences for Islamabad; the expectation of strategic advantage has turned into a security crisis. This article analyzes this transformation by dividing it into historical periods.

Afghanistan has historically been at the center of Eurasian power balances and has been referred to as the "Graveyard of Empires." The US withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2021 has been interpreted by many observers as a sign of the weakening of American hegemony, but it would be misleading to conclude that this withdrawal means Washington has abandoned the region. The new phase in US policy toward Afghanistan signals a shift from direct military presence to a geopolitical and hybrid strategy-based restructuring. As the global system evolves toward multipolarity and international power centers increasingly shift from West to East, Washington's renewed interest in Afghanistan and its surroundings is noteworthy. Once legitimized by the rhetoric of the "war on terror" and largely fragmented, this region has regained priority in U.S. geostrategic calculations. The Trump administration may aim to regain control of Bagram Air Base for American forces by utilizing diplomatic channels and peace processes in order to reestablish its influence in the region. However, the chances of success for such an initiative will depend on the consent of the Afghan government, the reactions of regional actors, and the balance of power on the ground.

Afghanistan–Pakistan relations have returned to the international security agenda in the post-2021 period due to border clashes, militant activities, and diplomatic tensions. Türkiye closely monitors the process due to its historical presence and geopolitical position in the region and is seen as one of the actors that could prevent the crisis from escalating. However, Türkiye's approach is seemingly low-profile but is actually based on multi-layered and strategic diplomacy. Afghanistan-Pakistan relations, especially after the Taliban came to power in 2021, have once again become the focus of geopolitical competition, border conflicts, and security concerns. In this

process, Türkiye's position is defined as somewhere between an "active mediator" and a "silent, strategic observer." Ankara carries a natural mediator profile due to its historical prestige, NATO identity, position in the Islamic world, and long-standing diplomatic and cultural ties with Afghanistan. However, the reality on the ground shows that Türkiye has adopted a more cautious and multi-layered strategy.

1. The Treaty of Westphalia and the Emergence of Geopolitical Borders

The Treaty of Westphalia, signed in 1648, ended the Thirty Years' War in Europe and laid the foundation for the modern nation-state system. With this treaty, borders ceased to be merely geographical lines and became political indicators defining the sovereignty and territorial integrity of nations. The Westphalia order established the right of each state to independently manage its internal affairs and the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other states, thus creating borders that defined the spheres of sovereignty of nation-states and were recognized by international law. In this context, the modern geopolitical concept of borders has gained historical legitimacy as a fundamental tool regulating the relationship between territory, population, and state authority. Colonial-era borders such as the Durand Line are controversial in terms of both national and international legitimacy when evaluated within the framework of the Westphalia principles (Özdal and Karaca, 2020, 278-279). Borders, as a geopolitical concept that determines a government's control over a specific region and population, gained importance in Europe after the Treaty of Westphalia. The Treaty of Westphalia was signed in 1648 in the German city of Münster among European countries after the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648) ended in Europe. This agreement laid the groundwork for the emergence of borders that define the sovereign territories of states and are recognized within the framework of international law.

The principles of sovereignty and equal rights established by the Treaty of Westphalia guaranteed the right of states in Europe to determine their own destiny and to establish their borders within the framework of international law. However, these principles were not directly applied to the colonial-era borders in South Asia. In the case of the Durand Line, the border drawn by the British colonial administration was not accepted by the Afghan national government and people, thus creating a contradiction between the national and international legitimacy of the line. Consequently, the principles of nation-state sovereignty and border legitimacy envisaged by the Westphalian order have not been fully implemented in the case of the Durand Line,

and this situation has become one of the fundamental sources of ongoing geopolitical tension in Afghanistan-Pakistan relations. However, in the case of the Durand Line, the Westphalian principles of non-intervention and the right to self-determination have been disregarded. The border was imposed by a foreign colonial power, Britain, and was determined without the participation of the Afghan people and the tribes living along the border. In this respect, the Durand Line is considered an incomplete post-Westphalia border example, contrary to the spirit of the Westphalia Treaty (Maisam, 2024, p. 4).

2. Post-Westphalia Borders and Historical Developments

With the Treaty of Westphalia, borders ceased to be mere geographical lines and became fundamental indicators defining the spheres of sovereignty and national identities of nation-states. During this period in Europe, states established absolute authority over their own territories and developed a system based on the principle of mutual recognition in international relations. However, when the influence of this order spread to regions outside Europe during the colonial period, a different picture emerged (Kissinger 2016, p. 35). Particularly in South Asia, the borders drawn by colonial powers were not in line with local ethnic, cultural, and political realities, which weakened both the local legitimacy and long-term stability of these borders. The Durand Line represents a concrete and problematic example of the post-Westphalia understanding of borders in South Asia. The line was drawn without the participation of the Afghan people and has led to conflicts at both the national and regional levels.

Since the signing of the Treaty of Westphalia and the spread of this concept worldwide, the concept of geopolitical borders—that is, territorial sovereignty borders—has retained its fundamental meaning, but certain historical developments have altered its meaning at the international level or weakened its position. In this context, colonial-era borders and external interventions, in particular, have made the legitimacy of borders both locally and internationally controversial and have created complexity in relations between modern states. A concrete example of such a weakening in the region is the Durand Line. This line is not a product of the nations' own will, but rather emerged as a result of an external separation process and foreign political decisions. Just like the border agreements imposed in the Middle East after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the Durand Line was drawn without regard for the region's social and cultural context. Therefore, it is evident that the line has failed to play a legal and legitimate geopolitical border role to this day and continues to be a constant source of conflict

between the two states. In fact, the Durand Line constitutes a concrete example of the artificial and unnatural border mentioned in the text: a border that is imposed solely by foreign policy concerns and is incompatible with the cultural, social, and demographic unity of the region.

3. Rights to Protect Borders and Territories

Unlike classical law, modern international law prohibits any action, occupation, conquest, or seizure that violates the territorial integrity of nation-states. The prohibition of the use of force, one of the norms governing international relations, guarantees the preservation of the existing status quo. Article 2, paragraph 4 of the United Nations Charter links the prohibition of the use of force with the principle of territorial integrity, stating: The Members of the United Nations shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations. In this context, although Afghanistan has historically not recognized the Durand Line, attempts to alter this line by force or military action are unacceptable under contemporary international law.

Therefore, the Durand issue has now become a point of conflict between Afghanistan's historical and national rights and Pakistan's established international territorial rights, and this situation determines the geopolitical nature of tensions between the two countries. The Durand Line is a classic example of the conflict between legitimate geopolitical border theory and imposed colonial borders. This border lacks historical legitimacy among the people and has weakened Afghanistan's territorial integrity from a geopolitical perspective. On the other hand, from the perspective of modern international law and the post-Ottoman order, Pakistan has established ownership and sovereignty over its territories. This duality between popular legitimacy and legal legitimacy forms the enduring root of political, security, and geopolitical tensions between Afghanistan and Pakistan.

From an international law perspective, Pakistan defends the legitimacy of the border as the successor to British India, while Afghanistan claims that this agreement is "not an international border, but a line of influence." The fact that the border has not been officially opened for discussion at the United Nations weakens Afghanistan's claim. However, the Durand issue remains a fundamental element of national identity in the Afghan public sphere. Today, the Durand issue has turned into a deep conflict of legitimacy between Afghanistan's historical and national rights and

Pakistan's internationally recognized territorial integrity. Afghanistan views the Durand Line as a product of colonial oppression and a violation of its historical identity, while Pakistan defends the line as a legitimate border under international law and the principle of state succession. These opposing stances determine the fundamental geopolitical nature of relations between the two countries; the border issue has evolved from a mere geographical dispute into a multi-layered area of tension centered on identity, sovereignty, and regional security. The Durand Line is not merely a geographical border between Afghanistan and Pakistan; it is also one of South Asia's most complex, strategic, and historically controversial geopolitical lines, which has anchored relations between the two countries in a century of mistrust, competition, and periodic conflict.

From a geopolitical and political geography perspective, the concept of borders is a central and multidimensional phenomenon arising from the interaction between nature (the environment) and humans. In this sense, borders are not merely geographical lines, but also a fundamental element determining the relationship between human settlement, sovereignty, and identity. On the other hand, particularly in Europe, with the end of the Thirty Years' War and the signing of the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia, borders became a political structure at the center of the concept of territory in the formation process of the nation-state system. In this context, the Durand Line between Afghanistan and Pakistan was drawn as a product of the colonial era and the post-Ottoman international order, but cultural, ethnic, and local demographic factors were ignored. Established by an agreement signed in 1893 between British representative Sir Mortimer Durand and Afghan Emir Abdurrahman Khan, this line was not intended to create a genuine national border from a geopolitical perspective, but rather to define the spheres of influence of the British Empire and the Afghan government.

The drawing of the Durand Line meant not only a loss of territory for Afghanistan, but also the fragmentation of its national identity and historical integrity. This border divided many ethnic groups, primarily the Pashtuns, into two parts, thus creating an artificial ethnic divide along Afghanistan's eastern border. In Afghan political discourse, this situation has gradually taken shape as the "Pashtunistan issue" and has become an identity-based element of resistance in the country's foreign policy. Therefore, the Durand Line carries not only a geographical but also a psychological, cultural, and political dimension of trauma in Afghanistan. In this context, the rejection of the border is perceived as a quest for national rights and historical justice for Afghanistan, and a struggle to preserve state integrity for Pakistan. Before the Treaty of Westphalia and the beginning of the era of nation-

states, the concept of "border" was generally considered synonymous with geographical lines and was mostly used for natural, desolate, and difficult-to-cross areas. These areas were regions no longer under the military control of an empire or government. However, as the concept of territory gained importance and became associated with the nation, "border" took on a new meaning: It began to be used as a restrictive and defining indicator that separated the living space of one social entity and the land chosen by its community from another social entity and their place of residence (Pourhassan and Mohammadnia, 2023, p. 35-36).

In the case of Afghanistan, the Durand Line never had the meaning of a national border. This is because the people on both sides, especially the Pashtun tribes, were deeply connected by ethnic, linguistic, kinship, and cultural ties and never accepted the line as a border between two independent nations. Therefore, Afghan administrations, predominantly Pashtun, have consistently refused to recognize the Durand Line as an official border since Pakistan's establishment in 1947. From Pakistan's perspective, the Durand Line is not merely a historical line but is regarded as an internationally recognized and legitimate border. As the successor to British India, Pakistan accepts the legal validity of this line and argues that it is of vital importance for state integrity and security strategy. The international recognition of this line is a critical pillar for Pakistan's border security, migration, and control of cross-border threats. In this context, the Pakistani government perceives Afghanistan's rejection of the Durand Line as a matter of sovereignty and national security, and is actively using diplomatic and military means to secure recognition and effective control of the border.

At the heart of the ongoing tensions between Afghanistan and Pakistan lie the conflicting interpretations of the Durand Line. From Afghanistan's perspective, this line is a border that disregards historical and cultural ties and therefore lacks legitimacy in terms of national identity and sovereignty. Pakistan, on the other hand, views the line as an internationally recognized, legal border and considers it an indispensable element in terms of state integrity and security strategies. This contradiction has led to relations between the two countries becoming a multi-layered geopolitical conflict encompassing identity, sovereignty, security, and international law, rather than merely a geographical issue. The Durand Line thus serves as a symbol of the insecurity and competition that has persisted in South Asia for over a century. In the modern era, the concept of borders takes on critical functions such as ensuring political unity and territorial integrity, strengthening national and state unity, and determining ultimate control and sovereignty over territory.

Additionally, scholars emphasize that national and international borders play a significant role in both separating and dispersing societies, as well as integrating, differentiating, and connecting them in conflict. These five functions are considered one of the fundamental roles of borders for modern states. In the case of the Durand Line, most of these five fundamental functions of the modern border concept have not been fulfilled. The drawing of the line disregarded the cultural, ethnic, and historical ties of the Afghan and Pashtun communities, thus bringing the function of separating and differentiating societies to the fore. At the same time, while the importance of the line for Pakistan in terms of sovereignty and territorial control was emphasized, the legitimacy of this line remained controversial for Afghanistan, and the function of strengthening national unity was lacking. This situation has transformed the Durand Line from merely a geographical boundary of the modern border into a focal point of political, cultural, and geopolitical conflicts. Thus, the five fundamental functions that the line should fulfill for modern states have emerged as an axis of conflict and insecurity in the region. The Durand Line provides a concrete example of how the modern concept of borders can undermine its five fundamental functions due to its failure to gain public acceptance and its incompatibility with ethnic and cultural realities. Instead of creating political and regional unity, this line has led to the fragmentation of the Pashtun population, constant political conflicts, and the weakening of the integrity of the Afghan nation-state, ultimately becoming a source of ongoing crisis between the two countries.

4. The Durand Line and Regional Border Management

One of the key concepts in determining borders is regional administration. Regional administration refers to the existence of an authority that provides permanent control over a specific region and population. The basic functions of this administration can be summarized as ensuring internal order and security, protecting territorial integrity externally, and protecting and developing the interests of the country's citizens. The Durand Line provides a striking example of the ineffective implementation of the concept of regional governance. This line has made it difficult to establish permanent control between Afghanistan and Pakistan, particularly complicating the maintenance of internal security and order in areas with a high concentration of Pashtun population. Furthermore, the line's lack of recognition as a border has limited the administrative capacity of both states in terms of protecting territorial integrity and national interests, creating a persistent environment of mistrust and crisis between the two countries. In this context, when evaluated from the perspective of regional governance and border control,

the Durand Line stands out as a problematic border model from a political and administrative standpoint (Omid Maysam and Shamsini Ghiasvand, 2024, p. 153-154).

According to many theorists, the importance of land lies in its ability to provide an area where the state can exercise its highest authority and consolidate its sovereignty. The Durand Line clearly demonstrates why land and sovereignty relations are a constant source of crisis for Afghanistan and Pakistan. For Afghanistan, the non-acceptance of the line has made it difficult to enforce national authority on its eastern borders, and the division of the Pashtun population has meant a limitation of the state's sovereignty. On the other hand, the international recognition of the line from Pakistan's perspective supports the state's need to secure its sovereignty and maintain control along the border, which creates constant mistrust and diplomatic tension between the two countries. In this context, the Durand Line retains its geopolitical importance not only as a geographical border but also as the intersection of issues of territory, sovereignty, and regional governance. From a geographical perspective, a government can be defined as a regional authority; for without territory, the existence of a government has no meaning. In this context, borders are also of central importance. Without borders, it is impossible for a particular government to establish sovereignty over a particular piece of land and turn that area into a state entity. Furthermore, these boundaries must be valid both legally and internationally, meaning they must be recognized by local laws and the people of that territory, as well as approved by international law and relevant institutions.

In the case of the Durand Line, this second condition, local approval, has never been met. Although many countries internationally recognize the line as Pakistan's official border, there has been no national consensus or official recognition within Afghanistan. Therefore, from a geopolitical perspective, the Durand Line stands out as a border lacking internal legitimacy within the Afghan government, and this situation is seen as the fundamental source of political and security tensions between the two countries. The border also plays a critical role in defining the concept of population. Through borders, a government's sovereignty over its territory and the specific population living on that territory is defined and confirmed. In this context, people living in the territory under a government's control are considered the official population of that region. However, the communities on both sides of the border along the Durand Line share the same ethnic origins and see themselves as part of a common historical identity. This situation has naturally intertwined the political structures of Afghanistan and Pakistan and has complicated the control and definition of the nation in both countries.

This ethnic intermingling stands out as one of the fundamental challenges to building a sustainable nation-state in Afghanistan.

The borders drawn during the colonial period continue to be the source of serious geopolitical problems in today's international system. The British colonial administration's strategic but arbitrary approach to determining borders in the regions under its control largely disregarded ethnic, cultural, and historical realities. This situation triggered border disputes, political conflicts, and military tensions in many regions after independence. Indeed, the border arrangements between Israel and Arab states, particularly in Palestine, the Kashmir issue between India and Pakistan, and the Durand Line between Afghanistan and Pakistan remain among the most critical examples of colonial border engineering that still undermine peace and regional stability today. These border lines have led not only to territorial disputes but also to identity conflicts, national security concerns, and the institutionalization of long-term regional rivalries. Therefore, the steps taken during the colonial period continue to shape the architecture of international relations in the post-colonial world and complicate the prospects for lasting friendship and cooperation between neighboring states (Wali, 2019, p. 29).

5. The Historical Background of the Durand Line

In 1809, British representative Mountstuart Elphinstone (Monte Stuart Alphonseton) was sent to the winter palace in Peshawar to establish diplomatic relations with Shah Shuja Durrani, King of Afghanistan, and to sign an alliance agreement against a possible Napoleonic invasion. At that time, the Sultanate of Kabul (or the Afghan Kingdom) had a vast sphere of influence covering Kashmir, Punjab, and Sindh. Elphinstone's mission was to dissuade Afghanistan from joining any European alliance (particularly the Franco-Russian alliance) that could threaten British interests in India. Since the late 18th century, Afghanistan had been viewed as a geopolitical threat to British colonial rule in the Indian subcontinent. Indeed, some Maharajas in India were willing to provide financial and military support to Afghan forces to drive the British out of the region. The British formed a strategic alliance with the Sikh ruler Maharaja Ranjit Singh in the Punjab region to prevent Afghanistan from growing stronger. The purpose of this alliance was to create a "buffer zone" that would prevent Afghanistan from supporting anti-British movements in India. Ranjit Singh's position enabled the British to first consolidate their rule in South India and then advance northward to take control of the regions bordering Afghanistan. Beginning in 1818, Ranjit Singh's military campaigns led to the loss of a significant portion of Afghan territory. This process paved the way for the First Anglo-Afghan War

(1838–1842) and the Second Anglo-Afghan War (1878–1880) (Djalili and Kellner, 2009, p. 404).

As a result of British occupation, Afghanistan was forced to sign various colonial treaties. The Treaty of Jamrud (1855) – signed during the reign of Emir Dost Muhammad Khan, increased British influence over Afghanistan. The Gandamak Treaty (1879), signed during the reign of Emir Muhammad Yakub Khan, made the British a decisive force in Afghan foreign policy. In addition, the Triple Treaty, dated June 26, 1838, was signed in Lahore between Shah Jahan, Ranjit Singh, and Britain. This agreement provided for the transfer of some Afghan territories in Punjab to Ranjit Singh. However, this agreement is considered legally invalid because Shah Shuja was not the legitimate ruler of Afghanistan at that time, as he signed the treaty as the leader of the Saduzai family, not as the king of Afghanistan (Özdal and Karaca, 2020, p. 514-516). During a period when Afghanistan lacked parliamentary representation and a system of government based on the will of the people, the Durand Line was imposed in a coercive manner in line with the strategic interests of colonial powers, historically dividing Afghanistan's political geography. This border reflected the regional security concerns of the British administration of the time and, in particular, its strategy of protecting northwestern India. However, from a geopolitical perspective, the creation of the Durand Line disregarded the socio-cultural structure of local communities and institutionalized a long-term regional conflict as a result of the border's lack of a strong social foundation for its legitimacy.

Pakistan's founding process and the determination of its borders were similarly shaped by the power balances of the time and had lasting effects on the political order in South Asia. Politically, this historical process has been assessed by some researchers as a move of "geostrategic engineering" aimed at preserving Britain's sphere of influence in the region. During the same period, the establishment of the State of Israel in the Middle East, along with the emergence of two regional formations, can also be interpreted as part of a design to maintain Western influence in Eurasia's strategic corridors during the post-colonial era. In this context, the emergence of Pakistan and Israel is not only a result of national identity and state-building processes, but also a product of a strategic arrangement aimed at the redistribution of power, security architecture, and the reconstruction of regional balances in the post-colonial international system. This situation has fueled geopolitical rivalries and multi-layered security issues that have persisted to this day in both South Asia and the Middle East (Wali, 2019, p. 29-30).

The Durand Line was established by an agreement signed on November 12, 1893, between the Afghan Emir Abdurrahman Khan and Sir Mortimer Durand, the British Secretary of State for India. This agreement was part of the British strategy during the "Great Game" period to prevent Russia from extending its influence southward from Central Asia. The agreement divided tribal regions between British and Afghan spheres of influence, leaving approximately one-third of the Pashtun population under British administration. The Durand Line was not only a geographical border but also a line that divided the historical and cultural integrity of the Pashtun identity. For much of the 20th century, the Pashtuns and other tribal communities living along this line continued their daily lives without actually recognizing the border. Marriage, trade, social ceremonies, and migration between tribes took place without any intervention from border guards. During this period, the border functioned as a socio-cultural space where ethnic solidarity and historical belonging took precedence. This situation was encouraged by the Pakistani state, particularly during the Soviet occupation in the 1980s. The Islamabad administration mobilized the large Pashtun population living on both sides of the Durand Line to support the anti-Soviet "Afghan Mujahideen" in Afghanistan. This strategic move played a decisive role in the emergence of Islamist Pashtun militias, which would later form the core of the Taliban. In this context, Pakistan's "open border policy" changed fundamentally after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. The US intervention in Afghanistan and the Taliban's granting of sanctuary to Al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden completely transformed border policies in the region. Under pressure from Washington, Pakistan established military security lines and checkpoints along the Durand Line and placed border crossings under strict control (Far, 2022,pp. 154-156).

Although these measures are seen as steps taken by Pakistan within the framework of security cooperation with the West, the hardening of the border has profoundly affected the regional social fabric. Bin Laden's subsequent escape to Pakistan and the continued presence of militants along the border have led to the region being drawn into a cycle of radicalization, impoverishment, and militarization. Thus, the Durand Line has evolved from a 19th-century colonial demarcation into a 21st-century security barrier. This process has not only fragmented the Pashtun identity but also deepened the social foundations of geopolitical insecurity between Afghanistan and Pakistan. The origins of Pakistan's Afghanistan policy date back to the Cold War era. After the 1979 Soviet invasion, the US and Pakistan supported the Afghan mujahideen, and this process created a large sphere of influence for Islamabad's intelligence agency, the ISI. In the post-Cold War era, Pakistan

defined its goal of establishing a regime friendly to it in Afghanistan under the concept of "strategic depth." This doctrine envisaged Afghanistan as an area of military and political support in the event of a possible war with India (İnaç and Rafiq Sada, 2021, p. 23-24).

6. Colonial Legacy and Afghanistan's Structural Instability Stance

Afghanistan has argued that the agreement was signed under coercion and colonial pressure, claiming that the 1893 agreement had a "100-year validity period." Accordingly, the view that the line lost its legal validity after 1993 is widespread in Afghan politics. Pakistan, as the successor to Britain, considers this line valid under international law within the framework of the principle of state succession. The border drawn by Britain was not only a geographical division but also the basis for an ongoing political rift. The border was determined not by natural geographical lines but by Britain's military and administrative interests. For this reason, the people of the region did not accept this border as legitimate either at that time or afterwards.

When Pakistan declared its independence in 1947, London immediately recognized the Durand Line as the new state's official border. Afghanistan, however, refused to recognize this decision, arguing that the line undermined Afghan national unity. Thus, the line drawn by Britain during the colonial period became a permanent source of new international conflict. This process led Afghanistan to sever diplomatic relations with Pakistan in 1949 and, from the 1950s onwards, gave rise to a new debate known as the "Punjabi Question." All these developments demonstrate how Britain's colonial legacy institutionalized ethnic, political, and border-based tensions in the region (Mogaddedi, 2020, p. 120).

7. The Geopolitical Dimension of the Durand Line

The Durand Line is not merely a historical border dispute between Afghanistan and Pakistan, but also a strategic fault line at the heart of South and Central Asian geopolitics. The demarcation of this border was designed as part of British colonial security strategy to strengthen the northwestern defense line of the Indian subcontinent; however, this demarcation, which did not take into account local ethnic, tribal, and cultural ties, has become one of the main sources of regional instability in the long term. The Impact of Geopolitical Legacy on the Present The border arrangement left by Britain between Afghanistan and Pakistan remains one of the fundamental causes of insecurity and competition to this day. The artificial divisions created by London's "divide and rule" policy have shaped not only relations between the two countries but also regional identity and legitimacy debates. Even

in the modern era, the Durand Line issue remains central to questions of national sovereignty and identity in Afghanistan, while for Pakistan it has become a matter of security and territorial integrity. This situation proves that Britain's historical intervention is not confined to the past but directly influences the current forms of regional politics and security calculations (Shafaee, 2023, p. 439-441).

7.1. Geographical and Strategic Importance

In 1893, following the British Empire's victory in the Second Anglo-Afghan War, the British administration drew the 1,640-mile (approximately 2,640 km) Durand Line to demarcate the border between Afghanistan and the region then known as the "British Raj." This process took place during the final stages of the political and military rivalry between Britain and Tsarist Russia in Central Asia in the 19th century, also known as the "Great Game." London's primary goal was to turn Afghanistan into a geopolitical buffer zone between its own colonial sphere of influence and Russia. The resulting border line, which stretches from the Chinese border in the northeast to Iran in the southwest, is named after Sir Mortimer Durand, the British India Foreign Secretary at the time. This border was taken over by the newly established state of Pakistan after the partition of India in 1947, and the Islamabad administration has since recognized the Durand Line as a definitive and indisputable international border (Pourhassan and Mohammadnia, 2023, p. 34).

Afghanistan, however, has refused to recognize the Durand Line as a legitimate border, both during its monarchy and under its republican and Taliban administrations. Even the Taliban administration describes the line as a "hypothetical" or "imaginary" border. This stance reflects not only a historical dispute but also a deeper geopolitical issue related to Afghanistan's territorial sovereignty and the construction of its national identity. The Durand Line is 2,640 kilometers long and runs through a mountainous and difficult-to-access region. It stretches from the west of the Hindu Kush to the south of Baluchistan and controls the natural passes connecting Afghanistan to the Indian subcontinent. For Pakistan, this border serves as a strategic buffer zone against threats from the west, while for Afghanistan, it means an artificial severing of its natural sphere of expansion. The Durand Line has been at the center of the "Great Game" throughout history and continues to be one of the main axes of influence struggles between the US, China, Russia, and regional actors today. The Central Asian region is a strategic transit area for global power projection due to its proximity to energy basins,

Indian Ocean trade routes, and China's Belt and Road Initiative (Pourhassan and Mohammadnia, 2024, p. 128-129).

7.2. The Division of Ethnic Integrity

Under intense British diplomatic pressure, Afghan Emir Abdurrahman Khan was forced to sign the 1893 treaty, which ceded part of the vast territory inhabited by the Pashtun tribes to British India. Thus, a region that was historically, ethnically, and culturally unified was divided in two by external intervention. The most sensitive aspect of the Durand Line is ethnic division. The border split the Pashtun and Baloch communities in two, and today millions of Pashtuns live in both Afghanistan and Pakistan. The ideal of "Pashtunistan" in Afghan nationalism is closely linked to the rejection of the border. This situation has heightened Pakistan's concern about the strengthening of separatist tendencies in its North-West Frontier Province (now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) and tribal areas. Pakistan views the Durand Line not merely as a border but as one of the fundamental pillars of its national security. The policy of establishing influence over Afghanistan has been linked to the search for "strategic depth," particularly against India, and this situation has directly affected Afghanistan's sovereignty-building and national identity policies (Şeyhanlıoğlu, 2021, pp. 65-67).

The Durand Line carries an ethno-political dimension due to its division of the historical living space of the Pashtun population. This situation has produced identity-based resistance in the processes of Afghan nation-building; in Pakistan, it has complicated the integration of border regions with the central government, increased the mobility of militant groups, and made border security fragile. In this context, the Durand Line is not only a border line but also a strategic fault line positioned at the intersection of regional security architecture, national identity struggles, and great power competition. Therefore, the future of this line is directly linked not only to diplomatic relations between the two states, but also to the evolution of the multipolar international system, regional alliance dynamics, and the future of sub-national identity movements.

7.3. The Validity of the Durand Agreement

The Durand Treaty became effectively moot with the death of Emir Abdurrahman Khan. Under intense diplomatic pressure from the British, Emir Habibullah Khan was forced to re-commit to the treaty's validity in 1905. However, with his death in 1919, this commitment was voided, and the same year, the British re-included the provisions regarding the extension of the Durand Line in the Rawalpindi Armistice of August 8, 1919 (İnaç,

2021, p. 226-227). Subsequently, the three-year Kabul Interim Treaty of 1921 replaced the Rawalpindi Treaty, and both parties (the Afghan and British governments) remained committed to its provisions until 1921. However, the situation changed again after the establishment of Pakistan in 1947. The Afghan government, through the Loya Jirga convened in 1949, declared the annulment of all treaties signed with the British-Indian government. At the same time, the Afghan representative attempted to bring the issue to the attention of the United Nations Security Council, but the proposal was rejected due to US opposition. Consequently, the Afghan government, relying on Article 14 of the 1921 Kabul Treaty, officially declared the annulment of the Durand Treaty and all its annexed agreements. In this context, the treaty's validity under international law is effectively terminated (Khalidi, 2018, p. 7).

8. Causes and Consequences of the Recent Conflict between Afghanistan and Pakistan

8.1. Tehrik-i Taliban Pakistan (TTP) is the Main Cause of the Conflict

The most significant cause of the recent conflict between Afghanistan and Pakistan is the dispute over the Tehrik-i Taliban Pakistan (TTP). Pakistan claims that the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan supports the TTP and provides militants with sanctuary on Afghan soil. In response, the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan claims that Pakistan has launched attacks on Afghan territory and along the hypothetical Durand Line. This has exacerbated security problems along the border and fostered the harboring of ISIS-affiliated elements. The mutual accusations clearly demonstrate that the TTP is the root cause of the conflict. Pakistan justifies every military intervention in Afghanistan by allegedly targeting TTP bases. Founded in Pakistan in 2007, the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) faced significant challenges following its establishment in 2014 and 2015 due to internal disagreements and organizational problems. However, the group reorganized and resumed operations in 2018, launching attacks against military positions and security forces in Pakistan. Pakistan's Demands and the Official Position of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan Following the renewed attacks of the TTP, Pakistan has requested the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan to launch comprehensive military operations against the Pakistani Taliban inside Afghanistan. The Pakistani government issued a clear security warning, stating that if the Islamic Emirate did not take such steps, the Pakistani army would be forced to conduct operations directly on Afghan soil. The Islamic Emirate of

Afghanistan categorically denies all these allegations. The Islamic Emirate's Foreign Minister, Emir Khan Mottaki, described Pakistan's accusations as "propaganda against the Islamic Emirate" and stated that Afghanistan does not harbor any organization that threatens the security of any regional country. Similarly, the Islamic Emirate's spokesman, Zabihullah Mujahid, rejected Pakistan's allegations, stating: "Instead of ensuring its own security, Pakistan has once again blamed Afghanistan. The Islamic Emirate neither supports nor condemns such actions; however, preventing attacks within Pakistan is not the responsibility of the Islamic Emirate. Pakistan must independently ensure its own security." These exchanges demonstrate that the TTP issue lies at the heart of the security crisis between the two countries and that the parties' perceptions of responsibility have completely diverged. Pakistan's Cross-Border Operations and the Response of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan Despite the Islamic Emirate's repeated statements that Afghanistan's territory would not be allowed to be used against any foreign actor, Pakistan did not find this assurance sufficient and continued its cross-border operations (Sheikh Darreh Ney and Moein Abadi Bidgoli, 2024, pp. 102-104).

In April 2022, Pakistani warplanes conducted airstrikes in the Khost and Kunar provinces of Afghanistan. According to Afghan sources, 47 people were killed and 22 were injured, the majority of whom were women and children. Pakistan stated that these attacks were operations targeting the TTP structure. Similarly, on March 18, 2024, Pakistani air forces conducted operations against targets in the Paktika and Khost regions, and on January 10, 2025, the Raskan district of Kunar province was targeted by Pakistani warplanes. The Pakistani government claimed that all these operations focused on TTP headquarters inside Afghanistan. Furthermore, tensions escalated further with the Pakistani attack on Kabul on October 9, 2025. The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan considered these attacks a violation of state sovereignty and stated that it responded in accordance with the provisions of self-defense under international law. According to Emirati officials, Afghan forces launched counterattacks along the Durand Line. Spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid stated that 58 Pakistani soldiers were killed and approximately 29 wounded in these operations. These figures have not been confirmed by Pakistan.

8.2. The Second Cause of the Conflict: The Indian Factor and Pakistan's Strategic Response

India's regional role also stands out as a significant factor in the recent tensions between Afghanistan and Pakistan. Pakistan launched an attack on

Kabul shortly after Afghan Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi's visit to India. Muttaqi's visit was noteworthy because it marked the first high-level official contact between the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan and New Delhi in many years. For Pakistan, India's growing influence in Afghanistan signifies a weakening of its long-standing policy of "strategic depth." Islamabad has traditionally aimed for Afghanistan to serve as a "backline" for its own security and views India's gaining political, economic, or intelligence influence over Pakistan through Afghanistan as a national security threat. In this context, Muttaqi's visit to India was interpreted by Pakistan as Afghanistan drawing closer to India and raised concerns that the regional balance of power could shift. This situation can be considered a key factor in Pakistan's escalating pressure on Afghanistan and justifying the attack on Kabul.

The extraordinary hospitality shown by India to the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan delegation was considered a remarkable diplomatic development. Afghan Foreign Minister Amir Khan Mottaki and his accompanying delegation were welcomed by Indian officials with an unusually warm and high-level protocol. This signals that relations between the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan and India may enter a new era. One of the most significant aspects of the visit was Mottaki's visit to Darul Uloom Deoband. Despite this institution's historical and ideological ties to the dominant Deobandi line in Afghanistan, it has not been officially visited by any high-ranking Afghan official since the 1950s. Therefore, this visit holds both symbolic and strategic significance. Another noteworthy element is the warm welcome the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan received by the foreign minister, despite the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in India being known for its nationalist and often anti-Islamic rhetoric. The government even allowed Muttki to pay an official visit to Deoband, demonstrating that pragmatic and strategic considerations are at the forefront of India's Afghanistan policy.

While India does not share a direct border with Afghanistan, New Delhi's official rhetoric occasionally emphasizes the claim of sharing a border with Afghanistan through Gilgit-Baltistan. India has historically considered Gilgit-Baltistan a sovereign territory and, as such, considers the region part of its strategic hinterland. Therefore, Pakistan has made both preserving the political status of the region and limiting Indian influence in Afghanistan a key element of its foreign policy. Emir Khan Muttki's visit to India caused significant unease in Pakistan, particularly because it was one of the first official contacts at the level of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan. The visit sparked not only concern but also a distinct sense of anger and resentment in Islamabad. The timing of the visit and the warm welcome India extended to the delegation further reinforced Pakistan's reaction. Although India's

relations with the Islamic Emirate are limited and largely symbolic, New Delhi's efforts to maintain its influence in the region following the US withdrawal from Afghanistan are noteworthy. India, in particular, seeks to maintain its presence as a counterweight to China and Pakistan's influence in Afghanistan. This strategic approach explains India's cautious yet sustained diplomatic engagement in Afghanistan. In this context, India's relative rapprochement with the Islamic Emirate and Muttki's visit to New Delhi were interpreted by Pakistan as a sign of strengthening Afghanistan-India relations. This situation was seen as risky for Pakistan's traditional concept of "strategic depth" and paved the way for Islamabad to increase pressure on Kabul. Therefore, Pakistan's attack on Kabul can be interpreted not only as a show of force related to the TTP issue but also as a means of preventing Afghanistan's rapprochement with India.

8.3. The Afghanistan-Pakistan Conflict: US Factors and Indirect Pressure Allegations

There are various regional interpretations suggesting that the United States played a role in the recent conflict between Afghanistan and Pakistan. Some analyses claim that the US has recently increased its diplomatic pressure on the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, particularly demanding the transfer of Bagram Air Base. However, these claims have not been officially confirmed by the US or the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan. However, the circulating of former US President Donald Trump's statement, "If the Taliban doesn't give up Bagram, very bad things will happen," in various political circles has made these discussions more visible. While the context and accuracy of this statement have not been officially confirmed, its perceptual impact in the region is significant. Furthermore, the meetings between Pakistani Prime Minister and Chief of Army Staff Asim Munir with Donald Trump and the close contacts between the two sides have created a perception in some circles that the US is attempting to exert pressure on the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan through Pakistan. These assessments are largely based on regional commentary, security analyses, and geopolitical speculation. Therefore, the US factor can be considered as one of the indirect influences of the current conflict; however, the nature of this influence should be evaluated cautiously, as it is based on regional analyses and political discourse, not official statements. Nevertheless, it is generally accepted that the US is monitoring developments in Afghanistan within a strategic framework, within the context of Pakistan, China, and Iran, and is attempting to exert indirect influence on Afghanistan in terms of the balance of power in the region.

Pakistan's attack directly targeting Kabul was the first in the history of relations between the two countries and signaled a new escalation in regional politics. This extraordinary development has been evaluated not only as a technical dimension of Afghanistan-Pakistan tensions but also in the context of the indirect influence of regional and global actors (especially the US). Some regional analyses have raised allegations that the United States is attempting to exert pressure on the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan through Pakistan. These allegations are interpreted as suggesting that Washington has demands, such as the transfer of Bagram Air Base, and that if the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan refuses to accept these demands, pressure will be increased through Pakistan. In this context, some experts consider Pakistan's direct targeting of Kabul to be an indirect message from the US. According to these analyses, the US's aim is to convince the Islamic Emirate of two matters: First, that if Washington's demands are not met, Afghanistan could once again become a center of international insecurity. Second, that the Islamic Emirate will be forced to make strategic concessions to gain regional legitimacy. While these thoughts lack official confirmation, they are expressed within the framework of regional commentary that takes into account the balance of power in Afghanistan and the close contacts between Pakistan and the US. Therefore, the US factor can be considered an indirect, perceptual, and strategic factor in the current conflict; however, such assessments should be treated with caution.

9. Pakistan's Security and Geostrategic Threats

Pakistan's most serious security concern is the Afghan Talabani's indifference to militant activities along the border. The Afghan government is not actively defending the border from smugglers or armed groups, creating the perception of a strategic threat to Islamabad. Pakistani officials state that most militants operating within Afghanistan are loyalists of the Taliban and aim to "re-establish Islamic rule" in areas historically snatched from Afghanistan by the British. TTP, in particular, plays a central role in this equation. According to Pakistani officials, the Afghan Taliban provides covert support to TTP activities on Pakistani soil. This claim was further strengthened after the targeting of TTP leader Noor Wali Mehsud by Pakistani forces in Kabul and the subsequent week-long border clash. While both sides—Afghan and Pakistani Taliban—deny the claims of mutual support, the actual situation on the ground reveals a de facto proxy relationship. This dynamic is closer to a proxy war model than a classic form of interstate conflict. The Afghan Taliban do not engage in direct military engagement, but they also do not take any concrete steps to limit the TTP's activities. Thus,

an implicit contradiction emerges between Pakistan's security priorities and the ideological and strategic priorities of the Afghan regime. Some senior members of the TTP have openly stated that they "received no pressure from the Taliban leadership in Afghanistan not to fight in Pakistan." This statement demonstrates that the Taliban leadership's passivity on border security is also linked to their ideological brotherhood (Sheikh Darreh Ney and Moein Abadi Bidgoli, 2024, p. 101).

The Durand Line has become not only a historical border dispute but also the geographical line of proxy security competition between the two states. In an environment where Afghanistan seeks to establish its domestic legitimacy through popular support and Pakistan through international law, the TTP's cross-border activities create an area where the two countries' sovereignty areas practically overlap. This has placed the tension between geopolitical sovereignty and ideological solidarity at the heart of regional security. During the Cold War, Pakistan became a key ally in the US's Central Asia policy, while Afghanistan pursued a policy of neutrality. Afghanistan's rapprochement with the Soviets in the 1950s was perceived by Pakistan as a threat through the Durand Line. Post-1979 Jihad, Refugees, and the Collapse of the Border During the Soviet occupation period (1979–1989), Pakistan, along with the CIA and Saudi Arabia, supported the Afghan mujahideen, effectively rendering the border uncontrolled. Millions of Afghan refugees have sought refuge in Pakistan, and the border regions have become a hub for radicalization, arms, and drug trafficking (Djalılı and Kellner, 2009, pp. 407-408).

10. Pakistan's Transition from Strategic Depth to Strategic Swamp

In the mid-1990s, the Taliban movement was formed from students emerging from madrassas in Pakistan. The ISI aimed to secure its own interests in Afghanistan by supporting this new movement. Pakistan's military, financial, and logistical support facilitated the Taliban's capture of Kabul in 1996. During this period, Islamabad became one of the few states (the others being Saudi Arabia and the UAE) to officially recognize the Taliban regime. However, this "brotherly" relationship was largely based on interests, based not on ideological affinity or popular support but on security strategy. The Post-9/11 Era: The Hypocritical Alliance (2001–2014). The US intervention in 2001 overthrew the Taliban regime. Pakistan, by joining the US "war on terror" coalition, assumed the role of Washington's ally while continuing to provide safe havens for Taliban leaders. This contradictory policy was criticized by both the US and Afghanistan (Gawhary, 2025, pp. 44-45).

The Kabul administrations (Karzai, then Ghani) accused Pakistan of being a "terrorist breeding center." Islamabad, meanwhile, found itself increasingly squeezed between US pressure and internal security threats. Around August 15, 2021, the Taliban seized Kabul and took over. This ushered in a new era for the Pakistan-Afghanistan border regime, the mobility of militant groups, and refugee/diplomatic relations. The Taliban's Second Return to Power and the Deepening of Tensions (2021–2025). With the US withdrawal in 2021, the Taliban returned to power. Pakistan initially hailed this as a strategic victory. However, serious cracks soon emerged in relations: First, the Durand Line Issue: The Taliban administration refused to officially recognize the Durand Line on the Pakistani border. On the second point, the TTP Problem: The pro-Taliban militant group in Pakistan, taking shelter in Afghanistan, increased its attacks on Pakistani security forces. Finally, the Border Tensions: Between 2023 and 2025, the two sides experienced border clashes and air strikes. These developments demonstrated the virtual collapse of Pakistan's dream of "strategic depth." The geopolitical advantage that Pakistan hoped to gain by using the Taliban has instead turned into a security threat. While the Taliban regime chose not to interfere in Pakistan's internal affairs, it did not prevent the TTP's activities. This situation translated into an "uncontrollable neighboring regime" for Islamabad rather than a "friendly regime." Thus, Pakistan found itself trapped under its own security architecture — a state victim of its own militia strategy. Although Pakistan was the first country to recognize the Taliban regime in 1996, border problems escalated again after the Taliban's return to power (2021). The Taliban administration did not recognize the physical wall that Pakistan had built along the border; Border clashes have intensified, particularly in the Nangarhar, Konar, and Khost regions. Pakistan, on the other hand, holds Afghanistan responsible for the TTP attacks. Thus, the Durand Line has once again become a military tension line between the two countries.

11.Geopolitical Tensions in Afghanistan-Pakistan Relations and Proxy Elements in the New Security Architecture

Pakistani Defense Minister Khawaja Asif's statements regarding the possibility of "open war" with Afghanistan indicate the deepening of long-standing geopolitical tensions between the two countries. These statements are not merely a diplomatic showdown between the two states, but also a reflection of the transformation of the regional security architecture. The clashes and mutual accusations surrounding the Durand Line demonstrate that cross-border militant movement along the Afghanistan-Pakistan line remains unchecked. Pakistan has historically viewed Afghanistan as a buffer

zone for its own security, within the framework of its strategic depth doctrine. However, with the Taliban's rise to power after 2021, this balance has been reversed: the Taliban has become a quasi-state actor operating independently of Islamabad's influence and is no longer Pakistan's "backyard."

The Pakistani Defense Minister's statement that "the Taliban is now acting as India's proxy" demonstrates the repetition of the classic proxy war narrative in the regional context. During the Cold War, Pakistan supported the Afghan mujahideen against the Soviets; in the 1990s, it viewed the Taliban as a strategic ally. Today, however, the roles have reversed: Pakistan defines the Taliban government in Afghanistan as a security threat, while the Taliban opposes it for interfering in Pakistan's internal affairs. This has created an asymmetric security dilemma between Afghanistan and Pakistan. While Pakistan views the TTP operating on Afghan soil as a threat to its national security, the Taliban government avoids directly targeting this group. Thus, the two actors attempt to balance each other with proxy actors based on a mutual lack of trust.

The tension between Afghanistan and Pakistan is not merely a bilateral issue; it also reflects regional power rivalry. The prominence of India's emphasis in Pakistan's statements demonstrates that Islamabad perceives the power struggle in Afghanistan as a new front in the India-Pakistan rivalry. Meanwhile, China's infrastructure investments in Afghanistan and Iran's growing influence on its western border are restricting Pakistan's geopolitical maneuverability. In this context, the Taliban's efforts to pursue an independent foreign policy can be considered part of its pursuit of a multi-centered regional balance. The Taliban government is pursuing a strategy of establishing balanced relations with China, Iran, Russia, and Central Asian countries, ceasing to be a dependent actor on Pakistan. Pakistan's warning of "open war" actually represents a new phase in the classic debate about the legitimacy of the border and security sphere. The Durand Line is not only a geographical line between the two countries, but also a symbol of geopolitical identities and security perceptions. Currently, Afghanistan-Pakistan relations have settled into a conflicting balance between the "independent Taliban state" and the "security-concerned Pakistani state." While the Doha and Istanbul talks offered diplomatic efforts to ease this tension, a lasting peace will not be established unless the structural lack of trust, proxy elements, and the historical legitimacy of the border are resolved (İnaç and Amini, 2024, pp. 151-152).

12. Tension and Open War Warning in Taliban-Pakistan Talks

Pakistani Defense Minister Khawaja Asif's statement that "we may enter open war" with Afghanistan suggests that tensions between Islamabad and the Taliban have crossed diplomatic lines and risk escalating to the military. The timing of the statement—coming amid ongoing talks in Istanbul between delegations from both countries—is quite striking diplomatically. While the Doha and Istanbul talks between Pakistan and Afghanistan are officially labeled "peace and security consultations," the parties' mutual distrust is now clearly reflected in diplomatic language. Asif's words, "What we discussed in Doha grew in Pakistan, but I don't understand why Afghanistan treats us this way," can be interpreted as an attempt to invoke Pakistan's historical influence over the Taliban. This statement is a diplomatic pressure message that questions Afghanistan's pursuit of an independent foreign policy and attempts to compensate for Islamabad's loss of influence in the region. Diplomatically, this statement will reinforce Afghanistan's emphasis on sovereignty. The Taliban administration will likely interpret these statements as a "continuation of Pakistan's colonialist stance" and adopt a more rigid stance in the negotiations. Consequently, it seems unlikely that any tangible progress will be expected from the Istanbul talks in the short term.

The historical legitimacy debates surrounding the Durand Line are currently being reshaped by the geopolitical and security dynamics of Afghanistan-Pakistan relations. Pakistani Defense Minister Khawaja Asif's recent statement, "If talks with the Taliban fail, we may engage in open war with Afghanistan," has raised concerns that the diplomatic tensions between the two countries could escalate to the military level. This statement was made during the Taliban-Pakistan talks, which began in Doha and continued in Istanbul, and thus directly impacted the course of the negotiation process. From a diplomatic perspective, this statement reflects Pakistan's efforts to reassert its historical influence over the Taliban and a reaction to Afghanistan's pursuit of an independent foreign policy. Pakistan perceives the Taliban administration's new diplomatic contacts, particularly with India and Iran, as threats to its own security architecture. This has caused relations between the two countries to shift away from the rhetoric of "brotherhood" and toward a foundation of mutual distrust.

From a military perspective, the term "open war" serves not only as a diplomatic pressure tool but also as a warning that the already fragile security balance in the border regions could be further destabilized. Pakistan's airstrikes, which occasionally target Afghan territory in response to increasing TTP attacks in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan

regions, increase the risk of an uncontrolled escalation between the two countries. The Taliban administration, however, characterizes these attacks as a violation of sovereignty and declares that it reserves the right to retaliate. This further complicates the already contentious issue of border security along the Durand Line.

Politically, domestic political dynamics in Pakistan have also contributed to the hardening of this rhetoric. The escalating economic crisis and security challenges have led the government to adopt nationalist rhetoric. In response, the Taliban administration frames Pakistan's statements as an intervention against national sovereignty and presents the domestic public with the image of an "independent administration resisting external pressures." Thus, both sides are attempting to consolidate their domestic political legitimacy through foreign political tensions. From a regional perspective, this development carries the potential for a new rupture in South Asia's security architecture. Afghanistan's rapprochement with China, Iran, and Russia, and Pakistan's rivalry with India and the West are transforming the region into a multipolar geopolitical conflict. Consequently, the historical legacy of the Durand Line has ceased to be a mere border dispute; it has been reshaped as a proxy war, a security balance, and a struggle for regional influence along the Afghanistan-Pakistan axis.

13. Pakistan's "Taliban Paradox": The Transformation of the TTP from a Tool of Influence into a Security Threat

Pakistani security forces have long used militant groups like the TTP as a tool to exert indirect influence over the Afghan Taliban. This strategy was based on the "good Taliban vs. bad Taliban" dichotomy that Islamabad has employed since the 1990s. The Afghan Taliban was viewed as a "good" partner serving Pakistan's regional interests, while groups that directly threatened Pakistan's internal security were classified as "bad." However, this approach has become a security policy that has backfired over time.

Since the Taliban took control of Afghanistan in 2021, the TTP has launched widespread attacks against civilian and military targets in Pakistan's border regions, creating a profound vulnerability in the country's security architecture. The recent escalation of deadly bombings and armed attacks, in particular, demonstrates the collapse of this tactical distinction Islamabad had built in the past. The TTP has become not only an "uncontrolled militant structure" but also a threat the Pakistani state faces with its own intelligence history. The Afghan Taliban's ideological affinity and historical solidarity with the TTP has made it impossible for Islamabad to control

militant activities on Afghan soil. This has transformed Afghanistan under Taliban rule from a strategic buffer zone for Pakistan into a direct security risk.

The recent negotiations in Doha and Istanbul were designed to reduce the TTP's activities and establish stability along the border; however, it is unclear whether these talks will produce lasting results. The complexity of this crisis lies in Pakistan's inability to easily contain a group it created and supports. The TTP is no longer just a domestic threat; it has also transformed Islamabad's lever of influence into a challenge to itself. This scenario signals the de facto collapse of Pakistan's strategic depth doctrine. This doctrine, once aimed at building regional influence through Afghanistan, has now transformed into an asymmetric threat network within the country, forcing Islamabad into a defensive posture both militarily and diplomatically.

Pakistani Defense Minister Khawaja Asif's harsh statement carries weight, and his statement in Istanbul, "If no agreement is reached, we will enter open war," while considered a diplomatic threat, poses a serious risk to the military balance on the ground. It is known that Pakistan has recently conducted airstrikes against the increasing TTP attacks in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan. However, these operations have occasionally spilled over into Afghan territory, sparking border violations between the two countries. The Taliban government considers the targeting of its territory a "violation of its sovereignty" and states that it reserves the right to retaliate. This increases the risk of uncontrolled escalation between the two sides. The autonomous actions of militant groups, especially in border areas, could easily trigger a military conflict.

14. Political Consequences and Diplomatic Repercussions of the Conflict between Afghanistan and Pakistan

The recent conflict between Afghanistan and Pakistan has led to a significant strain in political relations between the two countries. This tension has manifested itself not only at the bilateral level but also in regional and international arenas. Following the conflict, Pakistan adopted a narrative accusing the Islamic Emirate of supporting terrorism in various international and regional forums. In this context, Pakistan asserted that Afghanistan's territory was being used against Pakistan and, furthermore, that Afghanistan could pose a security threat to other states under the right circumstances. Such allegations have become a key component of Islamabad's strategy to exert pressure on Afghanistan in the eyes of the international community. Furthermore, by specifically raising issues such as "inclusive governance,"

"human rights," and "women's participation in public life" at regional meetings on Afghanistan, Pakistan is indirectly attempting to hinder the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan's international recognition process. This approach reflects Pakistan's strategy of simultaneously highlighting security concerns and exerting diplomatic pressure on Afghanistan through normative arguments. As a result, the political impact of the war negatively impacted the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan's pursuit of international legitimacy. Pakistan, meanwhile, sought to increase its leverage over Afghanistan through a combination of security, diplomatic pressure, and normative rhetoric.

The Use of Mutual Pressure Tools and the Further Straining of Relations Between the Two Countries The deterioration of bilateral relations is not merely a process in which Pakistan has deployed pressure tools against Afghanistan; the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan has also employed various counter-pressure tools in the context of recent conflicts. This demonstrates that relations are no longer based solely on unilateral accusations but rather on mutual pressure strategies. According to statements by the Islamic Emirate's spokesperson, Zabihullah Mujahid, it is alleged that ISIS groups are "turned a blind eye" or operating in some Pakistani cities, and that some attacks in Afghanistan and other countries in the region (including Iran and Russia) are allegedly organized by ISIS cells based in Pakistan. This discourse has become an important diplomatic and political pressure tool used by the Islamic Emirate against Pakistan. Of course, these allegations are not supported by independent evidence, and are therefore viewed with caution internationally. Furthermore, there are assessments that drug production and trafficking activities have increased in Pakistan following the ban on drug cultivation in Afghanistan. This situation is being used by the Islamic Emirate as another tool of criticism and pressure against Pakistan. This discourse demonstrates that the drug economy has become a new topic of discussion in the relations between the two countries, particularly in the context of regional security and cross-border crime. Another element of pressure put forward by the Islamic Emirate is the allegation that Pakistan is creating problems in transportation routes to Central Asia. In this context, Afghanistan interprets Pakistan's policy on regional trade and transit corridors as a "geoeconomic pressure tool" against itself. In short, with the deterioration of relations between the two countries, both sides have begun to use their unique pressure tools to the fullest. This mutual pressure dynamic has further damaged the already fragile Afghanistan-Pakistan relations and exacerbated their negative consequences.

The tensions created by the war were not limited to political and security aspects; they also directly negatively impacted economic relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan. Following the conflict, Pakistan implemented various restrictions on Afghan traders at the Port of Karachi. This significantly reduced the functionality of the port, where Afghanistan conducts a significant portion of its foreign trade by sea. Furthermore, the closure of border crossings between the two countries led to a significant decline in trade volume. The transportation of Afghan goods to third countries through Pakistan became difficult and, at times, obstructed. During this period, the confiscation of Afghan traders' containers, delays in transportation, and increased customs duties further hampered commercial activities. Because Afghanistan's economy is highly dependent on foreign trade, particularly transit routes through Pakistan, these measures placed significant economic pressure on Afghan traders. Furthermore, Pakistan also faced economic losses due to reduced exports to the Afghan market, disruptions to border trade, and decreased transit revenues. Therefore, the economic interdependence between the two countries has become a source of mutual costs during the conflict and has created a long-term environment of distrust in economic relations.

One of the most significant social and humanitarian consequences of the war is the escalation of pressure on Afghan refugees living in Pakistan and the acceleration of forced deportations. Following the conflict, the Pakistani Central Government, in a cabinet meeting chaired by Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif, openly declared that only Afghan citizens with valid visas could remain in the country, while all other Afghans must be expelled from Pakistani territory. This decision created a serious humanitarian crisis for hundreds of thousands of Afghans who had been living in Pakistan for many years, most of whom were unregistered or in the country with temporary documents. With the implementation of the deportation orders, numerous Afghan families were forcibly deported, their property and household goods confiscated. Allegations of ill-treatment emerged in some border areas, and their access to education, healthcare, and livelihoods was suddenly disrupted. Therefore, one of the most striking consequences of the war is the mass and forced repatriation of Afghan refugees, which has both increased Afghanistan's socioeconomic burden and profoundly impacted the humanitarian dimension of Pakistan-Afghan relations.

15. Is Türkiye a Mediator or a Silent Actor in the Afghanistan-Pakistan Crisis?

Historically, Türkiye's diplomatic relations with Afghanistan date back to the 1921 Moscow Treaty, while relations with Pakistan accelerated after independence in 1947. Türkiye contributed to Afghanistan's modernization process with military missions and training support. It developed defense and security relations with Pakistan throughout the Cold War. Historical disagreements between Afghanistan and Pakistan, particularly over the Durand Line, and the rise of the Taliban have transformed Türkiye's role in the region. Türkiye's military presence in Afghanistan, acting as a "non-combatant force" within the framework of its NATO mission, has made Türkiye credible to local actors. In Afghanistan, Türkiye, a NATO member state but not directly involved in military conflict, has pursued a strategy of "soft power" and "construction diplomacy" since 2001. This strategy has enabled Ankara to maintain its historical image in Afghanistan and has allowed it to maintain open channels of dialogue with all political actors, including the Taliban. Indeed, the fact that the Taliban-Pakistan talks held in Istanbul took place in Türkiye indicates that Ankara offers an impartial and reliable diplomatic platform.

From a diplomatic perspective, Türkiye prefers to play a facilitating role rather than openly mediating the crisis. This aims to preserve both Türkiye's strategic relations with Pakistan and its careful balancing act with the Taliban. Ankara advocates for reducing Afghanistan's international isolation through the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and regional diplomatic mechanisms, while also viewing Pakistan's security concerns as legitimate. The ongoing crisis between Afghanistan and Pakistan has evolved from a mere border issue between the two countries into a multilateral test of regional diplomacy. In this context, Türkiye's geopolitical position, diplomatic influence in the Islamic world, and historical relations with both sides position Ankara as a potential mediator. However, whether this potential translates into concrete diplomatic initiatives remains debatable. From a military and security perspective, the likelihood of Türkiye's direct involvement is low. Instead, Ankara is taking steps to ensure diplomatic stability and maintain the continuity of humanitarian aid. The economic and social crisis in Afghanistan, triggering radicalization and waves of migration in Pakistan's border regions, makes Türkiye's indirect involvement in this process inevitable. In this context, Türkiye views the crisis as a regional stability issue rather than a security risk.

At the geopolitical level, Türkiye recognizes the strategic importance of Afghanistan-Pakistan stability in projects related to corridors to Central Asia and China's Belt and Road Initiative. Therefore, Ankara considers its mediation role not only to facilitate bilateral crisis management but also as a prerequisite for regional integration. However, Türkiye's efforts are limited by factors such as the delicate balance of its relations with the West, Iran's influence in Afghanistan, and China's growing role. Türkiye is neither a completely passive observer nor a full-fledged mediator in the Afghanistan-Pakistan crisis. Rather, it serves as a diplomatic bridge and a reliable platform for dialogue between the international community and regional actors. This position grants Türkiye a limited but stable sphere of influence and positions Ankara as a "silent but strategic" actor in South Asia's new geopolitical equation.

In recent years, Türkiye has been striving to redefine its position in regional equations, not merely as an observer but as an active and influential actor. Its involvement in the mediation process in the ceasefire talks between Afghanistan and Pakistan can also be considered within this framework. While this move ostensibly aims to stabilize the region, it also encompasses Ankara's geopolitical objectives and interests. In this process, Türkiye is striving to consolidate its image as a "conciliatory power in the Islamic world" while simultaneously aiming to secure a permanent diplomatic position in regional energy and trade networks by assuming a strategic bridge role between Central Asia and South Asia. In this context, Türkiye's diplomatic stance on the Afghanistan-Pakistan axis can be interpreted as a strategy where "soft power diplomacy" intersects with geoeconomic interests. Ankara aims to influence regional decision-making processes through diplomatic legitimacy and trust-building without a direct military presence. In line with efforts to reduce the Taliban regime's international isolation, Türkiye's hosting of this dialogue process gains prestige on both humanitarian and political levels.

However, Türkiye's approach is not entirely free of risk. The rapid shifting regional balances, the growing influence of Iran and China in Afghanistan, India's anti-Pakistan stance, and the West's hesitation are all limiting Ankara's diplomatic maneuvering space. Therefore, Türkiye's mediation role should be viewed as a careful balancing act, rather than an active diplomatic intent. While the Doha talks that paved the way for the ceasefire agreement between Kabul and Islamabad were ostensibly hosted by Qatar, Türkiye's active but cautious diplomatic participation behind the scenes was notable. While Qatar served as the official host of the talks, Türkiye held a position approaching observer status, closely coordinating with Pakistan and Qatar. While no official invitation was issued to Türkiye by either side, the

strategic relationship of trust and intelligence-based cooperation within the Ankara-Islamabad framework demonstrate Türkiye's indirect but effective involvement in this process.

The images released to the public following the signing of the agreement also revealed the symbolic dimension of this diplomatic order. The presence of the Director of Türkiye's National Intelligence Organization next to the Pakistani delegation can be interpreted as a concrete demonstration of the close political, military, and security ties between the two countries. Conversely, the presence of the Qatari Foreign Minister next to the Afghan delegation suggests that the role-sharing in the talks was a deliberate diplomatic design. This seemingly simple seating arrangement is actually a reflection of both countries' strategies to protect their regional spheres of influence and advance their own interests. This situation necessitates evaluating Türkiye's role in the region not merely as a mediation initiative but also as a multi-layered diplomatic maneuver. By participating in the process without directly participating, Ankara is both deepening its strategic alliance with Pakistan and creating an invisible yet decisive sphere of influence in the political equations over Afghanistan.

Türkiye has built a multilayered strategic partnership with Pakistan over the past year, ranging from military cooperation to political support on the Kashmir issue. This relationship is the product not only of periodic interests but also of security concerns, defense industry cooperation, and a search for diplomatic solidarity within the Islamic world. This relationship of trust between the two countries has led Islamabad to position Ankara as one of its most reliable allies in the Islamic world. This strategic trust has been one of the key drivers that paved the way for Türkiye's involvement as a mediator in the ceasefire process in Afghanistan. From the Pakistani government's perspective, Ankara is perceived not only as a neutral external actor but also as a diplomatic partner with a degree of sympathy for Pakistan's security and geopolitical concerns. Therefore, Türkiye's mediating role should be viewed as a pragmatic diplomatic position where mutual interests align, rather than a classically neutral observer.

On the other hand, the Afghan side has been cautious about accepting Türkiye as a mediator. Throughout the Republican era, Türkiye's position within the NATO alliance was generally identified with the Western military bloc in Afghan public opinion, weakening Ankara's claim of neutrality. Although Türkiye has adopted a softer diplomatic rhetoric compared to the US and Western countries over the past two decades, it has effectively operated within the same military and institutional framework. Due to

this historical backdrop, in the current Afghan political climate, where susceptibility to external interference is high, Türkiye's participation in the ceasefire negotiations is perceived by many as an indirect intervention rather than a mediation effort. Consequently, Ankara's diplomatic presence in Afghanistan reflects an ambivalent position, oscillating between geopolitical pragmatism and a perceived lack of legitimacy.

Türkiye has historically sought to strengthen its position at the regional level through tripartite alliances and multilayered diplomatic networks. The Türkiye-Azerbaijan-Pakistan triangle, symbolized in recent years by the slogan "One Nation, Three States," is a clear example of this strategic orientation. This alliance has not only been limited to military cooperation but has also been institutionalized in media, security, and public diplomacy. This has led Türkiye to align itself—consciously or indirectly—with Pakistan's position in regional crises. Ankara's explicit support for Islamabad's positions on the Kashmir issue, in particular, reveals the geopolitical and ideological basis for this alignment. Therefore, Türkiye's ability to assume a completely impartial and fair mediator role in the Afghanistan-Pakistan crisis appears to be limited in terms of both structural alliance relations and regional security balances.

When evaluating Türkiye's behavior in the ceasefire negotiations, it is necessary to consider Ankara's broader regional motivations. Türkiye is pursuing an active and multifaceted policy aimed at increasing its influence in the Middle East and the South Caucasus. In every region where a power vacuum has emerged, from Libya and Syria to Karabakh and Central Asia, Türkiye is striving to create a strategic position for itself by leveraging both its diplomatic channels and intelligence capabilities. In this context, Afghanistan presents a significant opportunity for Türkiye to be recognized as an influential actor in the Pakistan-Afghanistan crisis and thus directly engage in South Asian geopolitics. Ankara is not only assuming a mediator or facilitator role in this process, but is also pursuing a strategy to strengthen its regional visibility and diplomatic leverage.

The recent statements by the head of the Turkish Intelligence Agency are noteworthy in this context: President Erdoğan reportedly personally followed the ceasefire negotiations until midnight. This level of interest demonstrates that the Afghanistan issue is not merely a temporary diplomatic mission for Ankara. The real question is why Türkiye has suddenly focused on the Afghan issue. The answer to this question is related to the latent power struggles and geopolitical windows of opportunity in the region. Türkiye is aware of the limited opportunity to consolidate its role given China's growing influence in Pakistan and the involvement of Russia and Iran in

the Afghan case. Therefore, Ankara's presence in the ceasefire mediation is not merely a short-term diplomatic initiative but can be considered part of a long-term strategy of soft power and intelligence-based influence in South Asia.

However, it is necessary to be cautious when assessing Türkiye's intentions. Drawing on past experience, Ankara understands that it cannot enter the scene without the support of regional countries. China, Russia, and Central Asian states still do not view Türkiye as a central player in the Afghanistan issue. Therefore, Ankara's efforts to host subsequent meetings, particularly the Afghanistan-Pakistan negotiations, are more of a diplomatic stunt than a fundamental shift in the regional balance of power. From a realistic perspective, Türkiye's priority is not to achieve a lasting peace between Afghanistan and Pakistan, but rather to secure its own geopolitical position and consolidate its regional influence. Ankara seeks to position itself as a bridge between South and West Asia and assume a new role in the regional security order. However, in a region where trust is limited and inter-actor wariness is high, this goal is met with skepticism and has limited prospects for success.

Therefore, a clear distinction must be made between the role of mediator and that of active actor. While Türkiye may superficially portray itself as a mediator, it will likely act as an actor pursuing its own geopolitical and diplomatic interests in the future. While Ankara's participation may have a short-term easing effect, it risks exacerbating the fragile balance of power and geopolitical complexity in the region in the long run. In recent years, Afghanistan has witnessed competition between external powers, undermining the country's stability. Therefore, Afghanistan must not fall victim to the ambitions and influence games of new external actors. While the ceasefire between Afghanistan and Pakistan may be promising, if it is underpinned by the hidden interests and geopolitical rivalries of regional powers, this peace will remain temporary and fragile. Türkiye must demonstrate a genuine commitment to regional peace and stability, rather than exploiting the Afghan crisis merely as a stepping stone in regional politics. Otherwise, the question of whether Ankara is moving toward reconciliation or pursuing a broader strategic agenda not yet fully understood by the outside world will remain unanswered.

16. Conclusion

Pakistani and Afghan security forces have been engaged in clashes for weeks along the Durand Line, drawn by the British Empire in the 19th

century to divide the historically populated areas of the Pashtun population. Today, the status of this line is not only a matter of military contention but also a geopolitical issue whose historical legitimacy is being questioned. The Taliban government is increasingly openly challenging the legal nature of the border in negotiations aimed at a permanent ceasefire, reviving this historical legacy. The 1880 Treaty of Gandamak, signed after the Second Anglo-Afghan War (1878–1880), had made Afghanistan dependent on British India in its foreign policy. The British, concerned about growing Russian influence in northwestern Afghanistan, wanted to maintain Afghanistan as a buffer zone. After the 1880s, Chitral in the north, Chaman in the south, and many tribal areas in between came under British military control; however, the official border status of these areas had not been established.

Dozens of soldiers and civilians lost their lives in the clashes along the border. Initially, Pakistan launched airstrikes targeting Tahrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), which it blames for terrorist attacks originating in Afghanistan and claims the Afghan government supports. These operations escalated tensions along the already disputed Durand Line, creating the danger of escalating the border dispute into a wider military conflict. Since then, the parties have largely adhered to the agreement, initially implementing a temporary ceasefire in Qatar. Prior to the subsequent talks scheduled for Istanbul, expectations that the two sides would reach a common understanding on the Durand Line and border security were extremely limited. This situation highlights the fragile nature of the ceasefire and the risk of failure of the negotiations.

The Durand Line is not merely a border dispute between the two countries, but a geopolitical node at the intersection of historical identity, national sovereignty, and regional security. For Afghanistan, rejecting the border signifies defending historical integrity and Pashtun identity, while for Pakistan, questioning it is perceived as an existential threat to the country's integrity. Therefore, the Durand Line creates a zero-sum security dilemma for both sides. Resolving the issue requires a multifaceted diplomatic approach encompassing not only legal but also ethnic, political, and economic integration processes. Otherwise, the Durand Line will remain a perpetual conflict line in 21st-century South Asia. Consequently, the Taliban-Pakistan talks have revived the Durand Line's contemporary geopolitical significance. This border has become a symbol not only of a historical conflict but also of regional power rivalry and the fragility of modern security architecture.

The Pakistani Defense Minister's warning of "open war" not only signals a harsh political statement but also heralds a shift in the regional security

equation along the Afghanistan-Pakistan line. The blockage of diplomatic channels, escalating military risks, and the escalation of political rhetoric could plunge the region back into a Cold War-style proxy conflict. Therefore, the continuation of the Doha and Istanbul processes is critical for the stability of not only the two countries but also the entire South Asian security architecture. The collapse of the Taliban-Pakistan talks held in Istanbul has clearly exposed the deep distrust between the parties. While each side blames the other for the failure of the process, increasingly harsh media rhetoric and mutual threats have increased the risk of relations escalating into military tension and a diplomatic crisis.

The crisis in Taliban-Pakistan relations, characterized by threats, pressure, military operations, and accusations of supporting terrorist groups over the past four years, has escalated into one of the most complex conflicts the Taliban has faced with its former allies. This situation reveals one of the deepest crises of trust in the history of Afghanistan-Pakistan relations. Islamabad's expectation of absolute loyalty in return for the political and logistical support it has provided to the Taliban for years, coupled with the Taliban's efforts to shed its image as a "Pakistan-dependent movement" and strengthen its national legitimacy, have become the primary obstacles to a lasting reconciliation between the parties. India's growing diplomatic and economic influence in Afghanistan, coupled with the emergence of aggravating factors such as the TTP, have further strained Taliban-Pakistan relations. These factors have deepened the crisis of trust between the parties, while the failure to adequately address the accumulated problems has made the resolution process both more difficult and complex.

Despite the promising statements made at the Doha Summit, the Istanbul talks clearly demonstrated that a solution to the current crisis would not be easy. According to the TTP and some observers, the failure to include fundamental issues such as the Durand Line on the negotiation agenda made the process contentious and fragile from the outset. The future of this crisis depends largely on the course of the upcoming negotiations. The way the parties persuade each other to accept their terms through potential mediators will determine not only the direction of Afghanistan-Pakistan relations but also the future of regional balances. However, the current situation not only renders the ceasefire both fragile and symbolic; it also elevates the future of relations to a more precarious and unpredictable point than in the past. The historical trajectory of Taliban-Pakistan relations is a classic example of how short-term geopolitical gains can turn into long-term security threats. Pakistan supported the Taliban to protect its own interests since the 1990s, but this policy ultimately weakened its internal security with the rise of

elements like the TTP. The bitter irony of history is that Pakistan's "strategic depth" has, over time, become its own "strategic swamp."

American imperialism's new moves in Bagram and Pakistan's Pasni Limon do not simply represent the return of an empire; rather, they can be considered an attempt to reshape the regional order in an environment where Washington can no longer impose its power unilaterally. This restructuring is built on the integrated use of military, economic, intelligence, and diplomatic tools to consolidate influence over transit routes, strategic ports, and energy corridors. However, today's Asia finds itself in a completely different context than in the past. The continent is no longer a passive or inactive stage, but a dynamic and multilayered geopolitical arena populated by new actors who are transforming the rules of power from "occupation" to "intelligent and multilateral participation." In this context, powers that fail to adapt to multipolar reality and complex regional networks will be limited to playing pawns on a geopolitical chessboard that is not solely controlled by Washington, rather than becoming major players. The measure of success in regional politics is no longer absolute dominance, but rather strategic interactions, the intelligent use of local capacities, and multi-actor coordination.

The Taliban's return to power in 2021 has escalated diplomatic, military, and security tensions along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border (especially along the Durand Line). Regional rivalry is not limited to Kabul and Islamabad; it also encompasses the strategic considerations of China, Russia, Iran, Qatar, the US, and Central Asian states. In this multilayered equation, Türkiye is a regional actor with a network of influential access and relationships, albeit one not directly involved. Consequently, Türkiye's presence in the Afghanistan-Pakistan crisis, in addition to humanitarian diplomacy or mediation, is part of its strategy to establish a presence in the South Asian pillar of the new multipolar order. In this process, Ankara maintains its identity as a "silent mediator," preferring to remain an actor with high influence but limited visibility in the regional system.

Relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan have historically fluctuated. During the initial rule of the Taliban-led Islamic Emirate, Pakistan established close relations with the regime and was among the few states to officially recognize it. There were expectations that relations between the two countries would remain similarly close and cooperative following the return of the Islamic Emirate to power in 2021. However, security issues stemming from the TTP organization, tensions related to Afghan refugees, and historical border disputes along the Durand Line have, contrary to

these optimistic expectations, led to serious strains in bilateral relations. Consequently, Afghanistan-Pakistan relations remain fragile at both the security and diplomatic levels.

The recent clashes between Afghanistan and Pakistan stem from deep disagreements between the two countries regarding the TTP issue. The Pakistani government accuses the Islamic Emirate of providing shelter and indirect support to TTP elements. In response, Islamic Emirate officials categorically deny these allegations and maintain that the TTP is not permitted to use Afghan territory for attacks against Pakistan. However, according to some Afghan sources, Pakistan, citing its operations against the TTP, has conducted military operations in various parts of Afghanistan, including Khost, Paktika, Nangarhar, Kunar, and, at times, around Kabul. Following the recent attack on Kabul, Islamic Emirate forces reportedly conducted operations purportedly of retaliatory nature, targeting several Pakistani border posts along the Durand Line. These developments have further strained relations between the two countries. Assessments are being made that the United States cannot be held directly responsible for these clashes. However, some analysts argue that the Indian factor has influenced Pakistan's Afghanistan policy, that the burgeoning diplomatic contacts between the Islamic Emirate and India are perceived by Pakistan as a strategic threat and, therefore, have resorted to pressure. Furthermore, literature suggests that the US may have made specific demands on Pakistan regarding relations with the Islamic Emirate or pressured it to control critical locations such as Bagram Air Base. However, these claims are difficult to verify with independent sources. To conclude, Afghanistan-Pakistan relations are becoming increasingly complex and fragile under the influence of counterterrorism, border security, regional rivalry, and great power politics.

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Chapter 7

Crete Under the Administration of Kavalali Mehmet Ali Pasha (1830-1840)[1] ⚇

Kevser Değirmenci[2]

Abstract

Following the intervention of the Egyptian governor Mehmet Ali Pasha in the Peloponnesian revolts, Crete was administered by Egyptian governors for a while. Mehmet Ali Pasha tried to establish a strong administration in Crete as he had done in Egypt, and tried to protect the reaya against the abuse and mismanagement of the beys and aghas. At first, Mehmet Ali Pasha accepted this assignment with great gratitude, but he calculated that as long as the seeds of mischief planted by the Greeks in Crete sprouted, rebellions would not be absent in the island, and whoever owned the island would suffer more harm than good, and for this reason, he did not want to stay in Crete for long, and instead asked for Syria to be given to him. Since the expenses of the island of Crete exceeded its income, it did not meet Mehmet Ali Pasha's expectations. However, his right to dispose of the island continued for ten years.

When the administration of Crete was left to Mehmet Ali Pasha for ten years, the general administration of the island was carried out by Mustafa Nâili Pasha, whom he appointed as a mashir with the title of civil and military guardian of honor. Mustafa Nāili Pasha, who started this duty at the age of 32 and continued it for a long period of ten years, displayed a good administrative performance. During this period, no significant rebellion broke out on the island. Mustafa Nāili Pasha, who served as the representative of Mehmet Ali Pasha, aimed to ensure peace and security in the island during this ten-year period and introduced a new administrative system. He also won the admiration of the people with some of the works he carried out for the reconstruction of the island. During this period, an unprecedented justice system was implemented on the island and culture was reborn.

Introduction

While the Peloponnese rebellion was in full swing, the Ottoman government, realising that it could not suppress the rebellion in this way, asked for help from the Egyptian governor Kavalalı Mehmet Ali Pasha in 1824. Mehmet Ali Pasha, who had a regular army trained by European experts and a powerful navy, agreed to suppress the rebellion on condition that the governorships of Crete and Peloponnese were given to him. From 1825 onwards, the Egyptian army, acting together with the Ottoman army to suppress the Peloponnesian revolt, achieved great success in a short time. Unexpectedly, after the joint Ottoman-Egyptian forces suppressed the rebellion, Britain, Russia and France signed a protocol against the Ottoman Empire. With the London Protocol, the three states demanded the signing of an armistice treaty between the rebels and the Ottoman Government. It was also stated that the state of Greece would be established immediately after the armistice. When the Ottoman Government did not recognise these decisions, on 20 November 1827, the joint Ottoman-Egyptian fleet at Navarin was sunk in a raid by the joint British-French-Russian fleet. When the Navarin raid became a diplomatic problem, the ambassadors of England, France and Russia left Istanbul and took some countermeasures. For example, England sent ships to take Ibrahim Pasha's forces from the Peloponnese to Egypt. France had temporarily occupied the Peloponnese with a force of 30,000 men. Russia, on the other hand, declared war against the Ottoman Empire in April 1828. The Ottoman-Russian War of 1828-1829 ended with the defeat of the Ottoman Empire and the Edirne Peace Treaty was signed on 14 September 1829 (Mecmua-i Muahedat, 1298, p. 70). With this treaty, the Ottoman Empire had to accept the London Protocol of 22 March 1829, which envisaged the establishment of an independent Greek State (Uçarol, 2008, p. 168). Thus, Greece, whose autonomy had been recognised by Britain and Russia in 1826, was gradually transformed into an independent Greek State.

While the borders of Greece were drawn with the London Protocol, the great powers such as England, Russia and France wanted the Greeks of Crete to remain loyal to the Ottoman Empire despite their participation in the revolts. Article 7 of the Protocol was related to the evacuation of fortresses. Accordingly, the Allies declared that they would not leave the Granbosa Castle in Heraklion, which they had previously blockaded, until the evacuation of the Eğriboz Castle. When the Granbosa Fortress fell into the hands of the Greek rebels, the remaining property of the Muslims who had to migrate from there fell into the hands of the Greeks. This situation caused great difficulties for the Muslims who were distributed to various

parts of the island. Some 250 Greeks in the Granbosa Castle stated that they would not surrender the castle until the evacuation of Evros and other places was completed. In this situation, Granbosa Castle was held as a hostage. The Ottoman Government reacted very strongly to this decision and stated to the ambassadors that this was a wrong decision and that the castle should be surrendered immediately. This issue was also notified to the governor of Egypt (Örenç, 2011, p. 248; Akyay, 2010, p. 46; Dedes, 2011, p. 340).

Stradford Canning, the British ambassador, and Russian and French envoys were appointed to negotiate with the Ottoman Empire on the administration and borders of the newly established Greek State and some other issues. The proposals submitted to the Bâbıâlî by these negotiators were evaluated. In addition, an official was sent to the islands, especially Samos, Crete and Rhodes, to prevent the reaya from siding with the Greek side. Edicts addressed to the reaya of the islands were prepared and translated into Greek to be distributed to the reaya. In the edicts, it was announced that the state granted some new privileges, especially commercial rights, to the reaya in the islands (Örenç, 2000, p. 340).

On 27 March 1830, it was stated that the Greeks would no longer intervene in the island of Crete and that the island would not be subject to Greece but would remain under the administration of the Ottoman Empire. On the other hand, the states had some demands from the Bâbıâlî to follow a moderate policy in the island of Crete and to grant some privileges. Accordingly, a general amnesty was to be declared for the Cretans who had been involved in the previous rebellions, and the people were to be protected against all kinds of oppression and a biased administration. However, the Christian population of Crete objected to this decision taken at the London Conference and declared that they wanted either full independence or to join Greece (Türkgeldi, 1987, p. 9; Karal, 1977, p. 18). As a result, since the island was not completely given to Greece, the Greeks of Crete, who were dissatisfied with this situation, revolted again in 1830. Although Mehmet Ali Pasha, who was appointed as the guard of Crete, suppressed this uprising in 1831, in the long run, the mischief and provocations fuelled by the Greeks in Crete would never cease (Salahi, 1967, p. 3; Baykal, 1969, p. 383; Macid, 1977, p. 16; Bostan, 1987, p. 19; Beyoğlu, 2000, p. 123; Hülagü, 2004, p. 329).

After the surrender of the Granbosa Castle of Crete and the collection of the arms of its inhabitants, the Cretan rebellion of 1830 was completely eliminated and this was reported to Mehmet Ali Pasha by Mustafa Naili Pasha and Mehmet Ali Pasha announced this news to Bâbıâlî (Ahmet Lütfi, 1999, p. 561).

1.Transfer of the Administration of Crete to Mehmet Ali Pasha

In 1830, the Ottoman government left the administration of the island of Crete to Mehmet Ali Pasha, the governor of Egypt, for his assistance (Saka, 1974, p. 79). Mehmet Ali Pasha had expressed his gratitude to the Sadaret for the transfer of the island of Crete to the Egyptian province on the condition that all fortresses together with the sanjaks of Chania, Rethymno and Heraklion would be protected (BOA, HAT. 715/34120).

Due to the intervention of Mehmet Ali Pasha, the governor of Egypt, in the Peloponnesian revolts, Crete had been administered by Egyptian governors for a while. Mehmet Ali Pasha endeavoured to establish a strong administration in Crete as he had done in Egypt, and he tried to protect the reaya against the abuse and mismanagement of the beys and aghas (Karal, 1977, p. 18). According to Hourani, Mehmed Ali Pasha's regional power strategy tended to produce a kind of modern provincial model not only in Egypt but also in Ottoman peripheries such as Crete (Hourani, 2002, p. 281). Crete remained under the administration of Mehmet Ali Pasha, the governor of Egypt, until 1840.[3] Mehmet Ali Pasha, who accepted the assignment made to him with great gratitude at first, calculated that as long as the seed of mischief sown by the Greeks in Crete sprouted, rebellions would not be absent in the island, and whoever owned this island would suffer more harm than good, and therefore he did not want to stay in Crete for long, and instead asked for Syria to be assigned to him. Since the expenses of the island of Crete were higher than its income, it did not meet Mehmet Ali Pasha's expectations. However, his right of disposal on the island continued for ten years (Tukin, 1964, p.796; Salahi, 1967, p. 4).

In order to suppress the Cretan rebellion, 12.000 soldiers were landed in Crete, which was annexed to the Egyptian province, by Mehmet Ali Pasha with the navy and the first thing to do was to collect weapons. In addition, declarations were distributed to the inhabitants of the island to invite them to obedience (BOA, HAT. 394/20829/A). Cretan rebels objected to the surrender of weapons. Therefore, some problems were experienced (BOA, HAT. 394/20829/R). However, after Mehmet Ali Pasha's dispatch of navy and troops to Crete and the landing of troops, success was achieved in collecting the weapons in the hands of the people. Chania was captured

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3   In this way, on the one hand, the rebellion was suppressed and on the other hand, Mehmet Ali Pasha's plan to annex the Syrian region to Egypt was prevented. In return for suppressing the Greek rebellion, he was promised the governorships of Syria and Crete. However, Mahmut II, who found his support in the Ottoman-Russian War insufficient, gave Mehmet Ali Pasha only the governorship of Crete (Adıyeke, 2000, pp. 18-19; Macid, 1977, p. 16; Baykal, 1969, p. 383; Tukin, 1964, p. 796).

and the weapons were collected, and it was reported that Kisamo and Isfakiye would be captured in the same way and their weapons would also be collected (BOA, HAT. 392/20776). Granbose Castle was captured, guards were appointed here and the weapons in the hands of the reaya were collected.[4] (BOA, HAT. 912/39869/A; BOA, HAT. 912/39869).

When Mehmet Ali Pasha travelled from Egypt to Crete, cannons were fired from all ships and ceremonies were held. However, 43 days after his arrival, the governor of Egypt returned to Alexandria from Crete. The governor of Egypt was not satisfied with Crete and decided to return and enter the Damascus region (BOA, HAT. 836/37714).

Nothing could be sent to the centre from the revenues of Crete, which had been entrusted to Mehmet Ali Pasha, the governor of Egypt. Because the revenues of the island of Crete had decreased due to the rebellions and had even become unable to meet its own expenses. The Governor of Egypt, Mehmet Ali Pasha, had therefore declared that he could not send large sums of money to the centre. The amount allocated from Crete for the treasury of Haremeyn was collected from the governor of Egypt. The accounting and supervision rights of the foundations in Crete were given to the local administrators of Crete (BOA, HAT. 1421/58091; BOA, HAT. 1303/50786).

2.Crete Under Mustafa Naili Pasha's Administration

When the administration of Crete was left to Mehmet Ali Pasha for ten years, the general administration of the island was carried out by Mustafa Naili Pasha, whom he had appointed as a müşir[5], with the title of guardian of civil and military affairs (Karal, 1977, p. 112; Salahi, 1967, pp. 3-4; İnal, 1982, p. 74; Ahmet Rıfat, 1866, p. 54; Barchard, 2003, p. 24; Uluçam, 2008, p. 305). This situation can be considered as a result of the trust that Mehmet Ali Pasha placed in Mustafa Naili Pasha.

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4   During the Cretan rebellion, a number of thefts were committed by the soldiers, and the soldiers who were brought to court were punished (BOA, HAT. 394/20829/B).

5   Müşir, was established by Mahmut II within the framework of centralisation. Müşirs were the financial, administrative, civil, military and judicial superiors in the regions left to their administration by the merger of several sanjaks. They administered the regions under them by appointing ferik or mirliva. Müşirs were required to collect taxes without raising them and without oppressing the people. The müşir, to whom the financial revenues of a place were entrusted, was required to show a guarantee from the goldsmith that the amount belonging to the treasury of these revenues would be paid on time. After the promulgation of the Tanzimat, the powers granted to the müşirs were restricted and officials such as governors, zabtiye officers, muhassıls, and clerks of the financial registry were appointed to the sanjaks. Every official in the province was made directly subordinate to the centre. Küçük, 2002, pp. 32-33). For detailed information on the ranks given in the Ottoman Empire, see: (Akyıldız, 1993, pp. 37-40).

During this period, Mustafa Naili Pasha married Helena Bolanopoula, whom he met during his first visiting tours on the island as a guard. She was the daughter of the Orthodox preacher of a village near Rethymno. Mustafa Naili Pasha did not force his wife to convert to Islam, but allowed her to worship in the small chapel in the garden of their house. The marriage of Helena Bolanopoula, who had strong family ties, to Mustafa Naili Pasha brought strength to her family. As a result of this marriage, family members gained some positions. For example, they were appointed as priests in the Orthodox church in Beyoğlu, Istanbul (Barchard, 2003, pp. 24-25).

Mustafa Naili Pasha, who started at the age of 32 and continued in office for a long period of ten years, was a good administrator. During this period, there was no noteworthy rebellion on the island (Işın, 1945, p. 51). We learn about Mustafa Naili Pasha's activities during this ten-year period from the French-language report prepared by Monsieur Kaporal, Pasha's physician and confidant. Joseph Kaporal, a Frenchman, served Mustafa Naili Pasha and his family in Crete for a quarter of a century[6] (Barchard, 2006, p. 71). Since he had lived on the island for ten years, Monsieur Kaporal had all kinds of information about the islanders. The layiha prepared by Monsieur Kaporal on the administration of the island of Crete, the amount of tax revenues and expenses, and the arrangements that the Ottoman Empire should make based on this information contains important information about Mustafa Naili Pasha's first ten years of administration in Crete.[7] This report, which has been translated into Turkish, is important in terms of illuminating the period when Mustafa Naili Pasha served as Mehmet Ali Pasha's guard in Crete. In this report, detailed information is given about Mustafa Naili Pasha's administration in the island, the construction activities he carried out, the military situation and many other issues (BOA, İ. MTZ. GR. 1/4).

Mustafa Naili Pasha, who served as the representative of Mehmet Ali Pasha, aimed to ensure peace and security on the island in a ten-year period and introduced a new administrative system. He had also won the admiration of the people with some works he carried out for the reconstruction of the island (Adıyeke A.-Adıyeke N., 2002, p. 6). During this period, an unprecedented justice system was implemented on the island and culture was reborn.[8] Finkel's "pragmatic legitimation" approach to Ottoman modernisation is instructive in understanding Mustafa Naili Pasha's role as

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6   It is known that a branch of Monsieur Kaporal's family lived in Izmir. (Adıyeke, 1993, p. 295).

7   For Kaporal's layiha, see: (Adıyeke, 1993, pp. 294-315).

8   There have been some criticisms by foreign writers that Mehmet Ali Pasha tried to conquer the hearts of the people, but his representative Mustafa Naili Pasha and other officials were not very successful in implementing this (Adıyeke, 1993, p. 294).

a counterbalance to both the centre and the Greek reaya (Finkel, 2007, p. 377).

Mustafa Naili Pasha tried to establish a bond between Christian and Muslim landowners and wanted to prevent the destructive power of nationalism. In Crete, an administration similar to the one in Egypt was tried to be established. During the administration of Mustafa Naili Pasha, local councils consisting of Muslim and Christian members were established in Heraklion, Chania and Rethymno, the sanjak centres of Crete[9] (Barchard, 2003, p. 24). In addition to these, a council was also established in the district of Isfakiye. Under the presidency of the governor and district governors, these councils dealt with all cases except religious and inheritance matters. Appeals against the judgements rendered could only be appealed to a higher court in the council of Heraklion. These councils were continued with a new organisation after the administration of Crete was transferred back to the Ottoman Empire (Tukin, 1964, p. 794). The town councils had an important contribution to the implementation of the Tanzimat in the provinces. In particular, they acted as a court of law in resolving disputes between state officials and the public. These assemblies were small examples of the Majlis-i Vâlâ in the provinces. They functioned in many administrative and judicial areas such as supervising administrators, distributing taxes according to income and collecting them on time, auditing income and expenditure accounts, and taking measures to ensure security. They were also involved in health, public works, education and training (Çadırcı, 2007, pp. 288-289). The local council structure established by Mustafa Naili Pasha can be considered as the late 19th century reconstruction of a form of governance in classical Ottoman provincial administration in which local elites mediated to the centre, as Halil İnalcık states (İnalcık, 2000, p. 65).

As a part of the reforms that Mehmet Ali Pasha wanted to initiate in Crete, a newspaper similar to the one in Egypt was published by Mustafa Naili Pasha during this period.[10] A printing house was first established in Chania for the weekly newspaper. First, a team of five people arrived in Chania from Egypt on 18 October 1830. After six months, a stone printing machine was added to the printing press and six more people joined the

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9   After the proclamation of Tanzimat, the assemblies established in the sanjak centres were called muhassıllık assemblies, and with the abolition of muhassıllık, the name of these assemblies was changed to 'Small Assembly'. The assembly established in the provincial centre was called 'Grand Assembly'. With the regulation made in 1849, the name of the big assembly was changed to 'Provincial Assembly' and the name of the small assembly was changed to 'Sanjak Assembly' (Çadırcı, 2007, pp. 273-274).

10   The name of the newspaper published by Mehmet Ali Pasha in Egypt is Vakayi-i Mısriyye. For periodicals published during the Ottoman Empire, see: (Duman, 2000).

team. The first issue of the newspaper was published in December 1830 or January 1831.[11] This newspaper was important as it was the second newspaper in the history of the Turkish press to contain Turkish sections. It continued its existence until 1841. The Turkish name of the newspaper was 'Vakâyi'-i Giridiyye' and the Greek name was 'Kritiki Efiremis'.[12] In this newspaper, which was published on one half of the same page in Turkish and the other half in Greek, the discussions held at the council meetings and some news about the country's affairs were included.[13] In addition, announcements were made regarding some issues of public interest, such as the need to be careful against certain epidemics. The lists of ships calling at the harbour of Chania and information about the passengers and goods transported were included. The newspaper was hung on all printed boards and displayed in public places, as was the practice in Europe (Adıyeke, 1993, p. 295, Adıyeke, 2000, p. 95; Yazıcı, 1990, pp. 273-274; Koloğlu, 1987, p. 9). As Faroqhi notes, the maintenance of public order in the Ottoman provinces was possible through the balanced use of not only military but also cultural and economic means (Faroqhi, 2005, p. 191). Mustafa Naili Pasha's reconstruction activities and his press initiative were important tools in this respect.

The measures taken by Mustafa Naili Pasha for the reconstruction of the island and the maintenance of peace and order had created satisfaction among the people. However, the Greek population, who had expected the complete abolition of the jizya with the proclamation of Tanzimat, reacted negatively to the attempts to increase the amount of the jizya from 4-8-12 penny to 15-30-60 penny for three classes (Adıyeke, 2000, p.19; Adıyeke, 1993, pp. 305-306).

In order to maintain public order in the island of Crete and to ensure that the Greeks, who constituted three quarters of the island's population, were fully loyal and obedient to the state, the island had to be administered in an exceptional manner. Because the Greeks were of the same sect,

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11   In a report sent by one of the Italian Consuls in Alexandria, it was reported that a printing house was established in Heraklion by the Mehmet Ali administration and a Turkish-Greek newspaper started to be published. Mehmet Ali Pasha made great efforts for the regular publication of this newspaper (Koloğlu, 1987, p. 9).

12   The issues of the newspaper published between 22 June 1832 and 18 January 1834 are available in the Istanbul University Library (IU 07 (499. 8) V.G- 94.35 V22).

13   Under the heading 'News from the Chania Assembly', some events that took place in Chania were included. For example, the mausoleum of Gazi Mustafa, one of the places of pilgrimage outside Chania Castle, made a complaint to the Chania Assembly. After he stated that a person named İbrahim from Seline district came to the tomb and collected the banners here, the issue was discussed in the assembly. These and similar issues discussed in the assembly were publicised through the newspaper (Vakâyi'-i Giridiyye, nr. 60, 23 M 1248 (22 June 1832))

they were constantly provoked by both the Greeks and the other islands in the neighbourhood, and since they had been living with the desire for independence since 1821, they were constantly thinking of rebellion. The only way for the peace of the island was the reconciliation of the Muslim and non-Muslim population. It was clear that any other means would not stop the desire for rebellion and that this desire, which seemed to have subsided for the time being, would flare up again with the slightest provocation.

During the reign of Mustafa Naili Pasha, there were three country councils in Crete, in Heraklion, Chania and Rethymno. The presidents of these councils were sent from Egypt without exception. Thus, they only did what they were assigned to do and acted fairly since they were not related to the inhabitants. As for the council members, almost all of them were from the islanders, both Christians and Muslims. They also held other offices besides being members of the council. The members were divided into two groups; the first class consisted only of the noble and noble families of Muslims, and the second class consisted of Muslim and reaya deputies who were elected and sent from places with mixed populations, such as the kaza of Isfakiye. The national assemblies formed in this way discussed all matters, except for religious and inheritance matters, and recorded their decisions in mazbats. Regardless of the class of the members, they had equal voting rights. Decisions were made according to the majority. Even the head of the council was no different from the members in this respect. Members could not accept even a small gift, and if they did, they were immediately dismissed and imprisoned.[14] The election of members was renewed every two years. A person could freely claim his rights and file a lawsuit. The governor had the authority to inspect the council when necessary.

During the reign of Mustafa Naili Pasha, some arrangements were made in the police affairs of the island. Punishments such as caning, imprisonment and shackling, which had been applied since the past, were generally applied to Greeks and Greeks coming from the Seven Islands. However, Mustafa Naili Pasha had completely abolished this procedure towards the end of the 1830s. In case of murder, retaliation was applied, and for other offences, imprisonment starting from twenty-four hours and lasting for years, and criminals were put in chains to be employed in menial labour when necessary.

The soldiers who provided the defence of Crete consisted of regular and irregular military units. The regular troops were not subject to any decree

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14   Although no one seems to have attempted such a thing, it was once witnessed that a member who accepted a box of honey and some cheese was immediately dismissed as a member and imprisoned for two months.

of the councils. However, they were administered under the supervision of Mustafa Naili Pasha in accordance with the French military code with a few corrections. Almost all of the irregular troops were Albanian soldiers. They were completely under the control of Mustafa Naili Pasha.

During the reign of Mustafa Naili Pasha, tax collection in Crete was carried out within the framework of certain rules.[15] The bookkeeper, who was in charge of financial affairs, was always elected from the first class of the council members. The bookkeeper was one of the most respected people of Crete and resided in Heraklion. Two council ministers, who were also respected persons, were in charge of the bookkeeper. One of them was located in Chania and the other in Rethymno. In addition to the aforementioned officials, there were two officials from the Muslims, the hereditary subaşı and two officials from the reaya, the *kâhya* and *kocabaşı*, who were in charge of each accident.[16] They were under the command of a senior official called mukataat overseer, who was one of the first class of the council members. Tekâlif collection was carried out by the aforementioned subaşı and kâhyalar together. They would determine the amount of tax to be collected from a person and send it to the council with a receipt, and the situation would be reported to the *mukataat* overseer. The overseer would record the tax in his ledger without interfering. If the tax was in cash, it would go directly to the treasury; if it was in goods, the payer would deliver it to the overseer and put it in the warehouse. After it was recorded in the ledger there, the overseer would report the situation to the council overseer, who was his superior. Then it would be recorded in the ledgers of the bookkeeper and the assemblies would be informed. Since Mustafa Naili Pasha had the authority to supervise these matters in general, the matter would be finalised within his knowledge.

In terms of spending the revenues of the island, when it was necessary to make an expenditure from the revenues, this work was carried out by the submission and notification of the officials. The recommendations of the officials would be submitted to the council, and either accepted or rejected by the council. When they were accepted, they would be approved by Mustafa Naili Pasha and recorded in the ledger, and then a licence would be

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15   During the reign of Mustafa Naili Pasha, a monopoly was introduced in the tax system in Crete. This situation affected Muslims worse than Christians and was not very welcome (Barchard, 2003, p. 24).

16   The institution of the kocabaşılık was of great importance in the taxation practices of the Greek community. Their sphere of influence was further clarified with the Tanzimat Edict (Örenç, 2003, p. 32).

written, it would be decided to be executed, and it would be referred to the council minister. He, in turn, would pay the amount he was obliged to pay.

All the expenses of the island of Crete were met from the sums obtained from the sale of the crops. In this respect, anything that could harm the administration was avoided. For example, if a state property was to be sold, the amount was first determined and the day of the auction was announced. The tradesmen and merchants would be notified so that everyone would know. Then, on the appointed day, all members of the council would gather in one place and the auction would start. The auction procedure was applied without any complaints from anyone.

During the reign of Mustafa Naili Pasha, very strict measures were taken in the collection of revenues belonging to the island. So much so that no cheating was allowed in any way. If something was to be done, it could only be done with the unanimity of all officials, but this was not possible either. Because, without the consent of the council and the authorisation of Mustafa Naili Pasha, even 10 penny could never be given anywhere, and since the amount obtained from the goods sold was immediately spent on the daily needs of the island, the money would always be transferred to the treasury, not kept waiting. Even if there was a small amount left in the treasury, it was immediately handed over to the head of the goldsmith who was in charge of its custody. In order to eliminate any suspicion, the head of the goldsmith was obliged to submit a document every day stating the money in his chest to the council overseer, who in turn was obliged to submit it to the head of the council. In this way, if even a small amount of money of the treasury was lost, its whereabouts would be revealed. The first condition for the proper management of financial affairs was that everything had to be recorded in a book. This procedure was applied in the island as it should be.

In the island, all cases, except for religious matters and inheritance, were handled in the councils. If there was a religious issue that could not be resolved, the kadi, mufti, etc. would resolve it together with the scholars. If it was a matter of inheritance, the qadi, through the chief clerk of the kassam, would look into the matter in shari'ah, but a Muslim and a Greek deputy from the council would also be present and express their opinions. This procedure made the people feel more secure.

The Greek Bishop and the Jewish Rabbi in Crete had certain powers. As between Muslims, if a religious issue arose between two Greeks, they would be sent to the Greek bishop with one of the deputies of their own nation, and the case would be heard either in a council of priests or in the presence of the bishop alone, depending on the importance of the issue. Similarly, a

religious matter between two Jews would be settled through their rabbis, but a deputy from the Muslims or Greeks would be present. This deputy was responsible for expressing his own opinion and judgement. The courts were required to have faithful, loyal and knowledgeable judges. It was also deemed necessary to raise the salaries of judges in Chania and elsewhere to prevent bribery.

In 1830, the Greeks of the island of Crete had been warned by the three allied great powers to either change their places or to obey Mehmet Ali Pasha by surrendering their weapons to his officers. For those Greeks who wanted to re-enter the Ottoman administration, Mustafa Naili Pasha and Osman Nureddin Pasha, who was then the master of the Egyptian ships, had worked out a deed of agreement. The main article of this deed was written by Monsieur Kaporal, Mustafa Naili Pasha's advisor. This article was the complete abolition of jizyah from the Greeks. This was not permitted by the Centre, but it was decided not to increase the collected jizya. For some years, the Greeks did not hesitate to pay this tax and always hoped to be completely exempt. In 1835, an order from the centre announced that 15, 30 and 60 piastres each would be collected annually from the Heraklion reaya as jizya. The reaya, who wanted to be completely exempt from the jizya, complained even more in the face of this news. At one point they even took up arms again and stated that they would not give anything but a small amount, but Mustafa Naili Pasha intervened immediately.[17] Since he was also liked by the reaya, he calmed the matter and managed to implement the edict. Thus, Mustafa Naili Pasha maintained a balance between the centre and the unruly Greek population of the island. However, Pasha himself was in favour of the abolition of the jizya and promised the Greek population that he would write a petition to the centre in this regard. A Bac tax was also levied in Crete. It was deemed unnecessary because the officials collecting it harmed and offended the people, and its abolition was on the agenda in Crete as it was abolished elsewhere (BOA, İ. MTZ. GR. 1/4).

The destruction caused by the internal conflicts in the island during the reign of Mustafa Naili Pasha had negative effects on olive cultivation areas and olive trees. Between 1821 and 1829, many olive trees were burnt or cut down. Mustafa Naili Pasha had taken some measures and issued orders and military measures. Thus, he wanted to prevent the olive trees from being damaged and aimed to ensure that the people could safely harvest their products. In addition, he ensured that the crops produced by the people

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17   32 merchants were hanged from trees and the protests were harshly suppressed. This event resonated in Cretan popular culture as the cruelty of Ottoman rule (Barchard, 2003, p. 24).

who died or fled during the clashes were harvested so that they would not be wasted (Adıyeke A.-Adıyeke N., 2006, p. 158).

Customs tax was levied on the island according to the old tariffs. There was a special procedure for olive oil and soap. Soap was charged 7 penny per kg and olive oil was charged 4 penny. In addition, a 3 per cent customs tax was levied on the value of all goods. Therefore, the cost of soap was 12 piasters per kg and the cost of oil was 5 piasters and 10 coins. The customs officer on the island was a first class member of the council and was allocated a salary from the treasury. For this reason, they recorded the revenues in the books and never confiscated them.

Commercial cases that could not be resolved in the town councils due to some complicated issues were heard in the commercial court. The members of this court were composed of Ottoman subjects, Muslims, reaya and foreigners, and some European and Greek merchants, and they usually gathered at the customs. Some of the members were familiar with the French commercial code, which served as a basis for them. Since these members met voluntarily and without salary, they acted without malice. In fact, in a commercial centre like Crete, such courts should have been protected by the state.

The highest income in Crete was obtained from taxes levied on olive oil. In addition, taxes on various crops such as cotton, flaxseed, silk, melon, watermelon, etc. produced on the island also yielded income. The revenues obtained on the island of Crete could not make an economic contribution to the Ottoman Empire. Because the revenues were spent only for the island's own expenses. According to the data available in the estimated income-expenditure book of Crete, revenues were more than one million penny more than expenditures in a year. However, when the salary to be assigned to Mustafa Naili Pasha by the state and the amount of food and clothing for the soldiers were added, it was seen that the revenues would not be enough to cover the expenses (BOA, İ. MTZ. GR. 1/4) Since the existing expenses had to continue, it was decided to increase the revenues. It was planned to increase the welfare of the inhabitants by increasing trade and agriculture within a few years. In fact, it was hoped that Crete would provide a great profit even for the centre. Mustafa Naili Pasha's salary was 2.500.000 penny, almost a quarter of the island's revenues.[18]

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18   With the inheritance from his uncle Hasan Pasha, Mustafa Naili Pasha became one of the richest men of the Ottoman Empire (Barchard, 2003, p. 25).

3.Public Works Activities in Crete in the Period of Mustafa Naili Pasha

Mehmet Ali Pasha and his representative Mustafa Naili Pasha, in the first years of their administration of the island of Crete, had the idea of doing many things about the island that would be witnessed by the European States. However, later on, especially Mehmet Ali Pasha's endeavours diminished. Nevertheless, Mehmet Ali Pasha carried out many public works on the island of Crete. He had the harbours of Chania and Rethymno cleaned and constructed embankments by placing large stones at their entrances. Pavements were built around Heraklion and on the north side of Chania. The water from a large spring[19] in the immediate vicinity of Heraklion was transferred to this area. Life in Heraklion was often difficult in the summer because the water was too scarce to meet the needs. For this reason, it was necessary to transport water to the city from a good water source outside the city. During the reign of Mustafa Naili Pasha, the construction of a waterway, the costs of which were covered by Mehmet Ali Pasha himself, was initiated and advanced considerably. Although these and similar activities proved the diligence of the Egyptian governor in the early years, they were insufficient to meet the needs of the island.

On the island of Crete, the Venetians had built many castles and arches on the coasts and large stone embankments for the harbours. However, these were inadequate and even in very poor condition, making it impossible to move from one place to another. This situation prevented the export of the crops grown on the island, especially olive oil. However, trade was very important for Crete. In addition, since the peasants could not transport their crops to the bazaars and markets, they could not make sales and thus could not supply the foodstuffs they needed for the year.[20]

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19   There were no waters big enough to be called rivers in Crete. The flowing waters were only enough to be called streams and they were formed by rain and snow waters. Although there were some spring waters, they would either dry up completely in the summer season or they would be so low that they would not be needed (Hanyevi, 1288, pp. 16-17).

20   Monsieur Kaporal, an advisor of Mustafa Naili Pasha, had thought of a solution and presented it to the Porte. Kaporal foresaw that this plan would be accepted first by the Porte and then by the Cretan assemblies. According to Monsieur Kaporal's plan, the state would not spend a penny during the repair of the roads. Each of the thirty-seven thousand useful men between the ages of fifteen and sixty, one-sixth of Crete's population of about two hundred thousand, was to work eight days a year for five or six years. Those who were rich or engaged in commerce and had neither the time nor the ability to work in person were to pay for these eight days. The wages were to be collected in a special chest, and the officer in charge of the chest was to be elected by the votes of the assembly and work under the supervision of Mustafa Naili Pasha. Kaporal stated that the repair or reconstruction of the roads would be completed with the labour of thirty-seven thousand men for three hundred thousand days, eight days a year, by selecting those who wanted to work personally. Thus, the transport of goods, trade and even

The existing bridges in Crete also needed to be repaired. Some of the bridges were in a dangerous condition and could cause accidents. Every year during the winter season, people who had to cross these bridges - which had become unsuitable due to the overflowing of the rivers - suffered casualties. Two of the four bridges identified were intact, but the condition of the others was not known, so the Bābālī had to deal with this issue.

During the reign of Mustafa Naili Pasha, Mehmet Ali Pasha, in order to leave a legacy in Crete, wanted to build two schools, one for Muslims and one for Greeks, at his own expense. At a time when the construction of the school was halfway through, the Greeks, who were provoked, were sceptical about this good intention. The opposing Greeks spread the idea that the officers of the Egyptian troops would be supplied from here. Upon this incident, Mehmet Ali Pasha returned to Alexandria in a confused and offended state and did not issue any orders regarding the island of Crete again. Later, at the request of Mustafa Naili Pasha, a sheltered school for Muslims was built in Heraklion. Monsieur Kaporal stated that the cost of this school was reasonable and demanded that it continue to provide education. In the meantime, the Greeks had given up their opposition stance and even regretted it, complaining that the school's revenues were insufficient and that it was not well managed.

When a local or visiting Muslim died on the island of Crete, those of his heirs who could prove their maturity were entitled to receive their shares. The money belonging to orphans who could not prove their puberty was placed in the property chest by the officials appointed by the governorate. The money or property belonging to the orphans was managed under the care and supervision of the relevant officials in a way to generate income without losing the orphan's right. In this way, the needs of the orphans were met and their inheritance was preserved until a certain time. When they came of age, their property would be handed over to them.[21]

4.Soldiers in Crete during the Guardianship of Mustafa Naili Pasha

During the period when Mustafa Naili Pasha was the guardian of Crete, certain amounts of mahiye and rations were given to the soldiers in the island. For example, in 1837, the total amount of one-month mahiye paid to

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the transport of soldiers from one place to another could be easily carried out (BOA, İ. MTZ. GR. 1/4).

21   For detailed information on the subject, see: (Özcan, 2006, pp. 103-120; Çanlı, 2003, pp. 59-86).

the secban soldiers, artillerymen, prisoners and clerks in Heraklion, Chania and Rethymno was 116.701 penny and the total amount of rations was 10.814 penny (BOA, C. AS. 684/28731).

A total of 60.812 penny was given to 893 sekban soldiers and their chiefs in Crete. Bulgur and barley were allocated as rations. The number of cavalry and scouts was 262 and the amount of mahiye given to them was 37.870 penny. The rations allocated to them were bulgur and barley. The artillery and jeeps were allocated 14,920 penny, while only bulgur was given to them as rations. The total amount of mahiye and rations given to Mustafa Naili Pasha as *müşir-i ekrem* was 126.075 penny. As a result, the total amount of mahiye for one month distributed to the soldiers who provided the security of the island of Crete was 230.303 penny, and the amount of the determination was 47.331 penny. In total, the cost of the soldiers for one month was 277.635 penny.

In order to ensure complete security on the island of Crete, reinforcements were constantly sent from outside. It was necessary to allocate certain amounts of allowances to these soldiers, who usually came from Rumelia. For example, the newly arrived sekban soldiers from Preveza were also allocated mahiye and tayinat. Since the number of new crews coming to the island of Crete from outside was high, the amount of mahiye and tayinat paid to them was also high. The number of incoming soldiers was 56,675 in total, and their mahiye was 371,735 penny and their rations were 91,554 penny, totalling 463,289 penny. Accordingly, a comparison of the sums and rations of the old and new crews will reveal the difference (BOA, C. AS. 684/28731).

The island of Crete had become a stopping point for Albanian soldiers travelling from the Balkans to Egypt. Mustafa Naili Pasha organised these Albanian soldiers on behalf of Mehmet Ali Pasha and sent them to Syria and Adana (Barchard, 2003, p. 25). As a matter of fact, Mustafa Naili Pasha travelled from Crete to Damascus with some troops in 1838 when the Druze and Maronites rebelled in Jebel-ü Lebanon in 1837 and attacked the Damascus region. Together with İbrahim Pasha, the son of Mehmet Ali Pasha, who had come from Aleppo, he had returned to Crete after 6 months of labouring to suppress the bandits (BOA, HAT. 373/20413/C).

5.Conclusion

The assignment of the island of Crete to Kavalalı Mehmet Ali Pasha between 1830-1840 is an important example that reflects both the Ottoman central authority's search for regional balance and Mehmet Ali Pasha's

Egypt-centred power building. Although the economic structure of Crete and its potential for constant rebellion did not meet Mehmet Ali Pasha's expectations, the administration of the island was successfully carried out by Mustafa Naili Pasha, who was his representative.

The administrative structure established by Mustafa Naili Pasha on the island, with its local assemblies, fair judicial practices, tax regulations and public works activities, turned into a practice of governance that was rare in the Ottoman provinces of the period. Pasha succeeded in establishing a balance between both Muslim and non-Muslim elements, and took important steps towards the establishment of social peace and the regular execution of public services. The administrative and financial reforms implemented in this period, while providing an environment of relative stability in Crete, also had a pioneering character in the pre-Tanzimat Ottoman reform experiences.

All in all, this ten-year period of special administration in Crete constitutes a remarkable example in the context of Ottoman-Egyptian relations, central-provincial administrative dynamics and the 19th century's quest for modernisation. Mustafa Naili Pasha's administration is of historical significance as it demonstrates how an organised and inclusive administrative approach, sensitive to local conditions, was possible in Ottoman administrative history.

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BOA, HAT, nr. 394/20829/A

BOA, HAT, nr. 394/20829/R

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Appendix A. Mustafa Naili Paşa. (Uluçam, 2008, s. 305).

Mustafa Naili Paşa

Appendix B. Crete Island Map (Hanyevi, 1288).

Chapter 8
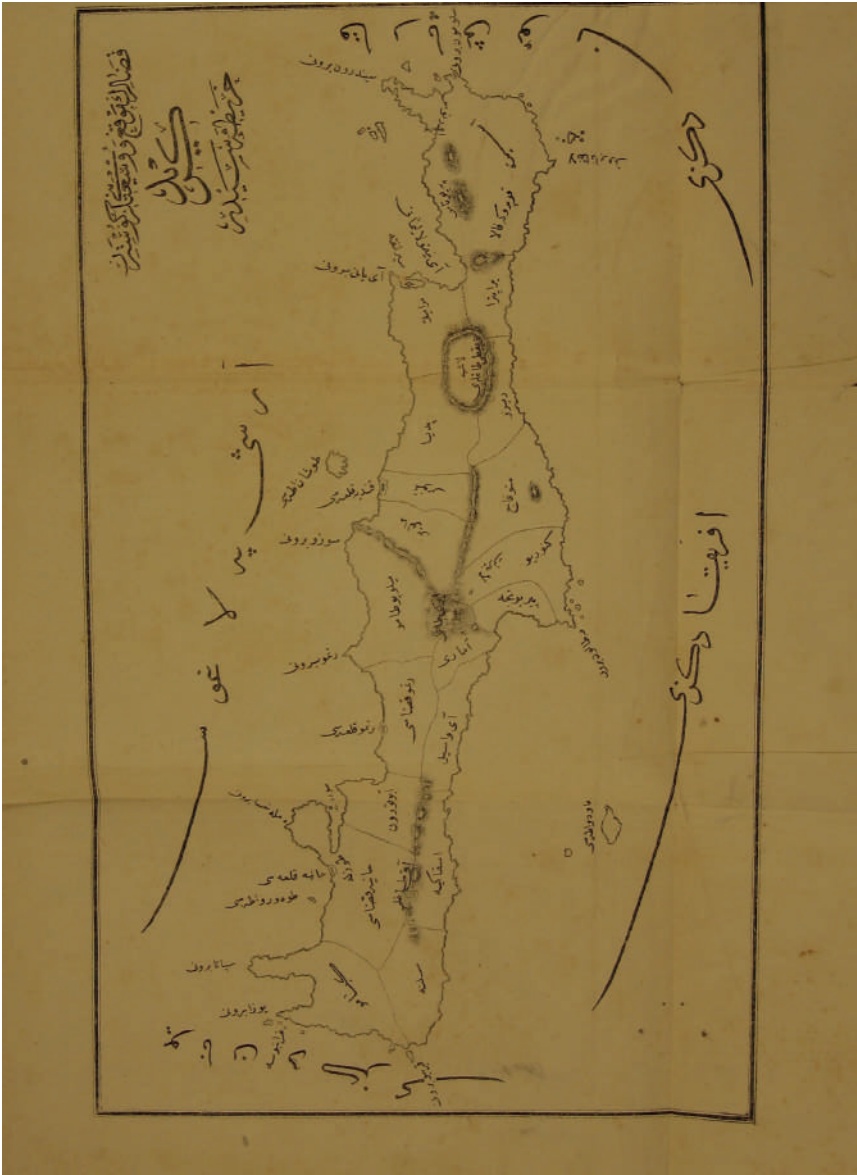
The Road to the Treaty of Kütahya: Balance of Power Policy in European Diplomacy and its Consequences 🔓

Ali Engin Oba[1]

Abstract

On the eve of the revolt of Kavalalı Mehmet Ali Pasha, the Ottoman Empire's loss of the Peloponnese and Algeria in 1830 marked significant developments in the challenging situation the Ottoman Empire faced. In this framework, while the rebellion launched by the Governor of Egypt, Mehmet Ali Pasha, against the Ottoman Empire was considered an internal problem of the state, the Egyptian rebellion became an international issue due to the intervention of major European powers in the rebellion, following their balance of power policies. As a matter of fact, in the face of the attitudes of England and France, which hesitated to intervene against the rebellion of Mehmet Ali Pasha in light of their various interests, the international problems caused by the Ottoman Empire's request for help from Russia led to the emergence of new issues challenging the Ottoman Empire.

Indeed, after the Egyptian Army defeated the Ottoman Army under the command of İbrahim Pasha in Konya, the Western countries intervened, and with the Kütahya Agreement dated May 14, 1833, the Egyptian Army withdrew its march on Istanbul and imposed its demands on the city. He made Istanbul accept his demands. The Egyptian Army remained in Kütahya for two and a half months and then retreated to Adana.

In the face of the Egyptian danger, the Ottoman Empire had to ask Russia for the support it could not receive from England and France, and with the Treaty of Hünkâr İskelesi dated July 8, 1833, the Russian Navy arrived in front of Istanbul. This situation disturbed England and France, per their policies towards Russia, and led them to work for the abrogation of this treaty. As a result, the Straits Convention was signed in London on July 13, 1841, with Russia's renunciation of the Hünkâr İskelesi Treaty. Accordingly, Britain,

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1   Prof. Dr., Çağ University

France, Russia, Austria and Prussia made it an interstate status that the Straits were closed to foreign warships and open to merchant ships. This situation prevented Russia from landing in the warm seas, and the Mediterranean continued to be a sea dominated by England and France.

As can be seen, the revolt of Mehmet Ali Pasha affected the balance of power policy of European diplomacy. Russia's landing in the Straits and Britain's threat to the route to India led to a new reevaluation of the European balance of power. These searches led to the Straits Convention of 1841.

INTRODUCTION

Egypt, which came under Ottoman rule in 1517, became an important province for the Ottoman Empire. As a matter of fact, the Ottomans, who were spread over three continents, had the opportunity to use the balances in the Eastern Mediterranean, the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf in their favour with Egypt. When it is considered that Algeria, Tunisia and Tripolitania, which were also strategically important countries in North Africa, were under Ottoman rule, the important position of the Ottoman Empire in the Mediterranean becomes clear. In the early 19th century, the loss of the Peloponnese and Algeria and other international problems, especially the policies of France and Britain, which were competing in search of new markets, were directed against the Ottoman Empire[2] In this enviroment, Napoleon Bonaparte began the occupation of Egypt on July 1, 1798.[3] This occupation led the Ottomans to discover diplomacy.[4] As a matter of fact, after power-based politics gave way to diplomacy, the Ottomans realised that they could sustain their existence with the diplomacy they practised in the light of the "balance of power".[5] On the other hand, Napoleon's Egyptian campaign played an important role in influencing the "fate" of the Ottoman Empire[6] Anglo-French rivalry, Napoleon's Egyptian expedition with an army of 40 thousand men and a scientific delegation of 500 people affected England and Russia. It created a short-lived British and Russian coalition against France. Within this framework, the Ottoman Empire concluded alliance agreements with Russia and England, which affected the balances in the Mediterranean and led to a change in these balances. On the

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2   Ali Akyıldız-Zekeriya Kurşun, Osmanlı Arap Coğrafyası ve Avrupa Emperyalizmi, İstanbul: İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2018, s.5.

3   Napolyon'un Mısır seferi için bakınız: Henry Laurens, L'Expedition d'Egypte, 1798-1881, Paris: Seuil, 1997.

4   Akyıldız-Kurşun, a.g.e., s.5.

5   a.g.e.

6   Musa Gümüş, Güç ve Diplomasi: Mısır Meselesi ve Sultan II. Abdülhamit, İstanbul: Kitabevi, 2018, s.3.

other hand, these developments also led to Egypt becoming a part of the Eastern Question.

EGYPT AND THE OTTOMAN STATE CREATED BY KAVALALI MEHMET ALİ PASHA

Mehmet Ali, who came to Egypt with the troops gathered from the Balkans on the occasion of Napoleon's Egyptian expedition, became the head of this troop after Tahir Pasha and put up a successful struggle against the French.[7] This struggle enabled him to take power in Egypt.

Mehmet Ali Pasha undertook reforms to reorganise Egypt and succeeded. This success led him to be recognised as the founder of the modern Egyptian nation.[8] Moreover, Mehmet Ali Pasha Egyptianized Egypt and created a state based on rational governance. With the help of French officers, he created an army composed of Egyptian fellahs. A French military mission arrived in Egypt in 1824 and contributed to the formation of an army.[9] On the other hand, Mehmet Ali Pasha had schools of science and technology opened, and plants, trees and fruit varieties were brought to Egypt. He directed the Egyptian economy to export to the European market.[10] In addition, he sent students to Europe and ensured developments in the fields of agriculture and industry.[11]

Within the framework of the evaluations on Mehmet Ali Pasha's rebellion against the Ottoman Empire, Kemal Karpat points to Mahmut II's centrism, economic monopolism and statism as the main cause of the rebellion.[12]

Mehmet Ali Pasha ruled Egypt for 43 years. During this period, four Sultans ruled the Ottoman Empire. During this period, Mehmet Ali Pasha succeeded in eliminating the former Mamluk beys and ensured the emergence of a political class consisting of his own family. In other words, a centralised power structure emerged and a strong state was formed.[13]

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7   a.g.e., s.7.

8   Virginia H. Aksan, Kuşatılmış Bir İmparatorluk: Osmanlı Harpleri 1700-1870, çev., Gül Çağalı Güven, İstanbul: İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2007, s.321.

9   Bernard Lewis, The Middle East: A Brief History of The Last 2.000 Years, New York: Simon & Schuster, 1997, s.296.

10   Afaf Lutfi Al-Sayyid Marsot, Mısır Tarihi: Arapların Fethinden Bugüne, çev., Gül Çağalı Güven, İstanbul: Yurt Yayınları, 2010, s.65.

11   Enver Ziya Karal, Osmanlı Tarihi V. Cilt, Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2022, s.127.

12   Kemal H. Karpat, Osmanlı'da Değişim, Modernleşme ve Uluslaşma, çev., Dilek Özdemir, Ankara: İmge Kitabevi, 2006, s.325-326.

13   Khaled Fahmy, Kavalalı Mehmed Ali: Osmanlı Valiliğinden Mısır Hükümdarlığına, çev., Abdullah Yılmaz, İstanbul: Vakıf Bank Kültür Yayınları, 2021, s.146.

However, Sultan Mahmut II and his Grand Viziers were always angry and cursed at this Pasha for disobeying the Sultan's orders.[14] Mehmet Ali Pasha, at the request of Istanbul, led expeditions to Hejaz and neutralised the Wahhabis in 1818. He also annexed Sudan to the Ottoman Empire. Mehmet Ali Pasha's desire to acquire Musawwa and Sevakin soured his relations with Istanbul.[15] With his role in suppressing the Peloponnesian revolt, he became the Governor of Crete, and a dispute arose between him and Istanbul due to the Navarino incident.

Mehmet Ali Pasha wanted Syria to benefit from its natural resources and to make his country more secure by moving the borders of Istanbul away from Egypt. According to him, in order for Egypt to live independently and in security, it was necessary to make Syria a border, and Egypt's natural borders did not start at Suez but at the Taurus Mountains.[16]

In other words, Mehmet Ali Pasha saw Syria as an extension of Egypt, a buffer zone, and he wanted to expand his tax base by occupying large Syria, which had natural and manpower resources such as iron, wood and coal.[17] For this purpose, Mehmet Ali Pasha wanted his son İbrahim Pasha to be appointed Governor of Syria. This led to a rift between Mehmet Ali Pasha and Istanbul. Mehmet Ali Pasha rebelled against the Ottoman Empire with the campaigns he launched in Syria and Anatolia. İbrahim Pasha, the eldest son of Mehmet Ali Pasha, wanted to completely Egyptianize the Egyptian army and worked in this direction. On the other hand, young İbrahim was sent to Istanbul at the age of 16 as a hostage in line with Ottoman tradition, and this period turned him against the Ottomans.[18] As a matter of fact, he later stated that he felt no loyalty to the Ottomans due to the influence of this period. İbrahim Pasha advocated Egypt's full independence from the Ottoman Empire. His father, Mehmet Ali Pasha, on the other hand, wanted economic and military independence from the Ottomans, but envisioned the preservation of cultural ties with the Ottomans.[19]

Unhappy with Mehmet Ali Pasha's successes in Egypt, state officials in Istanbul began to provoke Mahmut II against the Egyptian Governor. In this environment, Abdullah Pasha, the Governor of Acre, hesitated to give

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14 a.g.e., s.147.

15 Akyıldız ve Kurşun, a.g.e., s.8.

16 Dr. Şinasi Altundağ, Kavalalı Mehmet Ali Paşa İsyanı: Mısır Meselesi 1831-1841-I. Kısım, Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 1945, s.35.

17 Aksan, a.g.e., s.383.

18 Marsot, a.g.e., s.60.

19 Marsot, a.g.e.

Mehmet Ali Pasha his slaves and refused to pay his debts, which led Mehmet Ali Pasha to send an army against the Governor of Acre. In fact, Mehmet Ali Pasha aimed to capture Syria. Indeed, taking advantage of this expedition, Jaffa, Gaza, and Haifa fell into the hands of the Egyptians, and as a result of the confusion in Damascus, Damascus also came under the control of Mehmet Ali Pasha. In the face of these developments, Mehmet Ali Pasha was declared a rebel against the Sultan.[20]

Aga Hüseyin Pasha, the Governor of Edirne, was appointed as Serdar-ı ekrem and Governor of Egypt and sent against Mehmet Ali Pasha. Thus, a war started between Mehmet Ali Pasha and the Ottoman Empire.[21] The Egyptians defeated the Ottoman army near Damascus and entered Damascus.[22] Later, the Egyptians managed to defeat the Ottoman army near Antakya- İskenderun on July 29, 1832.[23] In this environment, Mehmet Ali Pasha declared that he would stop the war if Syria was given to him. Istanbul, which rejected this offer, mobilised Reşit Mehmet Pasha against Mehmet Ali Pasha's forces. Meanwhile, the Egyptian army under the command of İbrahim Pasha crossed the Taurus Mountains and reached Konya. Here, the Ottomans lost the battle between the Ottomans and the Egyptians and Rashid Pasha was captured.[24] The fall of Konya opened up the possibility for İbrahim Pasha to advance to Istanbul.

OTTOMAN DIPLOMACY AGAINST MEHMET ALİ PASHA

France and Britain pursued a diplomacy that favoured the survival of the Ottoman Empire. However, France displayed a sympathetic attitude towards Mehmet Ali Pasha.[25] The fact that İbrahim Pasha had reached a position that could threaten the existence of the Ottoman Empire led Russia to intervene in the problem, in addition to France and England.

On the other hand, Austria was also interested in the Mehmet Ali Pasha problem. As a matter of fact, Austria declared that it supported the Ottoman Empire and that Austrian merchants would not set foot in Egyptian ports as long as Mehmet Ali Pasha did not obey the Ottoman Empire.[26] Austria

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20 Karal, a.g.e., s.129.

21 a.g.e..

22 a.g.e., s.130.

23 a.g.e..

24 Konya Savaşı hakkında bilgi için bakınız: Salih Kış, "Kavalalı Mehmet Ali Paşa Hadisesinda Konya Muharabesi", Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Selçuk Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, 2004.

25 Gilbert Sinoué, Kavalalı Mehmet Ali Paşa: Son Firavun, çev., Ali Cevat Akkoyunlu, İstanbul: Doğan Kitap, 1999, s.311.

26 Şenay Döner, Moskof'la İttifak: Osmanlı-Rus Diplomatik İlişkileri (1832-1841), İstanbul: Timaş Yayınları, 2025, s.51.

became the most important trading partner of the Ottoman Empire between 1832 and 1841.[27] In this context, the spread of Russian influence in the Ottoman Empire was also a negative development for Austria. Realising that they could not cope with the Egyptian Forces, the Ottomans had to request military and political assistance from the countries interested in the region.

Realising that they could not cope with the Egyptian Forces, the Ottomans had to request military and political assistance from the countries interested in the region.

In July 1832, France offered to mediate with Egypt before Istanbul took the initiative to do so. Istanbul rejected this offer due to the French attitude favourable to Mehmet Ali Pasha.[28]

On the occasion of the arrival of the British statesman Stratford Canning in Istanbul, a request was made to the British for help with the question of the borders of the Greek State. Canning refrained from committing. Mahmut II told Canning that some commercial privileges could be granted to the British in return for their help.[29]

In this way, the fact that England and France remained bystanders to the Mehmet Ali Pasha problem for a while led to the intervention of the Russians and led to the competition between these countries.[30] In this context, the Ottoman Empire had to conclude the Treaty of Hünkâr İskelesi with Russia on July 8, 1833, and then the Treaty of Baltalimanı with Britain on August 16, 1838.[31] Both treaties negatively affected the general policies of the Ottoman Empire.[32] Thus, the Egyptian question changed from being an internal problem of the Ottoman Empire to an international one.

The Egyptian problem was solved with the London Protocol adopted in 1840 and the 1841 Edict issued by the Ottoman Empire in connection with it, which granted Egypt an autonomous status. Although Mehmet Ali Pasha was expelled from Syria and Lebanon, it was ensured that the governorships

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27 a.g.e.

28 Muhammed Hanefi Kutluoğlu, "1833 Kütahya "Antlaşması"nın Yeni Bir Değerlendirmesi", Osmanlı Araştırmaları, XVII, İstanbul: Enderun Kitabevi, 1997, s.265.

29 a.g.e., s.266.

30 Zekeriya Kurşun, Osmanlı Arapları: Hilafet-Siyaset-Milliyet 1798-1918, İstanbul: Vakıf Bank Kültür Yayınları, 2023, s.50.

31 Bu andlaşmalarla ilgili olarak bakınız: Dr. Rifat Uçarol, Siyasi Tarih: 1789-2010, İstanbul: Der Yayınları, 2008, s.191-196.

32 Kurşun, a.g.e.., s.51.

of Egypt would pass to his sons after him. Moreover, the Egyptian issue affected the attitudes of the European States towards the Ottoman Empire.

In light of Mahmut II's efforts to ally against Mehmet Ali Pasha, Mehmet Ali Pasha took action and wanted to start peace negotiations with Mahmut II.[33] However, since Istanbul did not intend to compromise with Mehmet Ali Pasha, this attempt did not yield any results.

Mahmut II sent Mavroyiani, the Ottoman Chargé d'Affaires in Austria, and Namık Pasha as the Extraordinary Envoy to London to request help from the British.[34] Meanwhile, England was too busy with the Irish and Belgian problems to respond positively to the requests for help against Mehmet Ali Pasha.[35] However, the possibility of Mahmut II's request for help from Russia prompted the Foreign Secretary Palmerston, who was in favour of aid. Palmerston had the British cabinet decide that instead of military aid, a mediation offer should be made to Mehmet Ali Pasha with the participation of France.[36] The Ottoman Empire did not respond positively to this proposal. The reason for this was the fear of the French attitude in favour of Mehmet Ali Pasha and their insistence on giving Syria to Egypt.[37]

Believing that this environment contained opportunities in their favour, Russia offered assistance to the Ottoman Empire. As a matter of fact, in November 1832, the Russian Ambassador declared that the Russian navy was ready to help the Sultan if he so desired. In this framework, in December 1832, the Russian Tsar offered to send General Muravieff to Istanbul to negotiate peace with Mehmet Ali Pasha. Muravieff arrived in Istanbul on December 21, 1832, during the Battle of Konya. However, the Ottoman Empire responded negatively to Russia's proposal in the hope of receiving help from Britain. Moreover, the Ottomans did not want Russia to be involved in this issue.

Russia's offer of help caused other countries to become more interested in the Egyptian issue. In particular, France started to press for an agreement between the Sultan and Mehmet Ali Pasha. In light of Russia's offer and the failure of the Ottoman army in Anatolia, the Ottoman Empire welcomed France's offer and sent Captain-General Halil Rıfat Pasha to Egypt to solve

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33   Kutluoğlu, a.g.e., s.266.

34   Namık Paşa için bakınız: Ahmet Dönmez, "İngiliz-Rus Nüfus Çekişmesi Ortasında İstenmeyen bir Osmanlı Elçisi: Mehmet Namık Paşa (1834-1835)", Tarih İncelemeleri Dergisi, XXXIX-I, 2024, 81-105.

35   Kutluoğlu, a.g.e., s.267.

36   a.g.e., s.269.

37   a.g.e., s. 269.

this problem.[38] The Russians also sent Muravieff to Alexandria. Muravieff informed Mehmet Ali Pasha that the Russians would not accept the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire and the demand for independence. In this context, Mehmet Ali Pasha ordered his son İbrahim Pasha to halt his advance towards Istanbul.[39]

THE CONSEQUENCES OF IBRAHIM PASHA'S ARRIVAL IN KÜTAHYA

Halil Rıfat Pasha also wanted to reach an agreement with Mehmet Ali Pasha and eliminate the danger of İbrahim Pasha. However, Mehmet Ali Pasha adopted an intransigent attitude.[40] He threatened that the Egyptian forces in Kütahya might march on Istanbul. He also claimed that he could start a revolt among the people of Rumelia, especially Albanians and Bosnians.[41] Meanwhile, İbrahim Pasha advanced as far as Istanbul and requested his father's consent to depose the Sultan. This was not following the promise made to Muravieff.

Furthermore, İbrahim Pasha increased his pressure to strengthen his hand during the negotiations with his father, Mehmet Ali Pasha and announced his intention to march to Istanbul via Bursa.[42] In this environment, İbrahim Pasha moved from Konya with the forces under his command and arrived in Kütahya. Ibrahim Pasha aimed to occupy the coastal cities in the Marmara Sea via Bursa and, thus, with the advantage of proximity to Istanbul, to force the Palace to accept the conditions that would be beneficial for them.[43] This situation caused great concern to Mahmut II, and since the expected help from the British did not come, the Ottoman Empire requested military aid from Russia on February 2, 1833.[44]

This development affected the European powers and led them to take action. France, especially in the first place, tried to prevent the arrival of the Russian Navy to the Straits in cooperation with Britain. In the meantime, France appointed a well-known diplomat, Admiral Roussin, as Ambassador to Istanbul. Roussin made attempts before the Palace in favour of French and British interests.

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38   a.g.e., s. 271.

39   a.g.e., s. 271.

40   a.g.e., s. 272.

41   a.g.e., s. 272.

42   Kutluoğlu,a.g.e., s. 273.

43   Kutluoğlu, a.g.e.., s.274.

44   Kutluoğlu, a.g.e., s.275.

In this context, French Charge d'Affaires Varenne and Reşit Bey travelled to Kütahya and tried to reach an agreement with İbrahim Pasha and prevent him from going any further. After a long negotiation, İbrahim Pasha's demand that Adana be given to him was accepted, and a compromise was reached in Kütahya. And İbrahim Pasha returned from Kütahya to Adana.

The May 14, 1833, Kütahya Reconciliation, Sulh'namesi, was not a written agreement, but a verbal agreement.[45] Although the verbal agreement was later confirmed by an edict, there was no written guarantee given by Mahmut II to Mehmet Ali Pasha and his son İbrahim Pasha.[46] There is no signed document between the two parties. However, this Compromise created an atmosphere of peace between the Ottoman Empire and Mehmet Ali Pasha. In this way, the first phase of the revolt of Mehmet Ali Pasha ended.[47]

Despite this compromise, the dispute between Istanbul and Mehmet Ali Pasha could not be resolved definitively.[48] This was because Mahmud II did not trust Mehmet Ali Pasha and thought that he might launch a new attack.[49] In this context, Russia showed friendship to the Ottoman Empire from the first days of the Egyptian revolt. Moreover, the protection of the existence of the Ottoman Empire became the basic principle of Russian foreign policy from

Pavel I onwards. In this framework, Russia pursued a determined policy against Mehmet Ali Pasha.[50] In this context, the Treaty of Hünkâr İskelesi was signed between Russia and the Ottoman Empire on July 8, 1833.

This treaty consisted of a preamble, six open and one closed articles and was concluded for 8 years. This treaty led to the Ottoman Empire becoming a Russian protectorate.[51] According to Feridun Cemal Erkin, the provisions of this treaty were too extreme for other countries. For the Ottoman Empire, these provisions were embarrassing. Therefore, this treaty could not have the quality of continuity.[52] The secret clause of this treaty is of fundamental importance.

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45 Kutluoğlu, a.g.e., s.285.

46 a.g.e.

47 Oral Sander, Siyasi Tarih: İlk Çağlardan 1918'e, Ankara: İmge Kitabevi, 2005, s.300-303.

48 Karal, a.g.e., s.136.

49 a.g.e.

50 Döner, a.g.e., s.13.

51 Karal,a.g.e., s.138.

52 Feridun Cemal Erkin, Türk-Sovyet İlişkileri ve Boğazlar Meselesi, Ankara, 1968, s. 27.

Indeed, the secret clause does not allow any foreign ships to enter the Dardanelles. Moreover, in the event of a war between Russia and the Western States, the Ottoman Empire would close the Dardanelles to the navy of the country at war with Russia. However, Russian ships will be able to pass through the Straits in both directions.[53]

EUROPEAN DIPLOMACY AFTER THE TREATY OF HÜNKÂR İSKELESİ

The first phase of the international problem caused by Mehmet Ali Pasha's attempt to seize the Ottoman Empire between 1831 and 1833 ended with the Kütahya Compromise and the Treaty of Hünkâr İskelesi. However, European countries had to be divided into two groups in the face of the Egyptian Question. The first group consisted of Russia, Austria and Prussia. The second group consisted of England and France.[54]

Although Nicholas I succeeded in making Russia's position in the East more effective with the Treaty of Hünkâr İskelesi, he acted together with Austria in light of the Ottoman Empire's difficulties against Mehmet Ali Pasha. In this context, to contribute to the survival of the Ottoman Empire, Russia and Austria concluded the Treaty of Münchengrätz on September 18, 1833. Later, Prussia joined this treaty in Berlin on October 15, 1833.[55]

In brief, this treaty consisted of a preamble and five articles, two of which were secret. The first article stipulated that the signatory countries should do their utmost to ensure that the Ottoman Empire remained in the hands of the Ottoman dynasty. The second article included the prevention of any changes in the Ottoman Empire. The secret articles dealt with the problems of preventing the expansion of Mehmet Ali Pasha and the situation that would arise if the Ottoman Empire could not be saved.[56] With this treaty, Russia was able to secure the help of Austria and Prussia and to support the privileged position it had realised with the Treaty of Hünkâr İskelesi.[57] The Kütahya Compromise could not eliminate the rivalry between the Ottoman Empire and Mehmet Ali Pasha. In particular, İbrahim Pasha, as mentioned above, wanted the full independence of Egypt. Within this framework, he was considering the transfer of the Caliphate from Istanbul to Cairo.[58]

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53   a.g.e. Hünkar İskelesi Andlaşması'nın şartları için bakınız: Uçarol, a.g.e., s.191-192.

54   Altundağ, a.g.e., s.159.

55   Döner, a.g.e., s.236.

56   Altundağ, a.g.e., s.163-164.

57   Karal, a.g.e., s.138-139.

58   a.g.e., s.140.

Around this time, rumours started to spread that Mehmet Ali Pasha would declare his independence.[59]

In this context, the Ottoman-British Trade Treaty was signed on August 16, 1838, in Balta Port. With this treaty, the Ottomans aimed to secure Britain's support against the Egyptian Question.[60] However, since this treaty envisaged the implementation of the Free Trade System, it contained conditions that would lead to the collapse of the Ottoman economy.[61]

Mehmet Ali Pasha demanded that the territories under his rule be passed down from father to son and later declared his independence. Meanwhile, the Ottoman Army was reorganised. The Ottomans, who also received British support, declared war against Mehmet Ali Pasha. On June 24, 1839, the Ottoman Army was defeated in the battle of Nizip. In the face of this situation, England, France, Austria and Prussia, fearing that Russia might re-enter the Bosphorus Strait under the Treaty of Hünkâr İskelesi, tried to find a solution to the Egyptian Question. However, France did not want to take any action against Mehmet Ali Pasha. Therefore, England, Austria, Russia and Prussia signed a treaty in London on July 15, 1840. The Ottoman Empire also participated in this treaty.[62]

This quadripartite treaty was concluded in order to protect the Ottoman Empire and to encourage Mehmet Ali Pasha to make a deal and compromise.[63] According to this quadripartite treaty, Egypt was left to Mehmet Ali Pasha to pass from father to son, and Southern Syria and Acre were left to Mehmet Ali Pasha on condition of his life.[64] Mehmet Ali Pasha was forced to accept these conditions. He could not get the help he hoped for from the French.[65] In particular, Britain's intervention prevented Mehmet Ali Pasha from establishing a big state, thus keeping Britain's security in the Eastern Mediterranean and India under control.[66] France, on the other hand, tried to maintain its influence over Egypt, but remained ineffective in bringing the rebellion to a conclusion.[67] The Egyptian Question lasted for seven years. The Ottoman State's difficulty in suppressing the rebellion of a

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59 Uçarol, a.g.e., s.193.

60 a.g.e., s.195.

61 a.g.e.

62 a.g.e., s.197.

63 Karal, a.g.e., s.198.

64 a.g.e.

65 a.g.e., p. 201.

66 a.g.e., s.202.

67 a.g.e., s.203

Pasha'[68] led to other problems in international politics. The most important of these problems was the one related to the Straits. In particular, the Treaty of London of July 15, 1840, was concluded because the Russians ensured the closure of the Straits to the warships of other states with the Treaty of Hünkâr İskelesi and the weakness of the Ottoman Empire.[69] Later, four states and France signed the London Convention on the Straits on July 12, 1841. The Straits Convention consisted of four articles. The most important article is the first one. This article includes the principle of closure of the straits to warships in peacetime. However, this convention is of great importance in the history of the Straits. Because, with this convention, the Straits were given an international status. This prevented the Ottoman Empire from making a change in the Straits regime without the consent of the signatory countries.[70] The Convention also made it obligatory for all signatory countries to respect the closure of the Straits. Thus, with this treaty, Britain put a barrier against Russia's ambitions regarding the Straits.[71]

CONCLUSION AND EVALUATION

The weakness of the Ottoman Empire as a result of Mehmet Ali Pasha's struggle against the Ottoman Empire led Western countries to take an interest in this problem. In this framework, Russia, England, France, Austria and Prussia caused important developments in European diplomacy as a result of the balance of power policy they pursued in the light of their interests in order to keep the Ottoman Empire alive.

In light of the outcome of the Kütahya Compromise, which was realised in order to prevent İbrahim Pasha's departure to Istanbul, the Hünkâr İskelesi Treaty with Russia led other European countries to make agreements to reduce Russian influence in the Straits and to keep the Ottoman Empire afloat. In this framework, the Treaties of Münchengrätz and London brought a solution to the Mehmet Ali Pasha problem. The Mehmet Ali Pasha incident also revealed the importance of the Straits issue and paved the way for the Straits Convention of 1841.

Thus, stopping Ibrahim Pasha in Kütahya shaped Mehmet Ali Pasha's efforts to take over the Ottoman Empire within the framework of international politics, and in the end, the Khedive regime was established in

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68   Fahir Armaoğlu, Siyasi Tarih: 1789-1960, Ankara: SBF Yayınları, 1973, s.125.

69   Andlaşma metnine bakınız: N. Bordeano, L'Egypte d'après les Traités de 1840-41, İstanbul: Typographie et Lithographie Centrale, 1869, s. 4-24.

70   a.g.e.

71   a.g.e.

Egypt, but the problems caused by a weak Ottoman Empire in international politics were encountered.

The authorities of the Ottoman Empire realised the importance of diplomacy to survive in the light of the bitter reality revealed by the Mehmet Ali Pasha incident.

Thus, the Kütahya Compromise led to new challenges for Ottoman diplomacy. Ottoman diplomacy tried to find solutions to these problems through the balance of power policy.

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Chapter 9

Localism and Traditionalism in Orhan Pamuk's Novel "A Strangeness in My Mind" 🔓

Ali Budak[1]

Abstract

In his novel *A Strangeness in My Mind*, Orhan Pamuk tells us about the city of Istanbul, which has undergone changes and transformations starting from the 1950s, through the life and love affair of a street vendor named Mevlut Karataş, who sells yogurt and boza, a traditional Turkish beverage. Merely from this aspect, the novel may not seem so inventive or striking. However, the novel is quite remarkable as a fictional work due to its structural properties, and its techniques of writing and narration. Pamuk's original perspective and approach in tackling and interpreting this seemingly ordinary content is worth placing emphasis on. For Orhan Pamuk, what distinguishes novels from other narrations is the presence of an undisclosed center in novels. That center is far from the level that can be traced through existing words, somewhere in the background, out of sight and difficult to capture. What we aimed to do in this article was to trace the central emotion and the idea, which may be regarded as the "major issue" of the novel. What kind of a second life does the novel *A Strangeness in My Mind* offer us? We searched for an answer to this question while also investigating the writing and the narration techniques.

INTRODUCTION

Orhan Pamuk is an author who has sediments of certain "matters" deep within himself. Even a superficial approach to his work clearly indicates that those matters carry a thematic coherence and at least a continuity. It seems that Orhan Pamuk has been telling us a single big story all the way from the start: the long story of the painful period of the modernization of Turkey and its people.

1   Prof. Dr., Yeditepe University, Faculty of Sciences and Literatures Department of Turkish Language and Literature, alibudak@yeditepe.edu.tr, https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9880-7958

Of course, the identity problems between East and West and the quest of content make up its main issue. Pamuk analyzes this issue in his novels such as *Cevdet Bey and His Sons* and *The House of Silence* in terms of Turkey's civil history. In these novels, the progress of Westernization all the way from the Tanzimat period until the 1980's and the ideas developed against it, is covered in a wide range and in different point of views. In addition to this, in *The Black Book*, Pamuk locates the uneasy artist, who is standing between the line of fantasy and reality exactly at the center of the novel. In the novels *The White Castle* and *My Name is Red*, the comparison of East and West acquires a totally different direction by transforming into a Europe-Ottoman contrast, this time in the fields of science and art. In the novel *Snow*, topics such as the local history of Kars, the hijab problem, suicides, coup de main; the East and West problematic is once again argued throughout Turkey in the line of politics and with its terminology. [2]

After Pamuk's novel *The Museum of Innocence*, the actual "matter" in *A Strangeness in My Mind* and its interrogation is realized through a pure love perception which is specific to Turkey, and the actual character of the novel is again Istanbul. Yet, this time it seems as if Orhan Pamuk embraces Istanbul with much warmer and more truthful feelings. That is to say, he wants to embrace this complex but so far deep and magical city, entirely and reconcile with all its districts... Not only with Şişli, Nişantaşı, Cihangir, Beyoğlu or Çukurcuma, this time the range differs from Fatih to Tarlabaşı, from Kadırga to Gazi District and Gültepe. In the same manner as above, in the novel *A Strangeness in My Mind*, not only the rich and the intellectuals are covered, but also a whole bunch of city people such as the poor, the illiterate, the provincial, the homesteaders, the yoghurt and boza sellers, the housewives, the *nouveau riche*, the nonexperienced and experienced are covered.

1. THE PLOT OF THE NOVEL

A Strangeness in My Mind is a novel which tells us the powerful change and transformation that Istanbul undergoes starting from the 1950's through the life of a street vendor named Mevlut Karataş who sells boza and yoghurt. The author summarizes his novel as follows:

"This is the story of the life and daydreams of Mevlut Karataş, a seller of boza and yoghurt. Born in 1957 on the western edge of Asia, in a poor village overlooking a hazy lake in Central Anatolia, he came to Istanbul at the age of twelve, living there, in the capital of the world, for the rest of

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2   Orhan Pamuk's novels are widely discussed in literary critisicm. For different point of views and evaluations see (Esen & Kılıç, 2008), (Esen,1996), (Hadzibegovic,2013)

his life. When he was twenty-five, he returned to the province of his birth, where he eloped with a village girl, a rather strange affair that determined the rest of his days: returning with her to Istanbul, he got married and had two daughters; he took a number of jobs without pause, selling his yoghurt, ice cream, and rice in the street and waiting tables. But every evening, without fail, he would wander the streets of Istanbul, selling boza and dreaming strange dreams." (Pamuk, 2016, p.3)

The abovementioned place on the western edge of Asia is Cennetpınar Village of Beyşehir district in Konya and a hazy lake is Akşehir. The author introduces the main character Mevlut as a tall, firm but slender, good-looking person. He presents Mevlut's baby face which arouses compassion amongst women as his main feature. The second feature of this brown haired, watchful eyed character is that even after the age of forty, he is adored by women thanks to his baby face. The author counts Mevlut's optimism being in a degree of naiveness, again as a part of his distinctions. The reported "strange thing" that happened to Mevlut after he eloped with a girl, makes up the novel's main link in the chain of happenings.

We can continue with the summary from where the author left off. Mevlut is the youngest child of the three children; two daughters and a son of the couple Atiye and Mustafa Karataş. As they don't have proper land in the village, they are having difficulties in making their living. In order to manage the family's budget Mevlut's father has to go to Istanbul to sell boza and yoghurt during the wintertime. After several visits to Istanbul and back, Mustafa Karataş and his big brother Hasan Aktaş have managed to get land at the very corner of the valley of Kültepe and have even built their own *gecekondu*, or slum house, there. For Mustafa Karataş, Istanbul is a city where you go to work in the winters and come back home in the summers, while his big brother Hasan Aktaş begins to settle his future in Istanbul and by the help of his brother builds another slum house in Duttepe and permanently takes with him his wife and two sons.

Mevlut has daydreams such as going to Istanbul right after finishing school just like his uncle's sons Korkut and Süleyman, but is unfortunately left to shepherd in the village for one year. His father has some reasons for himself for not bringing him with to Istanbul or maybe he is just being capricious. Later on when he takes his son with him, Mevlut is forced to a lonely life squeezed in a single roomed slum house. He goes to school during the day and at night he sells boza or yoghurt together with his father. Thus, ten years will pass since he came to Istanbul, Mevlut will study up till his last year of high school with great difficulty, but will not be able to

get his diploma. Later on, by joining his uncle's son Korkut at a wedding in Mecidiyeköy, his life will change for good, because at the wedding he has come to close eye contact with one of the bride's younger sisters and has fallen in love. At first, he will write emotional letters to this girl whose name he won't know for three years, then one night, by the help of his uncle's youngest son Süleyman, he will elope with the girl from her house in Gümüşdere Village. However, the girl whom he eloped with at night and did not see her face due to the darkness, will not turn out to be the girl of his dreams whom he gave compliments to her eyes for years. He was deceived by Süleyman, and instead of Semiha, whom he wrote hundreds of love letters to, he eloped with her big sister Rayiha. This is the "strangeness" which occurred. Anyway, Mevlut will hide his displeasure and accept this situation as his fate. The girl will feel that she disappointed the guy she eloped with, but will not dwell on it, or rather will not be able to dwell on it due to the circumstances. Actually, she never thought that the addressee of all those letters would be her sister by all means and not herself, because everything developed outside her knowledge.

What makes this intentional but simple mistake "strange" is Mevlut's passiveness. It is possible to describe his reaction which appeared as a deep silence as unresponsiveness or an action of unconsciously applied "patience". They have overcome the surprise and start waiting at the station. These moments are the first moments the prospective husband and wife spend with each other, and will of course be a determinant for their upcoming lives. Mevlut has bought two savory buns from the buffet; just as he gave one of them to Rayiha, Mevlut was faintly aware that the impression of gratitude on her face was about to open some space within him. This space has expanded with "her eating the bun slowly and guardedly as if she was committing a crime," with her falling asleep in the train compartment like an innocent child and with her waking up with a sweet smile on her face. Most particularly, when the girl notices his remote attitude and cries by saying, "You don't love me," and keeps on crying, it has deeply affected Mevlut and made him feel guilty and regretful for how he has behaved. This long journey together all by themselves in a train wagon will make Mevlut experience totally different feelings. From time to time Rayiha will fall asleep, lean her head over his shoulder while Mevlut will feel both responsible and secretly pleased by this.

Eventually, Mevlut will start fancying Rayiha's especially warm smile and her clear, bright face. He will be proud of this girl who is only a primary school graduate and can count the names of all the far countries along the coast without any difficulty and will start smiling to her with love before

arriving in Istanbul. In the coming days Mevlut's closeness to Rayiha will increase and gradually he will love her very much.

At first, Mevlut rented a small house in Tarlabaşı, then he asked Rayiha's father, Boynueğri Abdurrahman Efendi for permission to marry his daughter. At the time, yoghurts began to be sold in the markets. Due to this, Mevlut starts working in other fields such as selling ice cream in the streets and selling chicken and rice in Kabataş, while selling boza is his irrevocable job at nights. His main stops are Feriköy, Osmanbey, Taksim, Tarlabaşı and Karaköy. He has a very exhausting life but, as the time goes by, he feels more and more happy with his beloved smart wife whom he has become committed to. He will always remember these first years of his marriage as the best times of his life. Not long after they have a daughter named Fatma followed by their second daughter named Fevziye.

Meanwhile, Samiha, the girl whom Mevlut fell in love with at first sight and to whom he wrote letters of praise, is staying with her big sister, Vediha. Everybody thinks that she will marry Süleyman, but in an unexpected way, she has eloped with another boy and surprised everyone, particularly her big sister. The boy he eloped with is nobody else than Mevlut's close friend Ferhat. Samiha has thereby put Mevlut in a very difficult situation. Ferhat, who has helped Mevlut in writing his first letters to Samiha and even wrote some of them himself, has gained a totally different identity now. Apparently, he has become Mevlut's brother-in-law but in reality, he is just a betraying foe who has eloped with the girl he once loved even though he knew the truth. Mevlut doesn't know what to do and how to behave to this marriage for a long time. In one side there is his wife, Rayiha who is unaware of everything, then there is his sister-in-law, Samiha whom he is not sure whether she is aware of all the letters being written to her, and then there is his so-called dearest friend, Ferhat whom he always delightedly remembered spending wonderful times with.

Süleyman, who is responsible for Mevlut's strange marriage and thereby the main witness of his big secret, goes crazy. He had planned this game to have Samiha to himself but unfortunately, she has become someone else's lover. In fact Süleyman's plan was first to get Mevlut and Rayiha married so that he could marry Samiha quickly afterwards. At that time, he had no doubts that Samiha would choose him to marry. But things did not turn out the way he had planned. During this period Süleyman, who cannot accept not being loved by the woman he loves in return, and can't even find a good match for himself after years of searching, has admitted to Mevlut that he has directed the love letters to Rayiha himself instead of giving them to

Samiha. Restless days are on the way for Mevlut. Not being able to guess the results of the truth coming to light, he is also afraid of the happiness he feels by his witty thought, "maybe it would have been better if I was married to pretty Samiha."

Although Ferhat and Semiha had financial difficulties at first, they will reach prosperity by time. Ferhat has both worked and finished his university, later started to work as an electricity cash collector. Soon after that, Ferhat and Mevlut became close friends again, while Süleyman fell in love with a pavilion singer named Melahat, married to her and got two sons.

Life seems to be flowing relatively regular for the family. But Mevlut's difficulties in his job and his search for new opportunities continues. He will be fired from managing a very busy buffet due to tolerating staff's illegal activities, and he will not be able to run the boza store they managed together with Ferhat. But his actual breakdown will come with the sudden loss of his wife. Rayiha being pregnant to her third child, has tried to deliver her baby in very primitive conditions and has died due to blood loss. She was just thirty years old; just in the prime of her life.

Mevlut, thirty eight years of age was left alone with his two daughters. He was so used to Rayiha and her being a support to him that he was not ready to live without her. While continuing working as a parking lot attendant with the help of his friend from high school, Ferhat will offer Mevlut to assist him and he will start working as an electricity cash collector to earn more money for his daughters. Indeed, at a time where illegal usage of electricity in Istanbul was common, this job will support him financially.

Ferhat has turned this cash collecting job into his own advantage for a very long time and has earned quite a lot of money and a wider social environment by price cutting, tolerating illegal behavior and blackmailing, and is now struggling in a totally different dimension. He has fallen in love with the woman he met one day when he went to her house to inform the illegal usage of electricity and as of that day he has been searching her all over Istanbul. The love he felt for this young woman named Selvihan soon claimed his life. Ferhat was killed when he wanted to "bankrupt" the pavilion of Sami from Sürmene, whom Selvihan had a relationship with.

Thereby, Mevlut and Samiha will once again encounter each other. They were both widowed now and they were both interested in each other, especially Mevlut, who is secretly excited to have restarted everything from the beginning. The woman whom he fell in love with at first sight and wrote long letters to was now in a reachable and touchable distance. Besides, his

daughters have also gotten married even though Mevlut was not so fond of their marriages. His oldest daughter Fatma, even supported him to marry her aunt, Samiha. Mevlut has also gained stability in his professional life. He has been managing fellow citizen association which has been founded by his uncle's son Korkut's initiation who has now become a businessman and a political figure. The possibility of getting together with his first love will also answer his curiosity of "maybe…"

In the end, Mevlut and Samiha get married and move to the single roomed slum house at Kültepe. The house of Mevlut's teenage and first youth years has turned into a place convenient to live in after a few restorations. Semiha gets the rents of the houses left to her from Ferhat as well. These longtime lovers will trade their slum house for a condo and will live a more comfortable life, but Mevlut will continue selling boza at nights, because he loves the streets and finds the actual peace in the streets. The last words that he wants to say to the city will be told to him be the streets itself. This, at the same time, will be the answer to the crucial question which has occupied his mind for years.

2. STRUCTURE OF THE NOVEL

A Strangeness In My Mind seems to have gotten its name from one of William Wordsworth's poems. The author introduces the book with three epigraphs. The first one is a poem by Wordsworth. It seems to hold a light to Mevlut Karataş's lifetime that he spent between his hopes and his fate:

"A strangeness in my mind,

A feeling that I was not for that hour,

Nor for that place."

The second epigraph seems to have been given for the novel's other character or maybe its main character, Istanbul. The author brings a new approach to the subject of slum housing that has been going on in Istanbul since 1950's, by a quote from Jean Jacque Rousseau:

"The first man who, having fenced off a plot of land, thought of saying "This is mine" and found people simple enough to believe him was the real founder of civil society."

In the epigraph above, it is clearly visible that there is an objection to the perception of slum houses and their inhabitants up till now. The author declares that he will pay no attention to any "wholesale and insulting" point of views at the beginning of his novel.

The third epigraph is a quote from *The Black Book's* famous columnist Celâl Salik:

"The gulf between the private and public views of our countrymen is evidence of the power of the state."

While our authoritarian manager mentalities which likes to get involved almost in all areas, banalize our people, it has at the same time made them insincere and double-faced. This detection, when evaluated with the second epigraph, we can say that the author forces the reader to a preference. Fascism or self-rule of people without taking any orders from anybody? Finding the solution themselves? Given that, on the condition of building unplanned slum houses all over the city. The view of the period which started with slum housing in Turkey, which is evaluated as a movement of demilitarization and organization, is very new and dramatic as well.

The author starts his story with another two epigraphs. The first one is a sentence from the famous play, *The Wedding of a Poet* by İbrahim Şinasi, one of the authors of the Tanzimat period: "It is not customary for a younger daughter to be given away while her older sister remains unmarried."

The second epigraph is a proverb from the Beyşehir region:

"If there is a lie to be uttered it will not remain unsaid; if there's a blood to be spilled, it will not remain unshed; if you keep your daughter close, she will runaway instead."

Orhan Pamuk has been interested in postmodern literature techniques and especially starting with *The Black Book,* he deliberately started to use the main methods of this literary movement from parody to metafiction and intertextuality. But right at that point he has made a stunning turn; he has also gained interest in Eastern literature. He tried to connect the East's rich narrative traditions with the West's new techniques, it was a difficult mission but he was very successful.

The Black Book has come out as the miraculous synthesis of *Thousand and One Nights*, *Mantıku't-Tayr, Masnavi* and *Hüsn ü Aşk*. The book both gets in touch with them one by one and at the same time can stand alone. The book has also bravely put together the archaic stories of the Turkish-Ottoman-Islamic culture and literature together with some of Western literature's modern and experimental expressions. In one way, *The Black Book* in this aspect is proof that the walls between the narrative and methods of Western literature, and the fairy tales and stories of the East, which seem to be so distant from each other actually are not so high and unreachable.

As in terms of geography and culture, the novel is really stunning with its references to numerous literary texts which present distinctness and variety in time and location. Some of them have been rewritten, some reshaped, some have become a parody or a pastiche, some have been satirized and some are alluded to. Orhan Pamuk has freely benefited from a wide and rich heritage ranging from postmodern novels to masnavis such as; Mevlânâ to Borges, Attar to Dante, Şeyh Galip to James Joyce.

Orhan Pamuk, in his novel *My Name is Red*, has attempted an East-West questioning through the art of painting. But this time, he has taken the reader to history, Istanbul in 1591, and hosted them in the secret worlds of palace painters. Instead of archaic texts he has put Eastern paintings with Western paintings across from each other.

2.1. Parodic References:

A Strangeness in My Mind has the characteristics of the parody of several books, primarily of *The Wedding of a Poet*. By sharing an epigraph at the beginning of the book, the author clearly informs this himself.

2.1.1. Reference to The Wedding of a Poet:

In *The Wedding of a Poet*, which is the first printed Turkish theatre text, instead of getting married to Kumru Hanım, Poet Müştak Bey has gotten married to her ugly and old big sister. Müştak Bey realizes this on their wedding night and he goes crazy. As a result, his friend Hikmet Efendi comes to help him and pays certain amount of money to the imam of the neighborhood who solemnized this marriage and made him correct this mistake. Below is how the imam explained the situation in the book.

"Müştak Bey has gotten married to the oldest daughter, but not agewise, heightwise, with Kumru Hanım."

Orhan Pamuk loves to play games in a childish manner. Maybe this love for playing games lies underneath his postmodern preferences. While reading *The Wedding of a Poet*, if not all maybe some of us have thought, "how would it be if Müştak Bey had married Kumru Hanım's ugly and old sister instead of herself?" As Şinasi left his play as a one-act, we don't know if Müştak Bey lived happily ever after with Kumru Hanım.

Mevlut Karakaş, marrying Rayiha, the big sister of Samiha instead of herself is like a rewritten form of Şinasi's play in a new generation and in a new geography. However, Orhan Pamuk did not finish his novel at that point; it is as if he continued with writing what Şinasi didn't write,

and intended to fill the gaps of the story. With the hope of marrying the beautiful sister and instead marrying the ugly big sister and embracing her considering it as fate, Mevlut proves with his extraordinary life that one can behave differently than Müştak Bey and unlike what most people think, it might not be the end of the world, and that it can even be better.

With entering a new orientation by saying that there is another road to be walked is not just a simple action of gap filling. Yes, maybe the childish question of, "what would Müştak Bey do if the mistake was not corrected?" has been traced, games have been played and seriously the answers have been given but there also some other things the author points out and underlines.

"He'd been hiding it away in a corner of his mind along with his memories of Ferhat, but now it was back, keeping him company on his night walks. The leaves on the trees twitched and spoke to him. It all made sense now: KISMET was the force that bridged the gap between what our heart intended and what our words intended. A person could with for one thing and speak of another, and their fate, their kismet, was the thing that could bring the two together. Even the seagull over there who wanted to land on that pile of trash had started off with only the intention to do so, which it had then put into words of a sort through a series squawks, but whether the wishes harbored in its heart and expressed in its calls could ever be realized depended on a set of factors that were governed by KISMET – things like wind speed, luck, and timing. The happiness he'd found with Rayiha had been a gift of KISMET, and he must remember to respect that." (Pamuk, 2016, p. 486)

There is a proverb in Turkish; "The person for whom something is intended may not always be the person who gets it in the end." There is a clear fatalist understanding which is getting more evident in the paragraph above which can also be characterized as a solution to this proverb. One should intend with all his/her heart and should express this with his/her tongue. And in the end one must be happy with what comes up from his/her "kismet" and must show trust no matter what he hoped for himself. Whereas Şinasi, while writing *The Wedding of a Poet,* was absolutely affected by Enlightenment philosophy. While trying to take off the shirt of traditions, he has railed off from his hearts service, joined his mind's service and has followed new knowledge and perceptions as much as he can comprehend. So much so that in his famous poem *Münâcaât³,* he has left the existence of the creator to his mind's testimony.

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3   Münacaat's eleventh couplet can be roughly translated like this: For God's wholeness I need my reason as the witness/ And with all of my hearth should I pray and praise.

In that case, sometimes intentionally or unintentionally, there can be a difference in accepting or never accepting a mistake as thinking, "let's hope for the best," as the vast differences between Eastern and Western cultures.

Regarding the path Orhan Pamuk follows in *A Strangeness in My Mind,* it would not be wrong if we say that he has again tried to put on the old tradition of the "trust shirt". For sentences such as: in some cases, one should be able to leave aside rationality, and be happy with one's fate and trust timing and his/her heart, are obviously visible in the novel's discourse.

2.1.2. Reference to the Tale of Yakub:

A Strangeness in My Mind makes reference to the history extending all the way to Prophet Yakub (Jacob) with its general topic of marriage with two sisters. Prophet Yakub has fallen in love with his uncle's daughter, Rachel who was the youngest of the two daughters and wanted to marry her. But his uncle said this would be possible only if he worked for him for seven years. Prophet Yakub had no other choice than to accept this. Finally seven years passed and it was time for marriage. However, there was a surprise for Yakub. His uncle had thrown a feast and sent his eldest daughter, Lea for him to marry. Yakub will learn that the girl he spent the night with was not Rachel, only in the morning, and when he asked his uncle why he did such a thing, his uncle would say that the youngest daughter cannot get married before the eldest daughter gets married. But Yakub will not give up his love; he will work another seven years and finally succeed to marry Rachel.

Orhan Pamuk surely wanted to recall this blessed and widespread tale as well. It should easily be considered that Pamuk, with a worldwide known author title, has discussed a root theme regarding human beings, and that he is aware of its universal extension.

We can briefly define parody as, "placing an old text in a mismatching frame in a way so that it creates a funny effect together with a new text." We can say that the author considers the text which he will parody as his "thesis" and approaches it with his "antithesis". In this case, parody is a "reinterpretation" as a "synthesis" and is an "action of changing one's opinions". But we must not forget that this synthesis can never be a complete one. The differences between both texts or world perspectives will always remain as a "funny mismatch".

In other words, a parody is a genre made up of the combination of a "hypertext" and a "hypotext". While a "hypotext" shows the original text which the parody takes its theme from, the "hypertext" expresses the differences which the hypotext is exposed to. The fact of changing the

components of hypotext by hypertexts, whether with the purpose is to get revenge or develop, is named as "parodic transformation". According to this, there is a "playful" relationship between a parody's hypertext and hypotexts.[4]

A Strangeness in My Mind seems to be a parodic hypertext where the author uses *The Wedding of a Poet* locally and *Tale of Yakub* universally, and it is indeed in a playful relationship with the discussed original theme. Therefore it is not wrong to evaluate the novel as a specific parody of *The Wedding of a Poet* and a general parody of the old *Tale of Yakub*. By taking into account that a parody is a critical genre and that many of the parodies have satiric features, *A Strangeness in My Mind* gains another dimension. In that case, we can ask this question: What does the author criticize? The texts, the theme or the social perceptions?

Bakhtin mentions two types of parodies. The first one is an "extroverted" literary parody and reserves an "attack" against the "target text". In the second type of parody, there is an "action of solidarity" with the discourse that is made into a parody. Rather than distorting and destroying the hypotext, the aim here is to develop and enrich the discourse and make it much clearer. But we have to point out immediately that, even in these types of parodic structures the critical characteristic does not disappear totally. Orhan Pamuk seems to have illustrated this second type in *A Strangeness in My Mind*. The focus is not directly the hypotext itself, but the discourse. He has taken this specific and universal discourse and discussed it somewhere else in another time again and reinterpreted it, and just like Şinasi, he has directed its criticism towards Turkish people, society and conditions which neither can change nor transform the old discourse a single bit. Pamuk has given this hint by sharing an epigraph from the Beyşehir İmrenler region right at the beginning of his novel.

2.1.3. Reference to Tanzimat Literature

When we look at *A Strangeness in My Mind* from a broad perspective, and study it with a focus on the text, we can see that it is completely a parody of the Tanzimat literature. As of the first pages of the novel, it seems as if Ahmet Mithad Efendi is there and continues his speech from where he left off hundred years ago:

"Our hero Mevlut, was tall, of strong yet delicate build, and good-looking."

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4   For further informations see (Cebeci,2008), (Budak,2013).

"...and it will be worth my reminding readers of them now and again to help to explain some aspects of the story."

"I will narrate some strange events and that have come and gone and limit my part to ordering them in such a fashion as to allow my readers to follow and understand them more easily.

So I will start in the middle, from the day in June 1982 when Mevlut eloped with a girl from the village of Gümüşdere (linked to the Beyşehir district of Konya and neighboring his own village)." (Pamuk, 2016, pp.3-4)

By using postmodern narrative techniques, the author has separated his story and himself and just like Brecht, he has presented this distance which he created to the reader's attention; he has even from time to time forced the reader to see it. Besides, the novel has a theatrical script feature with its characters speaking with a first-person narrative one by one and dealing with the events from their own aspects. I believe that with his choice, the author makes sincere and kind references to the dramas of Tanzimat period that were meant to be read instead of being acted.

"**Mustafa Efendi.** I know you go to see your uncle's family in secret, I would tell Mevlut, you go to your uncle Hasan's shop to fold up newspapers, you sit and eat at their table, you play with Süleyman, but don't forget that hey cheated us, I would warn him. ..." (Pamuk, 2016, 70)

"**Süleyman**. That's not true: Mevlut knows that the real reason why construction on the Kültepe house had to stop was that Uncle Mustafa kept sending all the money he made in Istanbul back to the village. As for what happened last year, my brother and I really wanted to work with Uncle Mustafa on the house, but my father..." (Pamuk,2016, 74-75)

2.1.4. Reference to The Girl with The Red Scarf:

Finally, *A Strangeness In My Mind* strongly alludes to Cengiz Aytmatov's famous novel *The Girl With The Red Scarf* both with his faithful last sentence and his set up by using a first person narrative. Aytmatov has also started his novel himself and then continued the book by narrating the novel by two rivals İlyas and Baytemir. In *The Girl with the Red Scarf,* the young driver İlyas falls in love with Aysel and elopes with her. However, even though they have a child together, due to İlyas' ambition for his job and meaningless pride their marriage starts to fall apart, and after the appearance of another woman, Aysel leaves the house with her son. Then Baytemir steps into her life. Baytemir is not as young and good-looking as İlyas. But with never-ending kindness, love and indulgence he takes care of Aysel and her son.

One day, Baytemir comes home with a young man who has had an accident, Aysel is so surprised because the young man is her husband İlyas whom she left behind.

İlyas feels regretful for what he has done to his son and Aysel. He is also thankful to Baytemir who has saved his life. After recovering he starts to visit them very often. At first Baytemir is not aware of İlyas' visits and even after he finds out he doesn't care much. He also understands that Aysel's love for İlyas is not over. So, who will Aysel choose? Meanwhile, İlyas sees his son everyday secretly, without Aysel and Baytemir knowing it. In the end he runs away with Samet. But Samet, prefers to be with Baytemir rather than his father. Likewise, Aysel will choose Baytemir, because as Atıf Yılmaz's comment on the movie of this novel, "Love is effort, love is trust, love is self-devotion."

Orhan Pamuk has come to the same point as Aytmatov, with the narration of Mevlut, who has spent his whole lifetime with strangenesses in his mind with indetermination and uneasiness as to whether it should be Rayiha or Samiha, saying, "I have loved Rayiha more than anything in this world." The woman who has given Mevlut effort and trust is Rayiha and has crowned his pure and sincere love with her devotion.

3. CONTENT ANALYSIS OF THE NOVEL

While the novel *A Strangeness In My Mind* questions the love experienced within the frame of history of a family, it used Istanbul as a continuously changing allocation in the background. The subject is not only the physical change and transformation of Istanbul. With its new people, the city gains a new soul and culture, and just like among yesterday's and today's buildings, mosques, cemeteries, fountains, this creates deep clashes and gaps between peoples' standard of judgments and life styles. While the city performs endless enormities that are unplanned and unprogrammed, it has also parted, altered and diversified its people in terms of perception of economy, religion and spirituality, and politics.

We can say that, the actual thing that wants to be told is the unreasonable, one of a kind metamorphosis of Istanbul. One of the other main characters of the novel together with Mevlut is Istanbul, located right behind Mevlut as a big silhouette. But both of their stories have interlaced so much during the change and transformation period that they have become identified with each other and become a whole, as a city and a character. So to speak, they have experienced everything together and in each other. *A Strangeness in*

My Mind, with this content, is worth paying attention to and it presents a special depth.

3.1. People and City in Sufism

Considering and discussing the people and the city as a whole is among the most important expressions of our Sufi literature tradition. Yunus Emre, in one of his poem identifies the human body as a supreme city in which there lies a supreme sultan and where hundred thousand soldiers watch each of its doors.

"Bu vücudum şehrine bir dem giresüm gelür

İçindeki sultanun yüzin göresüm gelür" (Bilgin, 2013, p.96)[5]

Yunus Emre, in one of his other poem concretizes this magnificent bodycity a little more:

"Alnumı ay bilürem bu gözlerümi yıldız

Bu vücudum şehrine buçuk pulluk assum yok." (Bilgin, 2013, p.121)[6]

According to Yunus Emre, the Creator shall not be sought outside, it should be sought inside oneself. There is another self-inside oneself and that self is the heart which is also the living space of the Creator.

Gönül Çalab'un tahtı Çalab gönül'e baktı

İki cihan bedbahtı kim gönül yıkar ise (Bilgin, 2013, p.164)[7]

The human being is made up of a body and a soul. Our body faces our material world while our soul/spirit faces our spiritual world. It is also clear that Yunus' strong and enormous city is the heart being the meaning of oneself, in other words the spirit of oneself. It is also possible to say that the heart within the Sufistic discourse has been perceived as the bridge between a human soul and body. According to this, the human establishes a relationship with these two worlds with the heart. The heart is the common space for both sides. Identifying the heart as the city is the result of outcome of this perception. Aren't the cities these types of common spaces, where people get to know each other, make good-bad relations, and learn to live...? Both the heart or the soul, with its collectivism, layout, system, management, its

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5   I have the whim at times, to enter that town of my body/ the face of that Sultan inside, have the whim at times to see

6   My forehad as the moon, and those eyes of mine as the stars, I sense / In this town of my body, nothing exists as worthy as half a pence

7   God stared at it, which is his throne, the heart /Wretched is the One, here and hereafter, who broke a heart

material and spiritual texture, and with its continuously renewed existence which enables the state transition has been identified as a city.

A hundred years after Yunus Emre, we will encounter this city-human metamorphosis again with Hacı Bayram Veli. He will, identify the human being as a *şar*, city created between two worlds:

Çalabım bir şâr yaratmış iki cihânâresinde

Bakıcak didâr görinür ol şarın kenâresinde

Hacı Bayram Veli in the lines of his poem below which forms an integrity all the way from the start seems to tell us the cruise and travels of a dervish.

Nagihan ol şara vardım ol şarı yapılır gördüm

Ben dahi bile yapıldım taş u toprak aresinde

When one discovers the actual ego within himself and realizes how it is created with utmost expertise, he will also experience a formation process with his physical existence. In order to comply with the definition, he will build himself stone by stone and create himself. In other words, he will discipline his senses and he will carry it to a fullness befitting his soul city.[8]

3.2. City and People in the Novel

Despite Orhan Pamuk being an "Istanbul novelist", it is widely felt that he hasn't reflected Istanbul with its complete geography and its living enough up till now. He has indeed presented the surroundings of Nişantaşı with Cihangir and Beyoğlu as the common places in the actions of rich and intellectual people. *A Strangeness in My Mind*, however, takes place in two fictional slum districts named "Kültepe" and "Duttepe". By Orhan Pamuk's descriptions, we can understand that those districts are today's "Gültepe" and "Seyrantepe". Other districts apart from these two that are named in the novel are real districts as per their names and locations. Obviously, the author has used these two districts with their fictional names in order to strikingly materialize slum housing. Therefore, as a matter of fact while presenting Kültepe and Duttepe as the examples of typical and symbolical slum housing he will also give the main roles to the poor ones.

Besides displaying a strong observation, the novel also displays Istanbul's recent history with political and sociological data, while it also makes an effort to define the soul and the meaning which the city has started to gain. The author reflects and questions Istanbul's new cultural values over the

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8   For a detailed analysis of soul city theme in Yunus Emre's and Hacı Bayram's poetry see (Araz,2007)

novel's parallel main character Mevlut. There is also a subject of "person – location" correlation here. Especially as Hacı Bayram Veli states in his last verse, the "progression" of a person together with the city fairly make up the main theme of the novel, *A Strangeness in My Mind*. In parallel with Istanbul's fifty-sixty years of alternation and transformation process, Mevlut has also grown up, developed and become mature. The city together with itself has built him and his identity. He has become the city and the city has become him.

"When he walked down a quiet street where no curtain twitched and no window opened, he would sometimes feel – though he knew, rationally, that it wasn't true – as if he'd been there before, in a time of fables, and as he reveled in the sensation of meeting the present moment as if it were a memory, he would shout, "Boo-zaa" and feel that he was really calling out to his own past." (Pamuk, 2016, p.642)

Mevlut has perceived and experienced all his state of mind through the city:

"Now that Rayiha had died and his daughters were both married, the streets of Istanbul seemed longer than ever before, like bottomless black wells. He might find himself in some remote neighborhood late at night, ringing his bell and crying "Boza" as he made his way, when the sudden realization that he had never before been on this street or in this neighborhood induced a strange and terrifying memory or that feeling he used to have as a child or a young man whenever he went somewhere he wasn't meant to go (and when the dogs barked): the feeling that he would be caught and punished, which he took to mean that he was, in truth a bad person." (Pamuk, 2016, pp. 641-642)

He also feels some value in beliefs:

"With the city growing inexorably out of his reach, and no one to come home to at the other end of each dark road, Mevlut began to feel the need for God more than ever before. He started performing midday prayers before he went to work at the clubhouse – not just on Fridays but whenever he felt he needed to do so – either at the Şişli Mosque or at the Duttepe Mosque if he took a longer route or at any other mosque he happened to come across." (Pamuk, 2016, 643)

At this point, there might be an objection which is fairly right: of course a Boza seller will interact with such things in the city he lives in. However, despite Mevlut's changing life conditions, his insistence on going out on the streets every night clearly shows that his relation with the city is not

only related to his job. Considerably, what lies under this insistence is the psychology of "likeness" which he has created between himself and the city.

"Mevlut sensed that the light and darkness inside his mind looked like the nighttime landscape of the city. Maybe this was why he'd been going out into the streets to sell boza in the evening for the past forty years, no matter how little he earned from it." (Pamuk, 2016,728)

This person-location correlation which can also be considered pathological or the psychological devotedness of a person to the city where he lives in will eventually transform into the unity or better said "differentiation" from each other.

"...walking around the city at night made him feel as if he were wandering around inside his head. That was why whenever he spoke to the walls, advertisements, shadows, and strange and mysterious shapes he couldn't see in the light, he always felt as if he were talking to himself." (Pamuk, 2016,728)

The city has always been very kind and caring towards him. Almost for ages it has sent him "symbols and words" during the nights. And it is now time for Mevlut to give a real and serious answer back. It is now time for him to speak. But what will he say to the city? He was selling boza because he was very willing to do it and he was going to sell it till the end of time, but this was not the actual thing he wanted to tell. The voice that comes from deep within himself is the messenger of both the discovery and registration of his cultural belongingness, and of the completion of his maturation period. The dervish, in his cruise and travel has come very close to the end:

"Now he knew what it was that he wanted to tell Istanbul and write on its walls. It was both his public and private view; it was what his heart intended as much as what his words had always meant to say. He said it to himself. 'I have loved Rayiha more than anything in this world.'" (Pamuk,2016, p. 734)

3.3. The Center of the Novel

According to Orhan Pamuk the thing that distinguishes novels from other narratives is that they have an undisclosed center within themselves. This undisclosed center, in whose existence the reader strongly believes in while reading, does not show up very easily. It is something far back somewhere, unseen and not easily reached, far away from the novels' surface which is followed word by word and almost shifting and not easy to be caught. But the signs are everywhere. So much that, thanks to this center all

the details of the novel and everything which is encountered at the surface of the big landscape gets combined with each other. According to Pamuk, the deep sense we feel when we read a book or the illusion of us living in a three-dimensional world are both the results of the existence of this secret center. And that's why the value of a novel lies beneath the power to imply the meaning of its center as the center of the world. The real value of a novel must be measured with how much of real life feeling it awakens in ourselves. Novels must appeal to our actual thoughts about life and must be read with this expectation.

As a result, Orhan Pamuk bases his views on this judgement:

"Because of their structure, suited to the pursuit and discovery of a hidden meaning or a lost value, the most suitable genre for the spirit and form of the novelistic art is what the Germans call the *Bildungsroman*, or "novel of formation," which tells of the shaping education, and maturation of young protagonists as they become acquainted with the world." (Pamuk, 2010, p.28)

A Strangeness in My Mind is a novel exactly for this type of movement and process of wisdom. Orhan Pamuk has created a novel from the series of "Bildungsroman"s he read and improved himself when he was young such as: Flaubert's *Sentimental Education* and Thomas Mann's *The Magic Mountain*. But we have to point out that he has not done his due to the technical necessity of the novelistic work. According to him, writing a novel is to think like this: "...that our journey in this world, the life we spend in cities, streets, houses, rooms, and nature, consists of nothing but a search for a secret meaning which may or may not exist." (Pamuk, 2010, p.28). Each sentence of a good novel must make us feel the big knowledge and must express the feeling of existing in this world and how it feels.

In this case, *A Strangeness in My Mind,* is a "progress" novel in search of finding a solution to the question of what and how it feels like to exist in the world. It is the story of the vast constitutional journey of the individual towards the 'actual big knowledge'. Now we can go back further more and support ourselves on Hacı Bayram Veli. There is no doubt that this type of deepening will bring an additional layer and a striking richness to the novel and the author, even though they have not been reminded of it.

Mevlut, as a child, a teenage dervish candidate, has come to Istanbul, to the big dervish lodge as a pilgrim, has had a difficult life, completed his cruise and travel period, finally reached his own rights and is now in an effort to open the secrets of the unseen which is behind the seen.

In *A Strangeness in My Mind,* while the overwhelming expansion of Istanbul and the problems that come with it are presented in a documentarian observation with its reality, the author has not subsided into the simplicity of common complaints such as; 'Oh, where are the old days of Istanbul?'. He has neither developed an attitude of looking from the top, nor of underestimating or taking no notice, and has not transmitted such feelings to the reader. On the contrary, all through the way he has shown a tolerant and kind approach that tries to understand and develop empathy and has preserved it till the end. The person opposite us is an Orhan Pamuk whom has made peace with his city, come to terms with its different cultures, and who is disposed of the predictable judgments of West-East comparisons. It is clear that he is also in an effort to make his reader come to terms with his/her surroundings. I think the center of *A Strangeness in My Mind* is this 'pure-minded and thoughtful' approach which does not contain any orientalist move and looks at our people and our values all the way from the heart.

As a matter of fact, Orhan Pamuk has mentioned with definite statements in his same essay named "What Our Minds Do When We Read Novels," what kind of consciousness this view is:

"Let us always keep in mind that the art of the novel yields its finest results not through judging people but through understanding them, and let us avoid being ruled by the judgmental part of our mind." (Pamuk, 2010, p.23)

But this awareness is to do with the author's approach, and not with the center of the novel. The center of the novel is a result which shows up in the writing process. According to Orhan Pamuk, authors who usually create their characters and plots step by step during the writing process cannot be considered as to have the center of the novel which takes its power from the uncertainty, ready prior to start writing. This is valid even for the most controlled and organized authors. In that case, novels are also a process of awakening, development and maturation for the authors. In *A Strangeness in My Mind*, deliberately or not, Orhan Pamuk's initiatives that can be related with indigenousness and traditionalism and presenting us the opportunities of different interpretations can also be evaluated as the expression of the writing and creation period that was not planned at the beginning. In other words, we can say that the novel, which apparently seems to have the characteristics of questioning of love, has made up its own special and undisclosed center as it was being written.

This center also contained: Menderes period and first demolition activities in Istanbul, waves of September 12 regime period, Anavatan government and Istanbul's actual biggest physical change and finally Ak Party period... And also, people who leave their village to seek for jobs, slums, rich upstarts, profiteers, sectarians, religionists, Alevis, idealists...

3.4. Religion – Religionists – Sectarians

Let's point out once more, the features of the panoramic evaluation of Turkey's last fifty-sixty years history, making up a "center" to this novel; it comes out as the author's effort to be able to be objective and look from inside, and his inclusive and conciliatory approach. Religious speech, like other activities that have left a mark in the last thirty years of this period, necessarily has placed itself in the focus of the general landscape. Maybe one of the novel's apparent reflections is the big question mark it puts in the perception of wide-spread fanatical and conservative religious groups that comes to one's mind when they first hear the name Çarşamba Community in Istanbul. Religionists, religious groups and sectarians are carefully separated from each other.

3.4.1. Boza and the Culture:

We now know that the reason for Mevlut being described as a boza seller who is deeply devoted to his job, is related to the author's will to deeply comprehend his city. Boza is mainly a drink which is special to Istanbul. It is an indicator of the city's tradition and the features of this tradition, so it is the nostalgic symbol of the city. This is described to the global readers at the beginning of the novel in an encyclopedic language.

"Before we go any further, and to make sure that our story is properly understood, perhaps I should explain for foreign readers who've never heard of it before, and for future generations of Turkish readers who will, I fear, forget all about it within the next twenty to thirty years, that boza is a traditional Asian beverage made of fermented wheat, with a thick consistency, a pleasant aroma, a dark yellowish color, and a low alcohol content. This story is already full of strange things, and I wouldn't want people to think it entirely peculiar." (Pamuk,2016, pp. 19-20)

Islam in Anatolia and especially in Istanbul has been interpreted much differently from that of the Middle Eastern geography; within centuries it has become a belief system special to this place. Yahya Kemal has regarded this as Turkish Islamism. Vehbi Eralp, in his article named, "Homeland Poet, Yahya Kemal" has shared these words of Yahya Kemal:

"Our Islamism is not like any other nation's Islamism, it is unique," he'd say. "Even though alcohol and pork are forbidden in the religion, we drink lots of alcohol but we don't eat pork; prayers and fasting are duties, but we don't do the prayers, we fast." (Eralp, 1966, pp. 1-8)

It seems that Orhan Pamuk is trying to crack the door open for different religious understandings special to this geography through boza.

In March 1994 when Mevlut was about to get attacked by some stray dogs, he was called from a condo in Gümüşsuyu which saved his life. However, this time he was put on the rack by a group of men and women who were drinking and partying.

"'Are you a religious man?'"

Mevlut knew by now that this question carried political connotations in the wealthier households. The Islamist party, which was supported mainly by the poor, had won the municipal elections three days ago. Mevlut too, had voted for its candidate – because he was religious and had gone to the Piyale Paşa school in Kasımpaşa, which Mevlut's daughters were now attending.

'I'm a salesman,' Mevlut replied cunningly. 'How can a salesman possibly be religious.?

'Why shouldn't he be?'

'I'm always working. If you're out on the streets all the time, there's no way you can pray five times a day...'" (Pamuk,2016, p.28)

Then the conversation centered upon boza:

"'There's alcohol in boza?' asked one of the women, with eyebrows raised.

'Darling, you don't know anything, do you?' said one of the men. 'Boza was the drink of choice under the Ottomans, when alcohol and wine were banned. When Murad the Fourth went around in disguise at night, he didn't have just the taverns and coffee shops shut down but the boza shops too.'

'... There is some alcohol in boza, though maybe not much. I suppose that's how all those religious types got away with getting drunk during the Ottoman era. 'Of course there's no alcohol in boza,' they would say, and then happily down ten glasses and get absolutely slashed.'

[…]'Maybe boza will make a comeback if some of the religious bans are reinstated...,' said a drunk man with a thin nose, shooting a challenging glance at Mevlut. 'What do you think about the election results?'

'No,' said Mevlut, without batting an eye. 'There is no alcohol in boza. Otherwise I wouldn't be selling it.'

'See, the man's not like you, he cares about his beliefs,' said one of the other men.

'You speak for yourself. I'm religious, but I also like my rakı,' said the one with the thin nose." (Pamuk, 2016, pp.31)

3.4.2. Çarşamba Community:

This time Mevlut is invited to a three-storey apartment while wandering in the streets of Çarşamba on the night of a depressing day. The house is again very crowded. Six or seven people sitting around a table are busy with some texts in front of them, and it is apparent that they are "good-intentioned":

"'Welcome, brother boza seller, we are happy to see you,' said and old man with silver hair and a worn face, smiling gently at Mevlut.

The others looked like they might be his students. They were serious and respectful but also cheerful. Seated with them at the same table, the silver-haired man said, 'There's seven of us. We'll each have a glass.'" (Pamuk, 2016,438)

That night Mevlut will talk to the silver-haired man about his troubles and that man will give him solace, kind-heartedly with these words; "Man is the most precious fruit of the tree of life. Man is the greatest of all God's creatures. Nothing can blemish the jewel that is your heart." Mevlut will be honored by such an important and clever man giving him time, at the same time being a little restless to have made the students wait. But after the silver-haired man says, "Let them wait,' he will make further comments as: 'The most complicated knots would come undone at the Lord's command. His might would remove all obstacles.' and make a second hit for Mevlut. These words will touch Mevlut's soul deeply and he will go and see that man again the week after to find the answers to some questions in his mind.

"In that brief visit, he found out that the students called the silver-haired old man, 'sir,' while other visitor referred to him as 'Holy Guide'; that the students who sat at the table dipped feather quills in ink spots and wrote things in oversize letters; and that these letters formed words in Arabic taken from the Holy Koran. There were a few other sacred-seeming old things in the house: Mevlut particularly liked an old-fashioned coffeepot; framed words written in the same script they were tracing out at the table; a turban shelf with mother-of-pearl details; a grandfather clock with an enormous case

whose ticking drowned out everyone's whispers; and framed photographs of Atatürk and a few other frowning, equally serious (but bearded) figures." (Pamuk, 2016, pp.441-442)

And this Holy Guide will always stay in Mevlut's life until he dies, though this will not be a very strong bond. The only times Mevlut spends with him is his visits from time to time; he will not request money for the bozas he gives to him, and if he finds time, have a short conversation with him. But the Holy Guide will always stay somewhere in his heart, until the naturalness and the compassion of this historical structure was shaded by imported political religionism and religiousness from outside.

"Throughout the autumn of 1998, Mevlut paid frequent visits to the Holy Guide. A new, eager and more assertive crowd had begun to assemble at his lodge. Mevlut didn't like them much, and he could sense that the feeling was mutual and that they found his presence incongruous. Beard believers, backstreet hicks who never wore neckties, devotees, and acolytes of various kinds thronged to the Holy Guide in growing number, so that Mevlut hardly ever got the chance to talk to him anymore." (Pamuk, 2016,607)

Orhan Pamuk is also like Yahya Kemal. Like it or not, he never wants to stay apart from the feeling of community shared by the city which he lives in; to always stay as part of the collective soul... The opposite would create a deep sense of guilt for him. He has clearly stated this sensitivity towards religion in his memoir *Istanbul*:

"I find the essence of religion to be guilt. As a child I felt guilty – about not being fearful enough of the honorable white-scarved woman who entered my daydreams from time to time and about not believing in Her enough. There was also the guilt of keeping myself apart from those who did believe in Her." (Pamuk, 2006, p.238)

We can say that the platform where Çarşamba Community goes round in *A Strangeness in My Mind*, goes parallel with this approach of the author. He has not evaluated them with a prejudged, widely spread and habitual reactionist, religionist and frightening discourse. Sects, sheiks, dervish lodges are just some of the facts which make up Istanbul's spiritual climate. They should have a counterpart in society according to what they experienced in years. But these radical foundations have been detached from their historical bondings and have been transformed into a political power lever. Orhan Pamuk, taking a stand by showing his respect for the city's Islamic monastery and dervish lodge culture, has bravely carried degenerated sects, sheiks and

their followers who have lost their local features to the agenda and brought them up to discussion:

"Mevlut had last visited the lodge six months ago. Swarmed by his legions of admirers, the man was out of reach, and it had been impossible to hear let alone understand anything he said. In the past ten years, the streets all around the house in Çarşamba had filled up with votaries of many different sects, all wearing robes of one color or another. It was the same traditional religious garb that people wore in Iran and Saudi Arabia. These people's political Islamism had begun to unnerve Mevlut, and eventually he stopped going there altogether." (Pamuk, 2016, p.693)

In the novel, the Alevis are represented by the character Ferhat, the nouveau-rich and profiteers are represented by Hacı Hamit Vural and his sons, the idealists are represented by Hasan Aktaş's son Korkut. The author usually shows an understanding and a tolerant approach, but he seems to be far away from this while talking about the idealists. Korkut, who has been characterized as being one of the perpetrators of the coup attempt in Azerbaijan, is maybe the only character who emphasizes the negativity of the novel.

4. NARRATIVE TECHNIQUES OF THE NOVEL

The art of a novel is based upon narrative. The form of narration is also as important as what is being narrated, because the only way a narration can reach a reader is by a form or a technique. This form or technique is what adds variety, dynamism and depth to the narration.

In other words, the thing which makes up the aesthetical touch and the factor which makes a novel is the narration form or technique that is gained by using the language in certain forms. This is done in two different ways as of its basic humor: The thing which is narrated meaning the case, is either narrated by a narrator (diegesis) or it is stimulated directly (mimesis).

The first narration form is used in sagas, first period novels and stories, while the second narration form is used is theatres. Indeed, until reaching the realistic, the narrators had an indisputable important role in the formation of the narration. All the attention was focused on the narrators. The insufficiency of this technique which has put the narrator either in front or on top of the text has been set forth by the realists. In order to remove this deficiency and insufficiency of this "narration" technique, realists activated the technique of "demonstration". This "demonstration" technique which is borrowed from the theatre and which is mainly used together with a

"narration" has changed the structure of the art of a novel tremendously and has relatively objectified the measures.

In a "narration", the event story is told, while in a "demonstration" the story is embodied in front of the eyes of the reader. The narrator takes advantage of the reflection of the features of place and people by "depiction" being the third required action.

4.1. Novel's Perspectives

A Strangeness in My Mind, shows up as a novel in which the narrator's "narration" and "depiction" is balanced with the characters' "demonstrations". While the narrator tells us the story as a person who sees and knows everything in an epic discourse, the novel characters who intervene show testimony from the first-person narration. Supposedly, they do this to clarify the events being told and to put forward their own situation. But in a way, they have also questioned the narrator; and by this they have both saved the text from the shallowness and boringness of the single angle perspective and have made the text questionable from place to place.

In the novel, an event has been reflected in three different perspectives as below:

"At midnight, they were woken by the sound of running in the streets, people screaming and shouting slogans. They did not know who was out there. His father checked the bolt on the door and barricaded it with the table with the short leg, which Mevlut did his homework on in the evenings. They saw flawless shooting up from the other side of Kültepe [...]"

"**Korkut.** To be honest, I didn't believe that the Alevis had put a bomb in the mosque either, but lies spread fast. The patient, quiet, devout people of Duttepe had seen "with their own eyes" the Communist propaganda that had appeared on mosques and even in the farthest neighborhoods, and their anger was a force to be reckoned with. You can't just come here from downtown in Karaköy, or maybe even from outside of Istanbul, from Sivas or Bingöl, and think you can take this land away from the people who actually live in Duttepe! Last night we saw who really owns these houses, who actually lives in them. It's hard to stop a young nationalist whose faith has been insulted. Many homes were damaged."

"**Ferhat.** The police did nothing, and if they did, it was only to join the raids. Groups with scarves wrapped around their faces started to break into homes, vandalize property, and loot Alevi shops. Three houses, four shops, and the grocery store run by a family from Dersim were all burned to the

ground. They retreated when our people started shooting at them from the roofs. But we think they'll be back after sunrise." (Pamuk, 2016, p.160-162)

In fictional texts such as novels or stories, "perspective" is as important as the technique and method. Questions such as: by whom the narration is being watched, by whom the factors such as place, time and characters are seen and understood by, by whom and to whom it is transmitted to, will directly divert us to the "perspective". A novel which is narrated by the author's own unlimited perspective, in other words, a novel with a narration of (he/she), is much more different than a novel narrated by the main character ("I" narration) in terms of ways and methods of creating meanings, and as well as both coverage and genre. It is possible to assimilate the person whom his/her perspective is being taken advantage of, as a mirror which reflects the events. However, this mirror is not a mirror that shows everything in front of it. It changes the images of some of the objects according to its structural features.[9]

This way, *A Strangeness in My Mind* has presented a perspective which apart from the narrator, the events are narrated and interpreted by the perspectives of each character; in other words, more than one or the total amount of the characters.

"**Vediha**. They forced Samiha into the car. I saw it all from the window. Help! I screamed. Hurry up, or they're going to blame me! Those villains are abducting my sister, help!"

"**Süleyman**. I ran after them, but I couldn't catch them! I was so enraged I could have exploded. I went back, jumped into my van, and sped off... I leaned over to the glove compartment, took out the Kırıkkale gun, and fired two shots into the air. But don't write down that either, because it's not true that she's eloping. People will misunderstand!"

"**Samiha.** Actually, they've understood perfectly well. I eloped. I eloped out of my own free will. Everything you've heard is true. I can't believe it either. I'm in love!.."

"**Vediha**. The children heard the gunshots and rushed joyfully out into the garden as if someone had set off firecrackers. Bozkurt, Turan, I yelled after them, go back inside and shut the door. They didn't listen, so I smacked one and dragged the other inside by the arm. I thought I should call the police. But it was Süleyman who'd fired the shots; would it be wise to call?.."

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9   For further information (Aytür,1977)

"**Süleyman.** Before I'd even reached Mecidiyeköy, they'd already passed Şişli. I went back home and parked the van, trying to keep calm. I'd never thought anyone would dare to take my betrothed away in broad daylight, right in the heart of Istanbul, so I still couldn't believe what I'd seen…"

"**Abdurrahman Efendi.** What is it like to be a father whose daughters keep running away? I'm a little embarrassed, but I'm also proud that my daughters don't settle for the husbands someonelse picks out for them but bravely go with the men they choose for themselves…"

"**Korkut. .**.. One day it was just me and Abdurrahman Efendi in the house. 'Some fathers take a man's money and anything else they can get, and then when a better match shows up, they secretly sell their daughter to the richer man and then pretend the girl eloped. Please don't get me wrong, Abdurrahman Efendi, you're a respectable man, but how could Samiha not think about this when she ran away?' I asked. 'I'll be the first to make her pay for this,' he said…" (Pamuk,2016, pp. 314-319)

It means that this option with its technical usage applies to the action of "demonstration" rather than "narration" in a text. Orhan Pamuk has also followed the steps of authors such as Henry James and has placed importance on the technique of "demonstration" in his novel, *A Strangeness in My Mind*.

4.2. Novel's Voices and Characters

A Strangeness in my Mind is a novel where everybody narrates their own story with their own perspective just as in *My Name is Red*, but this does not mean that it is directly a polyphonic novel. At least, we cannot claim that it reserves a type of polyphony which is defined by Bakhtin.

One of the concepts Bakhtin has developed based on the carnival theory is "dialogism." According to him, meaning evolves only in a dialogical process. Dialogism is a complicated concept derived by the inspiration of Bakhtin's action of dialogue, which is the language transaction between two people. According to this, every word, even a simple daily speech is dialogic in principle; and is the expression of polyphonic feature of the existence and language of human beings. To be clearer, words carry within themselves the voices that have used them in different times and periods. In this case, a state of dialogical relation comes up immediately between the old usages and future usages. Of course, in a line which extends from words to genre, all these features have intensified more in literature. Therefore, the measure of a good literature has become evident as to remunerate the dialogism and polyphony in life and language at a high level. What Bakhtin means by "polyphony" is the gathering of narrator's voice and the characters' voice

lined up on the same platform. So that, no possibility will be allowed to set up extra authority on any of these voices, and this way there will not be a need for a synthesis between the opposite perspectives that comes to the language. (Bakhtin,2001, p.11)

Orhan Pamuk, who has always been criticized for having deficiencies in creating women characters, seems to have worked hard to compensate for this deficiency in his novel, *A Strangeness in my Mind*. At least, he has written the novel with this awareness.

However, in this novel, it is very difficult to say that there exists a dialogical relation between the author and the characters just as there is in Dostoyevsky's novels. The character voices which drown the author's voice and speech is very apparent in the novel. The author, who is actually located in the novel with the attitude of epic narrator, has closed his doors to an equalitarian approach on the same platform as its characters, already at the beginning. Pamuk has carefully chosen and reflected the contents of the mirror which he has held to Istanbul's recent history in his novel. But Pamuk was not satisfied only with this, so he carried his attitude further by remembering and reminding that he kept the mirror in his hand all the way through the novel. The contrarian voices in the characters have never been able to be in a type of polyphony that Bakhtin emphasizes. Pamuk in this novel has substantially reached his target in giving the role mostly to women.

5. CONCLUSION

For Orhan Pamuk, who regards novels as "second lives", the actual thing is to put on stage what one has experienced in life in a correct representation. That is why the most determinant thing is the "landscape" in which the character is located in and his/her surroundings with events and things rather than the character itself. According to Pamuk, a novelist should be after how and to whom life can be represented to, not after creating a character. (Pamuk, 2010, pp.60-61)

The omniscient narrator in *A Strangeness in My Mind* has summarized a fifty to sixty-year timeline with its general points and has presented it to the reader in a "panoramic" way with his own perspective and sequence. At times when he wanted to picture events and situations in a certain place and time, he has brought the characters with their own voice, color and perspectives to the stage. The novel's big stage has continued to be Istanbul from the beginning till the end.

The novel is made up of seven main divisions and a total of fifty-seven sections. The author has presented the divisions with dates and the sections

with titles. This way he has provided convenience to the reader in terms of perceiving long time intervals. So that, in order to avoid any complications of characters and events, the author has put a family tree at the beginning and a general chronology at the end of the novel. This way, we can understand that the author wanted to give his novel a documentary quality and that his actual target was not to tell us a love story but to tell us the modernization adventure of Istanbul or better said Turkey. We can also say that this author, who likes and knows how to use postmodern techniques very well has turned his interest into a game by using such insertions. Fundamentally, both of the approaches seem to fit the novel and the author.

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Chapter 10

The New Syrian Government and Turkey-Syria Relations 🔓

Beyzanur Kına[1]

Abstract

Relations between Turkey and Syria have witnessed periods of both cooperation and conflict throughout history. Particularly following the civil war in Syria, significant changes have occurred in the relations between the two countries. In this context, the emergence of the new Syrian government and its relations with Turkey are of great importance in terms of regional dynamics. This article examines the current state of relations between the new Syrian government and Turkey and possible future developments. The aim of this study is to evaluate how the relations between the new Syrian administration and Turkey have been shaped and their impact on regional policies. In this context, the policies of the new administration, Turkey's strategic objectives towards Syria, and the diplomatic, economic, and security-based interactions between the two countries will be analyzed. Furthermore, predictions will be made about how these relations may evolve in the future.

Introduction

The civil war that broke out in Syria in 2011 profoundly shook the country's political and social structure and significantly affected regional balances (Duvan, 2024, p. 108). Following the war, the process of establishing a new political order in Syria began, and this process has become an important agenda item for all actors in the region (Develioğlu, 2023, p. 147). Turkey, in particular, closely monitored developments in neighboring Syria, and these developments took priority in Turkey's foreign policy (Gökçe, 2021, p. 39).

The formation of the new Syrian administration has been shaped by the changing internal dynamics resulting from the war and the interventions of

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1   Master Student, Kütahya Dumlupinar University, Institute of Graduate Studies, Department of Political Science and International Relations, beyzanur_kiina@hotmail.com

international powers. In this process, issues such as the preservation of Syria's territorial integrity, the refugee crisis, and the fight against terrorism have become central to Turkey-Syria relations. Turkey continues its diplomatic and strategic efforts to ensure stability in Syria and to structure the new administration in accordance with international norms (Utar, 2023, p. 120).

This article aims to examine the current state of relations between the new administration in Syria and Turkey and how these relations may shape up in the future. The policies of the new administration, Turkey's strategic objectives towards Syria, and the opportunities for cooperation between the two countries will be evaluated in this context. Furthermore, the effects of these relations on regional and global dynamics will be discussed.

Political Transformation in Syria

Syria has undergone a profound political transformation process with the civil war that began in 2011 and has continued for over a decade. This process has led to fundamental changes in the country's socio-political structure and has affected regional balances (Atacan, 2025, p. 6).

The Syrian civil war erupted in 2011 when popular protests, influenced by the Arab Spring, turned into violent clashes. During this period, intense fighting took place between the Syrian government and various opposition groups, and the country's territory was divided among different forces in terms of control (İnaç and Kına, 2025, p. 28). The civil war caused millions of people to be displaced and led to widespread humanitarian crises. By the 2020s, the intensity of the war had decreased, but political and social instability continued. In the post-war period, the country's reconstruction process and the search for a political solution came to the fore (Ekici, 2024, pp. 741-744).

The war has created a new political balance in Syria. During this process, various local administrations and international actors have been influential alongside the central government (Mergen and Danacıoğlu, 2019, p. 2958). The new Syrian administration is attempting to manage the political, ethnic, and sectarian differences inherited from the war. Local militias that gained power during the civil war, externally supported groups, and the influence of international powers have been decisive in the formation of the administration. The new administration needs national and international cooperation for the reconstruction of the country and the establishment of political stability (Gündoğdu, 2024).

The political transformation in Syria has been shaped by both internal and external factors (Hamdo, 2024, p. 120). Internal factors include ethnic

and sectarian tensions, local power centers, and economic problems. The social structure, worn down by war, is one of the fundamental challenges facing the new administration. External factors manifest themselves through the interventions of international powers, the strategic interests of regional actors, and global power balances (Gül, 2018, p. 410). The influence of countries such as Russia (Turan, 2024, p. 398), Iran (Semin, 2024, p. 469), and Turkey (Ağaoğlu, 2024, p. 36) on Syria shapes the new administration's foreign policies and the country's future. In this context, the political transformation process in Syria exhibits a dynamic structure through the interactions of both internal and external actors (Atlıoğlu, 2025, p. 308).

Historical Background of Turkey-Syria Relations

Relations between Turkey and Syria are based on a deep and long-standing historical past. These relations began during the Ottoman Empire and continued into the modern era, taking shape within the framework of changing political, economic, and social dynamics in different periods (Karakuş, 2020, p. 539).

The Ottoman Empire ruled Syrian territories for approximately four centuries, during which time deep cultural and social ties formed between the two regions. Following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in the early 20th century, Syria came under French mandate, severing direct administrative ties between Turkey and Syria. With Syria gaining independence in the 1930s, Turkey and Syria began establishing diplomatic relations as modern nation-states. However, certain border issues, such as the incorporation of Hatay into Turkey, have occasionally strained relations between the two countries (Buzpınar, 2024).

The Cold War period was a time when relations became even more complicated due to Turkey and Syria being on different sides. Turkey joined NATO as part of the Western bloc, while Syria developed close ties with the Soviet Union. During this period, issues such as border security, water resources, and terrorism frequently caused problems between the two countries. In particular, allegations that Syria supported anti-Turkish terrorist organizations caused serious tensions in relations ( ). However, the signing of the Adana Agreement in 1998 marked the beginning of cooperation in the fight against terrorism and initiated a period of improvement in relations (Ağaoğlu, 2024, pp. 41-45).

Before the Arab Spring, there was a noticeable improvement in relations between Turkey and Syria, with steps such as visa exemption between the two countries and increased economic cooperation. However, the Arab

Spring that began in Syria in 2011 was a dramatic turning point in relations between the two countries. While Turkey supported calls for regime change in Syria, its relations with the Assad administration deteriorated (İnaç and Kına, 2025, p. 29). During this period, Turkey hosted millions of refugees fleeing Syria and supported opposition groups in the Syrian civil war. The effects of the Arab Spring led to a deep rift in Turkey-Syria relations, and this rift has continued to this day (Ekici, 2024, p. 66).

The New Syrian Administration and Regional Dynamics

The new administration that took shape in Syria after the civil war is of critical importance in terms of regional dynamics. In this process, Syria's relations with neighboring countries, regional security and stability, and the role of international actors stand out as determining factors in the new administration's policies and the overall situation in the region (Gündoğdu, 2024, p. 235).

The civil war that began in Syria in 2011 has led to profound changes in the country's social and political structure. In Syria, which has a multi-ethnic and multi-religious structure, the impact of this diversity on the country's political history and the dynamics of the civil war is an important topic of debate. While demands for democratic transformation were at the forefront at the beginning of the war, sectarian and ethnic divisions became more pronounced as the process unfolded. This situation led to the expectations for democratic transformation at the beginning of the war turning into sectarian war-based propaganda in the later stages (Atlıoğlu, 2025, p. 308).

The effects of the civil war in Syria have also been felt in neighboring countries. For example, the city of Antakya in Turkey has been exposed to the socio-spatial repercussions of the war. It has been determined that the people of Antakya are distant and reactive towards refugees, and that there is a high possibility of tension. It has been determined that the region has experienced significant economic hardship and that most sectors have been deeply affected by the war (Duvan, 2024).

Syria's relations with its neighboring countries have become an important diplomatic priority for the new administration following the civil war. Neighboring countries such as Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and Israel have been directly affected by the instability in Syria, and this situation has brought about a search for a new balance in regional relations (İnanç and Kına, 2024, p. 227). Relations with Turkey, in particular, require intensive negotiation and cooperation on issues such as border security, the refugee crisis, and the fight against terrorism. Relations with other neighboring

countries are shaped around issues such as economic cooperation, the sharing of energy resources, and political dialogue (Çetinkaya and Özcan, 2024, p. 2476).

The new Syrian administration must carefully plan both its domestic and foreign policies to ensure regional security and stability. Ethnic and sectarian tensions within Syria could reignite regional conflicts and increase security concerns among neighboring countries. In this context, neutralizing armed groups in Syria, ensuring border security, and encouraging the safe return of displaced persons are among the priority objectives (Bınarcı, 2024, p. 285).

International actors play a key role in shaping the new administration in Syria and directing regional dynamics. Countries such as Russia and Iran support the Syrian government, while Western actors such as the US and the European Union exert pressure for a political solution and democratic reforms. In addition, the United Nations and other international organizations play an important role in humanitarian aid and reconstruction processes. The influence of these actors on Syria is a significant factor in determining the country's domestic and foreign policies (Süvari and Salihi, 2022, p. 97).

Turkey's Syria Policy

Turkey's Syria policy encompasses a series of important elements shaped by strategic goals and priorities. Security, migration, and economic relations form the cornerstones of this policy, while Turkey's presence and influence in Syria are also evaluated within this framework (Yeşiltaş, 2023, p. 42).

Turkey's strategic objectives in Syria focus on preserving the country's territorial integrity, ensuring border security, and combating terrorism. Turkey aims to eliminate security threats posed by the PKK and its Syrian affiliate, the YPG. Furthermore, achieving a lasting political solution in Syria and realizing the democratic will of the Syrian people are among Turkey's priorities. In this context, Turkey contributes to political solution efforts by playing an active role in international platforms such as the Astana process (Demir, 2021, pp. 548-550).

The security problems created by the civil war in Syria pose a direct threat to Turkey. For this reason, Turkey is attempting to neutralize terrorist elements by conducting cross-border operations (Şeker, 2023, p. 49). The issue of migration is also of critical importance in terms of Turkey's Syria policy. Turkey hosts millions of Syrian refugees, making it the country with the largest refugee population in the world. This situation creates a significant burden both in humanitarian and economic terms, leading Turkey to demand

more support from the international community. Economic relations focus on reviving the trade volume that developed before the war and the role of Turkish companies in the reconstruction of Syria (Çavuşoğlu and Takkaç, 2023, p. 171).

Turkey has established safe zones in northern Syria through military operations such as Euphrates Shield, Olive Branch, and Peace Spring, and has supported the establishment of local administrations in these areas. These areas are considered a concrete manifestation of Turkey's influence in Syria. Turkey is striving to bring stability to the region by contributing to the development of services such as infrastructure, health, and education in these areas. Furthermore, Turkey's presence in Syria is also important in encouraging the voluntary and safe return of refugees (Bayraklı and Alkanat, 2022).

Turkey-Syria Relations Under the New Administration

With the formation of a new administrative structure in Syria, opportunities have arisen to reassess and develop Turkey-Syria relations. In this context, the development of diplomatic relations, economic and commercial cooperation, and security and defense cooperation are critical for strengthening cooperation between the two countries (Boran, 2024).

The development of diplomatic relations between Turkey and Syria is of great importance for ensuring regional peace and stability. The establishment of a new administrative structure in Syria presents an important opportunity to reshape relations between the two countries. The first step in this process will be gestures that build mutual goodwill and trust. The two countries can demonstrate their determination to turn the page on past problems. Opening communication channels and reactivating diplomatic missions could be an important step in initiating this process (Akkan, 2018, p. 123).

Increasing high-level contacts between the two countries is important in terms of determining areas of mutual understanding and cooperation. Meetings at the leadership level can accelerate the reestablishment of diplomatic relations . Furthermore, establishing regular dialogue mechanisms between foreign ministries could be an effective tool for increasing mutual trust. These contacts will play a critical role in deepening relations and identifying concrete areas of cooperation (Atacan, 2025).

Turkey and Syria can form joint working groups and commissions to develop bilateral relations. These structures can address various dimensions of political, economic, social, and cultural relations between the two countries. Technical committees composed of experts, particularly on sensitive issues

such as security, border management, and counterterrorism, can work to identify and implement concrete areas of cooperation. Such structures can make significant contributions to establishing mutual trust between the two countries (Bınarcı, 2024).

Addressing security concerns is a critical element in the development of diplomatic relations. While Turkey respects Syria's territorial integrity and sovereignty, Syria must also take Turkey's security concerns into account. In this context, cooperation in the fight against terrorism would be in the interest of both countries. Steps such as enhancing border security and conducting joint patrols can strengthen security cooperation and increase regional stability (Duvan, 2024).

Economic and commercial cooperation can play a key role in normalizing and strengthening relations between Turkey and Syria. In the process of rebuilding Syria, Turkey has the potential to cooperate in many areas that could contribute to the country's economic development. Infrastructure projects, energy, construction, and agriculture, in particular, offer significant opportunities for cooperation (Tolmaç, 2025).

According to information provided by Saka on a website in 2025, certain sectors in Syria will develop and add importance to the country and its relations with other countries (Saka, 2025).

Infrastructure and Construction Projects: Infrastructure projects are of great importance in Syria's post-war reconstruction process. The reconstruction of destroyed cities and the provision of basic infrastructure services such as roads, bridges, water, and electricity are essential. Turkey can make important contributions to Syria's reconstruction process with its experience and technological capacity in construction and infrastructure projects. Turkish construction companies have participated in large-scale projects in various countries and have gained significant expertise in this field. This experience can ensure quality and efficiency in the infrastructure projects needed by Syria. The active role of Turkish construction companies in projects in Syria creates economic opportunities for both countries. Projects to be carried out in Syria offer new job opportunities and economic growth opportunities for Turkey, while also contributing to raising the living standards of the Syrian people. Such collaborations can also help strengthen economic ties between the two countries and create a broader trade volume.

Energy Cooperation: The energy sector is another important area for cooperation between Turkey and Syria. Rebuilding Syria's energy infrastructure and ensuring energy supply security are critical for economic development.

Syria's energy infrastructure has been largely damaged or completely destroyed during the war. This situation jeopardizes the country's energy supply security and negatively affects the economic development process. Turkey can provide technical knowledge and experience in rebuilding energy infrastructure. This could include rebuilding power generation facilities, repairing transmission lines, and modernizing distribution networks. Turkey can implement capacity-building projects by providing technical support to Syria in energy production and distribution. Programs can be organized to train Syrian technicians and engineers working in the energy sector. Such training can increase Syria's capacity to manage its own energy infrastructure and help create a sustainable energy sector in the long term.

Agriculture and Food Security: The agricultural sector is of strategic importance for Syria's economic development. Turkey has a wealth of knowledge in modern agricultural techniques, irrigation systems, and agricultural technologies. Sharing this knowledge and technology with Syria can contribute to increasing agricultural productivity in Syria. In particular, the efficient use of water resources, soil fertility, and the introduction of modern agricultural equipment can make Syria's agricultural sector more sustainable. Joint agricultural projects developed between Turkey and Syria can both strengthen cooperation between the countries and contribute to regional food security. Within the scope of these projects, cooperation can be achieved in various areas such as seed development, agricultural research, and farmer training programs. Furthermore, sharing experiences in organic farming and sustainable agricultural practices can increase Syria's agricultural capacity. The agricultural sector plays an important role as a driving force for rural development. Projects carried out with Turkey's support can contribute to the economic development of rural areas in Syria. This can help create employment in rural areas, reduce poverty, and raise living standards. Supporting agricultural cooperatives and increasing farmers' access to finance are important parts of this process.

Border Trade and Increasing Trade Volume: Revitalizing border trade between Turkey and Syria can contribute to deepening economic relations. Increasing trade in border regions can help revitalize local economies and increase employment. Facilitating customs procedures and improving logistics infrastructure are important steps that can be taken to increase trade volume.

Investment Opportunities and Joint Ventures: Joint investment opportunities can be evaluated to develop economic relations between Turkey and Syria. Turkish companies can contribute to the country's economic development

by investing in various sectors in Syria. Joint ventures can enable the strengthening of economic ties between the two countries and the establishment of sustainable collaborations.

Security and defense cooperation between Turkey and Syria constitutes one of the most critical aspects of their relations. Cooperation on issues such as counterterrorism, ensuring border security, and effectively managing the refugee crisis is of great importance for the stability of the region and the security of both countries. Turkey is sensitive to potential terrorist threats emerging in northern Syria. In this context, developing effective cooperation with Syria in the fight against terrorism will contribute significantly to ensuring regional security. By cooperating in areas such as intelligence sharing and joint operations, both countries can prevent terrorist organizations from operating and minimize cross-border threats (Akkan, 2018).

Ensuring border security between Turkey and Syria is critical in terms of both security and economic relations. Increasing security in border regions will help prevent smuggling and illegal crossings. Developing joint patrols and border control mechanisms can strengthen cooperation in this area. Furthermore, the use of technological solutions in border security can increase effectiveness. Due to the civil war in Syria, millions of Syrians have sought refuge in Turkey. Effective management of the refugee crisis is in the interests of both countries. Turkey and Syria can work together to create conditions that encourage the safe and voluntary return of refugees. In this context, the creation of safe zones in Syria and the provision of basic services could encourage returns (Aras, 2023, p. 474).

Security and defense cooperation affects not only relations between the two countries but also regional security in general. Cooperation between Turkey and Syria allows for the development of policies that are also compatible with other actors in the region. This could be an important step towards establishing peace and stability in the Middle East. In conclusion, security and defense cooperation constitutes a strategic dimension of the relations between Turkey and Syria . Cooperation developed in this area will contribute to regional peace and stability while protecting the national security interests of both countries (Atlıoğlu, 2009, p. 76).

Problems and Opportunities

Relations between Turkey and Syria are complex in terms of both challenges and opportunities. The fundamental areas of conflict between the two countries play a critical role in determining opportunities for cooperation and common interests. At the same time, proposals for resolving these issues

and future perspectives should also be taken into account (Babahanoğlu, 2023, p. 415).

Key Areas of Conflict: The main areas of conflict between Turkey and Syria focus on counterterrorism, border security, and the refugee crisis. While Turkey is sensitive to the terrorist threats emerging in northern Syria, Syria is striving to protect its territorial integrity and independence. Furthermore, Turkey, which hosts millions of Syrian refugees, is affected by the socio-economic pressures created by this situation (Kadıoğlu, 2020, p. 2186).

The fight against terrorism stands out as a significant area of conflict in the relations between the two countries. Turkey is sensitive to terrorist organizations operating in northern Syria and conducts operations against elements threatening its security in these regions. Turkey views these operations as part of its national security and aims to rid its borders of the terrorist threat. Turkey's stance against the PKK and the YPG, seen as its extension in Syria, is particularly critical in this context.

Border security is another important area of conflict between the two countries. Turkey considers the effects of the civil war in Syria, with which it shares a long land border, to be a serious threat to its border security. Problems such as clashes along the border, illegal crossings, and arms smuggling shape Turkey's security policies. The safe zones established by Turkey in its border regions and military operations are among the measures taken against these threats.

The refugee crisis is an area of conflict that draws attention in terms of both its humanitarian and socio-economic dimensions in the relations between Turkey and Syria. Turkey is hosting millions of Syrian refugees due to the civil war in Syria. This situation has had a profound impact on Turkey's social and economic structure, causing various difficulties in the areas of education, health, and employment. Turkey is calling for more support and cooperation from the international community, seeking a fair sharing of the burden of this crisis.

Opportunities for Cooperation and Common Interests: Both countries share common interests in terms of regional stability and security. Cooperation in the fight against terrorism, ensuring border security, and managing the refugee crisis will benefit both countries. Cooperation mechanisms developed in line with common interests could reduce tensions between the two countries and create a more constructive dialogue environment. Economic development projects, energy cooperation, and increased border trade are steps that would benefit both economies (Akbaş, 2016, p. 843).

Cooperation in the fight against terrorism is of critical importance for the security of both countries. Developing a joint strategy against terrorist organizations operating in northern Syria can contribute to preserving not only Turkey's but also Syria's territorial integrity. In this context, intelligence sharing and joint operations can be effective tools for countering the terrorist threat.

Ensuring border security is also an area that requires mutual cooperation. Establishing secure border zones between Turkey and Syria can help prevent illegal crossings and smuggling activities. Such measures can increase trust between the two countries and ensure the safety of the people living in the border regions.

Solution Proposals and Future Perspectives: To resolve the issues, both countries should first strengthen communication by keeping diplomatic channels open. Diplomatic dialogue can prevent misunderstandings and allow mutual concerns to be addressed directly. As confidence-building measures, joint security meetings can be organized and cooperation on border security can be established. Regular meetings between the military and diplomatic representatives of the two countries can help build trust.

The support of regional and international actors is important in promoting a peaceful solution in Syria. Peace talks conducted by the international community, particularly through the United Nations, can contribute to ending the conflicts in Syria. Turkey can take an active role in this process and make efforts to achieve peace and stability. Considering the humanitarian dimension of the refugee crisis, policies should be developed to facilitate the safe and voluntary return of refugees. In this process, it is important to secure the return areas and provide basic infrastructure with the support and funding of international organizations. Cooperation between Turkey and Syria on this issue will contribute to the sustainability of the returns.

In the future, deepening economic and commercial cooperation between Turkey and Syria could create better living conditions and economic opportunities for the people of both countries. Cooperation in areas such as joint trade projects, increasing cross-border trade, and energy and infrastructure projects could support economic development. Furthermore, such cooperation could contribute to the normalization of relations between the two countries and the creation of a more constructive environment. Cooperation between Turkey and Syria could contribute to broader efforts for peace and stability in the Middle East. By cooperating with other countries in the region, common security and economic policies could be

developed. Such initiatives could have positive effects on resolving regional conflicts and increasing the welfare of the people (Düzenli, 2023, p. 144).

Conclusion

The political transformation process following the civil war in Syria has led to profound changes in the country's socio-political structure and has affected both regional and international balances. During this process, a new political balance has emerged under the influence of local militias, externally supported groups, and international actors alongside the central government. National and international cooperation is critical for the reconstruction of the country and the establishment of political stability. While Syria's future is being shaped by ethnic and sectarian tensions, economic difficulties, and the influence of international powers, the path the country will follow within the dynamic network of relationships between internal and external actors will also be decisive for the overall balance of power in the region. Therefore, Syria's political transformation process is a development that must be closely monitored in both the domestic and global contexts.

Relations between Turkey and Syria have a complex structure shaped by historical ties and geopolitical dynamics. Since the Ottoman Empire, deep cultural and social ties have been established between the two countries, but these ties have undergone changes in direction with the changing political conjuncture of the 20th century. The blocs of the Cold War era, border disputes, and security concerns frequently created tensions in the relations, while agreements such as the Adana Agreement provided periodic improvements. The Arab Spring brought about a radical transformation in Turkey-Syria relations, and the stance taken against the Assad regime and the refugee crisis led to deep fractures in the relations. Today, relations between Turkey and Syria follow a complex course, overshadowed by their historical past and recent political events. Future opportunities for cooperation and challenges will be shaped by regional and international dynamics. In this context, how relations between the two countries evolve is of critical importance for regional peace and stability.

The new administration that took shape in Syria after the civil war is at the center of regional dynamics and international relations, and this situation is of critical importance for the country's future stability. Relations with neighboring countries are at the forefront of Syria's diplomatic priorities, while issues such as border security, the refugee crisis, and the fight against terrorism necessitate cooperation with all countries in the region, particularly Turkey. Managing internal ethnic and sectarian tensions is central to efforts

to ensure regional security and stability, while the support and pressure of international actors play a decisive role in shaping Syria's domestic and foreign policies. In this context, the new administration in Syria must take strategic steps to ensure internal stability and contribute to regional peace by effectively utilizing regional and international cooperation mechanisms. How Syria progresses during this period will be a process that must be closely monitored for both the country's own future and regional balances.

While Turkey's Syria policy is shaped by strategic goals and priorities, Turkey-Syria relations under the new administration offer important opportunities for ensuring regional peace and stability. Turkey's presence and influence in Syria are evaluated within the framework of fundamental elements such as security, migration, and economic relations. With the formation of Syria's new administration, important steps can be taken to redevelop and strengthen diplomatic relations between the two countries. Increasing diplomatic contacts, addressing security concerns, and developing economic cooperation are critical for the normalization and strengthening of Turkey-Syria relations. Developing effective cooperation mechanisms in security and defense cooperation, counterterrorism, and ensuring border security can contribute to strengthening regional stability. Economic and commercial cooperation, on the other hand, can enable Turkey to play an important role in the post-war reconstruction of Syria. In conclusion, the development of Turkey-Syria relations has the potential to positively affect not only the two countries but also the overall stability and peace of the region. The steps taken in this process will contribute to regional peace and cooperation while protecting the national interests of both countries.

The study comprehensively addresses the fundamental issues facing Turkey and Syria and identifies potential areas of cooperation for resolving these issues. Critical issues such as counterterrorism, border security, and the refugee crisis are central to relations between the two countries, and addressing these issues effectively is of great importance for both regional and international security. While emphasizing the importance of cooperation in resolving these issues, the study also highlights the benefits that both countries can gain from this cooperation . Confidence-building measures and keeping channels of dialogue open can contribute to the positive development of relations.

Future studies may focus on a more in-depth analysis of the relations between Turkey and Syria. In particular, the role of regional and international actors and their impact on the cooperation processes may be examined. Furthermore, long-term strategies may be developed regarding the socio-

economic effects of the refugee crisis and its resolution. Studies may be conducted on technological solutions and innovative approaches to enhance border security. Finally, more detailed research could be conducted on the economic development projects and energy cooperation potential of both countries.

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Chapter 11

The Soviet Union Towards the Middle East During and After the Cold War, Russia and American Politics ⟨⟩

Hüsamettin İnaç[1]

Mohammed Rafiq Sada[2]

Abstract

The Middle East region, which contains many political and geographical obscurities, has been the cradle of settled life and production as well as the center of socio-cultural communication where nations and states come into contact with each other. The region, which was the source of the birth of writing, has always been associated with the phenomenon of globalization by imperial structures claiming to be a global power due to its role in the construction and solidarity of civilizations throughout history. After 623 years of Ottoman rule, the main subject of the negotiations between France and Russia in 1915 and then between France, Britain and Russia in 1916 was the division of the Middle East. Britain and France, who secretly shared the lands of the Ottoman Empire with the Sykes-Picot treaty, maintained their influence in the region throughout the First and Second World Wars. After the Second World War, the USSR, which wanted to fill the power vacuum in the region, pursued an expansionist policy towards the region. After the Pearl Harbor attack, the US abandoned its isolationist policy and started to directly intervene in the region. With the end of the Cold War, the only actor and factor determining the fate of the region has been the US and its policy towards the region.

1   Prof. Dr., Kütahya Dumlupınar University, Department of Political Science and International Relations,husamettin.inac@dpu.edu.tr (Corresponding Author

2   PhD Student, Uludağ University, Institute of Graduate Studies, Department of Political Science and International Relations, duhanfaruk7@gmail.com

Introduction

The Middle East, also described by the British and French as the Near East, has been under the influence of Islam for 1400 years, despite being the cradle of three Abrahamic religions. Considering that Arabs, Turks and Persians are the dominant ethnic groups in the region, it seems that Islam will continue its current influence in the future. The Middle East, which has played an active role in the clash and reconciliation of civilizations on the axis of the struggle for dominance throughout history, has served as a cultural bridge between the West and the East. The region, which is closely related to world politics and the international system, has a domino effect on the collapse and construction of the world order. From this point of view, the region, which serves as a transportation and communication crossroads between the Afro-Eurasian continents, has received and will continue to receive its share from the developments that have taken place and will take place on these continents (Huntington, 2019: 16-25). Indeed, the First World War, which started in June 1914 with the assassination of the Austrian Crown Prince by a Serbian nationalist, marked the end of traditional empires such as Austria Hungary, Russia and the Ottoman Empire. Moreover, the exclusionary and punitive spirit of the Versailles Treaty of 1919 and the League of Nationalities, the symbol of idealism, did not prevent the economic depression of 1929 nor the revisionist policies of Germany under the leadership of Hitler (Kissinger, 2016: 90-100). Therefore, the First World War, which led to the loss of 25 million lives as well as socio-economic and psychological problems, failed to preserve the mechanisms such as the Balance of Power and European Cohesion, which were the result of the principled political system brought about by the Westphalian treaty order, and made the actors that lost their tactical superiority capabilities even more aggressive. On the other hand, by bringing the construction of a new world order to the agenda, it has also paved the way for the emergence of new concepts, theories and ideologies. It widened the spectrum of vital interests and led to changes in geopolitical and geo-economic strategies, undermining the balance of power and sovereignty principles of the old world order, but it also opened the door to the Second World War by not learning from mistakes. States entered the Second World War, which lasted between 1939 and 1945, as "Axis States" and "Allied States". However, the aftermath of the war led to the deaths of more than 65 million people, 65% of whom were civilians and 33% soldiers. Therefore, after the war, the material and psychological capacity of the states reached the point of exhaustion (CNN, 2022).

The three major allied states started negotiations to discuss the conditions for the construction of a new post-war world order and to end the war.

Indeed, on 9 October 1944, Churchill visited Moscow and agreed with Stalin on an ethnically based "percentage agreement" to solve the Balkan problem. Then on 4-11 February 1945, Stalin, Churchill and Roosevelt came together at the Yalta Conference and in July 1945 at the Potsdam Conference and made many efforts to end the existing problems as well as to lay the foundations of the economic and political infrastructure of the new world order. To summarize, after the Second World War, European states lost their former prestige in the European continent and became secondary actors in the international system (Oran 2013: 471). In the new system to be established, the USSR and the USA, which played a dominant role as two rival states, emerged as the primary actors. One by one, the states colonized by the Great British Empire, on which the sun never set and which was renowned the world over for its colonialism, started to take steps towards independence (İnaç 2004: 49). While a new world called the Third World emerged in the context of the principle of self-determination, the ideology of colonialism of the 19th century has been relegated to the dusty shelves of history.

1. The Concept of Middle Eastern Geography and Geopolitical Theories

In the 19th century, the struggle for hegemonic rivalry in Asia continued between Britain and Tsarist Russia centered in Afghanistan, within the broad definition of "The Great Game" Middle East. Before the signing of the Treaty of 1907, which ended the rivalry between Great Britain and Tsarist Russia and determined their spheres of influence, political and military experts have pondered over who would dominate the world order and how, and how to achieve strategic superiority. Experts working on the subject have put forward a number of geopolitical theories to identify strategic centers of attraction. As a matter of fact, in 1904, three years before the British-Russian Treaty of 1907, the British Geographer Halford John Mackinder gave a conference titled "The Geographical Axis of History". Mackinder's geopolitical theory, also known as the Theory of Land Dominance, named the continents of Africa, Asia and Europe (Afro-Eurasia) as the "World Island" and argued that the Afro-Eurasia region was the strategic center of gravity of the world in terms of geopolitics. He defined the great plain stretching between Eastern Siberia and the Volga basin, cut by the Ural Mountains, as the Heartland. The peripheral countries bordering the Heartland, namely Austria, the Ottoman Empire, Germany, India and China, were referred to as the "Inner Crescent" or Rim Belt. He defined the states outside the Inner Crescent, including the United States of America (USA), Britain, Australia,

Canada, Japan and South Africa, as the "Outer Crescent" by placing them in the third box he envisioned in his own mental world (Oran 2013: 561-563). To summarize, with the theory of dominance put forward by Mackinder, he actually wanted to express that the power that dominates the east of Europe also has the effect of controlling the Heartland, which is the central region. The power that dominates the Heartland will also have the power to control and manage the world island. Likewise, the actor who dominates the world island will also have the power to control the whole world. From this point of view, it becomes clear that the concept of sovereignty is closely related to the provision of security and the acceptance and maintenance of its existence. In addition to this, security is a phenomenon that occurs and makes its presence felt by eliminating all existing and possible threats. Therefore, in our humble opinion, the following observation is very appropriate. The power that dominates Eastern Europe threatens the countries in its Heartland. The actor who dominates the Heartland region becomes the power that threatens the world island and an actor who dominates the world island becomes the power that threatens the whole world, which can be called the land threat theory. As a matter of fact, Mackinder's Land Dominance Theory resonated with Germany, which he saw as more of a threat than Britain, the country of origin.

On the other hand, Mackinder's theory was developed by the German general Karl Haushofer and manifested in Nazi Germany in the form of the political idea of Lebensraum. It was Nicolas Spykman, a British geopolitician, who developed Mackinder's theory in America and revised it in the context of national interests. Primarily an American political scientist, Spykman tried to build Mackinder's theory on two pillars, which was built on three pillars. Based on the parameters of future industrial and demographic growth, Spykman defined the heartland of the Central Asian region, which Brzezinski described as the Eurasian Balkans in his work The Grand Chessboard, as the strategic center of gravity of global power, and the geography starting from the Gulf region and extending around India as the Edge Belt (Yıldırım, 2018: 9-20) . Therefore, according to Spykman, a state that controls the Rim Belt dominates Eurasia, and a state that dominates Eurasia controls the world. The common point and underlying factor behind Spykman's theory, which guides the strategic moves in US foreign policy, and Mackinder's theory, which determines the British strategy, is the goal of becoming the only superpower to deal with the threatening and potential rival power (Brzezinski, 2018: 190-209). In light of the above, it should be noted that geo-political and geo-economic strategies are inevitably subject to change when needs, goals and priorities change.

In other words, in the struggle for dominance, geopolitical theory prioritizes capturing the strategic center of gravity of the threatening or potential rival actor. As we have mentioned before, the concept of the Middle East , which the British and the French described as the "Near East", was first expressed as "Middle East" by an American Admiral Alfred Thayer Mahan in 1902. Admiral Alfred used the term to describe the region between Saudi Arabia and India. In this context, as seen in both definitions, the concept of the Middle East is a western-centered and politically motivated definition rather than a geographical definition. Although the definition of the geography of the Middle East, which has attracted the world's attention in every period of history, is a highly controversial issue, the use of the concept has become widespread in the pre-World War II period. Middle East experts have defined the region geographically in two different ways: narrowly and broadly. In a broad sense, the Middle East extends from Morocco, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, Somalia, Sudan, Ethiopia and Egypt in the West to the Gulf of Oman in the East and includes Bahrain, Kuwait, Iraq, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Oman. The Middle East encompasses the Caucasus, Iran, Afghanistan, Central Asian Turkic Republics and Pakistan, including Turkey in the North, the Arabian Peninsula from Saudi Arabia to Yemen in the South, and Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine and Israel in the center. In a narrower sense, the Middle East is the region that includes Egypt to the west, the Red Sea to the south and southwest, Yemen and the Gulf of Aden to the south, the Gulf of Oman to the southeast, Turkey to the north and Iran to the northeast (Arı, 2005: 2- 15). On the other hand, the fact that 75.6% of the world's proven oil reserves and 38% of the world's proven natural gas reserves are in the Middle East in terms of religion and thought, science and culture, as well as the ability of civilizations to be founders and transformers, and underground energy resources have made the region an indispensable element of the international system in terms of geo-economics.

At the same time, due to the region's location at the crossroads of world trade and transportation routes, the Middle East serves as a socio-cultural base for communication and interaction. The Middle East is at the very center of the land and sea routes of the "One Belt One Road" project, now known as the Belt and Road Project, which was announced to the world public in 2013 by Chinese President Xi Jinping during his visit to Central Asia. This project also hosts straits such as the Dardanelles, the Bosphorus, the Strait of Hormuz, the Babul- Mendep Strait, as well as rivers such as the Suez Canal, the Tigris, the Euphrates and the Nile. In short, the Middle East, located in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea, the Arabian Sea, the Indian Ocean, the Caspian Sea and the Red Sea, is a geography that rival states,

which have failed to achieve cooperation and partnership in the international order and seek to become global powers, never want to give up.

However, the Middle East is a geography that has the power and capability to turn the ambitious imperialist dreams of all hegemonic powers into a thousand regrets. If geography is destiny, the Middle East has been a challenging and arduous arena throughout history, despite its geo-economic, geo-political and geo-strategic advantages. The Middle East, which played a significant role in the rebirth of modern Western civilization, identity construction, cultural export and economic development, has unfortunately been caught between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and the United States of America (USA) after the withdrawal of Britain from the region. As a result of the policies pursued by the US and Russia towards the region, the countries in the region, except Turkey and Iran, have not completed the process of nationhood in the 21st century and are struggling with problems such as terrorism, borders, water, legitimacy and inequality in income distribution.

2. Causes of the Cold War

Although the term "The Cold War" was first used by the American statesman Bernard Baruch in 1947, some authors argue that the Cold War began with Churchill's "Iron Curtain" speech in 1946. Some authors, on the other hand, underlined that the Cold War began on 12 March 1947, when the President of the United States of America Harry Truman, in his doctrinaire speech to the US Congress, argued that the division between two ideological attitudes had sharpened for the first time in the world and underlined that the cooperation established after the Second World War was gradually disappearing. So, what happened in the pre-Cold War period or in the post-WWII period that prevented a hot war and prepared the ground for the Cold War that continued until the dissolution of the USSR? First of all, when we look at the parameters that shaped the Cold War, the Second World War was literally a world war in terms of material and moral losses. After the Second World War, which lasted for six years, it is almost impossible to find a country that was not affected by the war, so to speak (Oran 2013: 535-537).

In today's socio-political conjuncture, the construction of a new world order and the establishment of global peace have emerged as the only universal desire. As a matter of fact, until the end of the Cold War, no one had the power to get involved in a third world war, except for local wars and major and minor conflicts between great powers. With the change in

the international political structure after the Second World War, a power vacuum emerged that needed to be filled. This power vacuum was tried to be filled by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), which followed a timid policy from the Bolshevik revolution of 1917 until the Second World War and gained a certain momentum in technology, and the United States of America (USA), which abandoned the Monroe Doctrine after the Second World War. The emergence of the United States and the Soviet Union as the two superpowers at the end of the war created a dual structure in world politics. On the other hand, while pre-war world politics meant European politics, the post-war period witnessed an expansion in the international political sphere and a shift in the axis. As the number of countries that gained independence before and after the war increased, the formation of a third world became clearer. The European states that emerged victorious from the war became economically dependent on US aid. In 1944-1945, the Soviet Union began to bring pro-Soviet Communist regimes to power in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Romania Hungary and Bulgaria, which it had entered on the pretext of liberating them from German occupation.

On the other hand, in order to reach the warm waters, which is one of the main strategic goals of traditional Russian policy, Russia has engaged in all kinds of games to reach the Eastern Mediterranean, the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean, especially Turkey, Iran and Greece. On 12 September 1945, the war ended with the surrender of Japan. While Britain and the United States withdrew their troops from Iran in accordance with the treaty of alliance with Iran in 1942, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics not only did not fulfill the requirements of the treaty to which it was a party. At the same time, under the leadership of a communist named Jafar Pishaveri, an uprising broke out in Iranian Azerbaijan and as a result of this uprising, the Mukhtar Azerbaijan Republic was declared in 1945. On the other hand, he had the Mehabad Republic, an independent Kurdish state, established in the South of Iran. In order to withdraw its troops from Iran, the Soviet Union tried to sign a new treaty in 1946 on the condition of jointly exploiting the oil in the North and giving 51% of its shares to the USSR. However, the Iranian Parliament and public opinion rejected this proposal of the Soviet Union (Armaoğlu, 2014: 377-379).

From the perspective of the United States of America, the US considered this interim period after the Second World War and before the Cold War as a time when the foundations of being the sole superpower in the world were laid. Indeed, the post-war international system was transformed beyond recognition militarily, economically and politically. America dealt with the construction of the new post-war world order within the framework of these

three parameters mentioned above. In order to restructure the political pillar of the new international order, in 1945, it sought to unite the nation states under the umbrella of the United Nations (UN) in order to give universality to the institution and to gradually increase its political influence. Although the situation in the General Assembly of the United Nations (UN) favored the United States, the Security Council of the United Nations (UNSC), which takes decisions according to the principle of unanimity and where the veto mechanism operates, has remained completely dominated by the great powers. This situation in the Security Council is legally incompatible with the principle of sovereign equality of states in the United Nations Charter signed in 1945. America economic system of the new world order aimed to reflect its economic power to the world economic system to be established by introducing the "Bretton Woods" system instead of the gold-based payments system from 1870 to 1930. On the other hand, it succeeded in establishing the International Monetary Fund to ensure economic stability in the world in general and in Europe in particular.

As a second step, the World Bank was established in 1945 under the name of the Bank for Reconstruction and Development. Militarily, although the United States cooperated with the USSR after the war, the USSR's expansionist policies encouraged the US to take military measures. However, it is an undeniable fact that it was not the Western European states that brought Fascist Nazi Germany to its knees, but rather the Soviet Union and the United States of America (Oran 2013: 480-484). To summarize, the factors that were effective in shaping the bipolar world order and the Cold War can be listed as follows. The realization of the Percentages Agreement agreed upon by Churchill and Stalin to determine the USSR's sphere of influence in Eastern Europe was the most important issue. The USSR's desire to exclude Western states from its sphere of influence and the Berlin Crisis, which prevented the unification of Germany and played a key role in the emergence of a dual structure such as the German Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany, are among these factors. In addition, there were the disputes over nuclear arms control and, most recently, the USSR's efforts to spread communism. Although the Cold War, which became clear in 1947 and escalated in the 1950s, was defined on a geopolitical axis that divided the world into two parts in the context of the Eastern and Western Blocs, it was actually a cold stare between ideologies that were the product of two different worldviews.

While socialism was the dominant ideology in the Eastern Bloc led by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, capitalism became dominant in the Western Bloc led by the United States. The divergence of views, which

aimed to preserve different socio-economic and political orders, led to a clash of interests, which in turn led to a tightening of ranks and polarization. This ideological competition during the Cold War not only pushed the boundaries of the mind, but also changed the form of warfare, moving the battlefield from land, sea and air to space. Although the USSR and the USA, who desired to monopolize the international order, did not engage in hot conflicts during the Cold War, they did not abandon the arms race. At the same time, they wore each other down through economic embargoes and propaganda based on intelligence, while their expenditures on the arms industry enabled economic crises and military coups in the world. As a result, the ideological rivalry that continued throughout the Cold War is now reflected externally as a geopolitical competition.

3. Developments that Exacerbated the Cold War

The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics' (USSR) support for the Cuban Revolution, which resulted in the overthrow of Batista, the Chinese revolution, which began under the leadership of China's legendary leader Mao Zedong and culminated in the declaration of independence of the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1949, and the North Korean revolution, in line with its policy of spreading the ideology of communism around the world, were among the most important factors that escalated the Cold War. The Marshall Plan for the economic development of Europe, launched by the United States in 1947, encouraged the USSR to take steps towards Cominform. The Cominform, which included the communist party leaders of Czechoslovakia, Poland, Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary, France and Italy, defined the Marshall Plan as an instrument of imperialism and was put forward as a counter-move and a promising alternative (İnaç 2018: 311). On the other hand, the construction of COMECON in 1949, a Moscow-based international organization that envisaged economic cooperation among socialist countries, was another factor that strained relations between the Blocs. The implementation of the Warsaw Pact, which was established in 1955 as the defense pact of the Eastern Bloc and undertook the task of protecting Eastern European countries, especially the USSR, against NATO attacks, exacerbated the Cold War. In addition, the USSR's decision to conclude bilateral aid agreements to further strengthen relations with the member states under the umbrella of the Pact was another factor that played an important role in the escalation of the Cold War.

Yugoslavia's exit from the Cominform was another key factor in the escalation of the Cold War, which later turned the war in favor of the United States. Likewise, the rise of justified reactions against the USSR

due to the so-called Prague Spring in Czechoslovakia and the death of 2500 Hungarian citizens by the Soviet army as a result of the liberal movements triggered by those who did not want pro-Soviet Union rule in Hungary is another important factor (Armaoğlu 2014: 404-432). When we look at the developments in the Western Bloc led by the USA, the process that started with the Truman Doctrine in 1946 continued with the Marshall Plan signed by US President Truman in 1948, which played a major role in the economic development of Europe, which experienced economic collapse after the war. European states in the Western Bloc established the Western European Union in 1948 to protect themselves from possible Soviet threats and dangers. The Union was the first military step taken against Soviet threats and expansionist policies after the Second World War. Another development in the Western Bloc was the formation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1949 to stop the expansion of the Soviet Union's sphere of influence and the expansionist activities of communism.

Another reason that deepened the Cold War was the Vandenberg Decision of 1948, which influenced the US President to participate in regional and other joint agreements on matters of national security and envisaged mutual assistance (İnaç 2021: 39-44). Another Europe-centered development was the establishment of the Council of Europe in 1949, with countries such as Britain, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Belgium, Ireland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Luxembourg, Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Luxembourg as members, aiming for closer economic relations among European countries. Likewise, Robert Schuman, former French Foreign Minister Robert Schuman, inspired by the draft of Jean Monnet, former Secretary-General of the League of Nations, put forward the Schuman Plan and established the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) in 1951 with Germany, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Italy and Luxembourg as founding members (İnaç 2007: 11). The main goal was to unite in the economic field and to ensure that hostile states, especially France and Germany, use their capacities to build friendship instead of war and to solve problems peacefully (Mengiler 2013: 15-22). On the other hand, in order to realize the dream of a united Europe, it was necessary to open a white page on the occasion of coal and steel, the most basic raw materials needed for industrial production, to realize European integration and ultimately to establish the European Union (EU).

4. USSR-US Middle East Policy during the Cold War

After the Second World War, Yemen gained its independence in 1918, followed by Egypt in 1922, Saudi Arabia in 1926, Iraq in 1932, Lebanon in

1945, Syria and Jordan in 1946. These seven newly independent countries came together on 22 March 1945 and signed the Pact of Arab Unity. In fact, these countries were the actors mentioned in the partition plan of France and Russia in 1916 (Oran 2013: 616-617). On the other hand, in December 1915, Britain signed a treaty with Ibn Saud, the Emir of Najd, recognizing the Emir's sovereignty over the lands of Najd and the southern shores of the Persian Gulf, except Kuwait. However, these lands were also given to Sharif Hussein, who organized Arab uprisings against the Ottomans in line with British directives. Therefore, Britain and France, who secretly divided the Middle Eastern territories between them with the Sykes-Picot agreement in 1916, did not refrain from producing justifications to rule the countries in the region with a mandate regime and to share the Ottoman lands among them. These justifications were shared with the world public opinion with a joint declaration published in 1918 and it was announced that this geography, which had been subjected to the oppression of the Turks for a long time, would be liberated in absolute terms.

However, as a result of the Bolshevik Revolution in Tsarist Russia in 1917, the Tsarist diplomacy deciphered all secret documents, leaving the Arabs with a sense of confusion and deception that they could not easily overcome (Armaoğlu, 2014: 119-179). Therefore, while the geopolitics of the Middle East was consolidated by the Ottoman Empire, which won victory after victory against Europe until the 17th century, the British and French mandate regime remained the dominant element in the region from the 19th century onwards until the Second World War with the influence of the industrial revolution. When Hitler became the head of Germany, he attacked Egypt in order to control the Indian Spice Route. Due to its geopolitical position, the Middle East, which is located at the intersection of the Afro-Eurasian continent, has always been under the influence of foreign powers. Therefore, the Middle East was undoubtedly one of the most controversial regions between the Eastern and Western Blocs during the Cold War.

Indeed, the impact of the Cold War on the Middle East was clearly reflected in the policies of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and the United States of America (USA) towards the region (Davutoğlu, 2004: 129-142). Before discussing the policies of the USSR and the USA towards the region, it would be useful to underline one point. During the Cold War, since neither the medium-sized states nor the small states that gained independence had the option of acting independently, these actors acted in alliance with the blocs. Likewise, the states forming the Non-Aligned Movement, which did not consider themselves outside or inside any power

bloc, could not be completely free from the policies pursued by the two blocs, despite their revisionist and rejectionist attitude. First of all, although the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics does not have an imperialist past in the region like the western states, its interest in the region is a continuation of Peter the Great's (Peter the Mad) expansionist policy, which aimed to reach the traditional warm waters and seize strategic opportunities such as bases and ports.

If we consider the policy of the USSR towards the region in the Cold War, which was carried to the Middle East geography under the leadership of the USA and the USSR through the allies, in the axis of Iran and Turkey, it is possible to summarize this political content as follows. While Britain and the United States withdrew their troops in accordance with the agreement with Iran in 1942, the USSR violated the aforementioned treaty and both created two independent republics in the country and remained in the country until 1946 (Mamadi, 2022). The USSR's territorial demands from Turkey at the Postdam Conference in 1954 and its desire to have a say in the straits both brought the bilateral relations between the two countries to a deadlock and led to new threats in terms of the security of the Middle East and world trade routes. On the other hand, the US started to directly intervene in the straits issue with Postdam (Delanty 2013: 131). The USSR's Middle East policy against the British Foreign Secretary Arthur Balfour Declaration, which envisaged the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine, was to support the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948 and to officially recognize it 3 days after its establishment. The USSR's quick recognition of the newly established state of Israel was motivated by the genocide of the Jews in Nazi Germany, Soviet resentment against the Germans and the motivation to bring this new state to its side. However, the USSR's hasty decision to recognize the Soviet Union created antipathy among the peoples of the Middle East, who saw the Soviet Union as the only savior from the West. In time, this antipathy even led the Middle East to move closer to the Western Bloc. However, after the Six Day War, the USSR realized its strategic mistake. During this period, one of the important allies of the USSR in the Middle East was Egypt under the leadership of Gamal Abdul Nasser.

Although the USSR provided Egypt with modern weapons, technical and economic aid, it did not prevent the defeat of the Arab states in the face of Israeli attacks. However, the Soviet Union supported Egypt's policy of nationalizing the Suez Canal and Britain withdrew its support for the Aswan Dam Project in order to break Egypt's power. The dam was then completed with the support of the Soviet Union. On the other hand, the USSR both threatened Israel, which occupied the Golan Heights and the

West Bank as a result of the Six Day War, with sanctions and terminated its relations with this country. Anwar Sadat, who came to power after Gamal Abdul Nasser in Egypt, demanded the return of approximately 15 thousand Soviet Union citizens to their country (Kızılkan, 2017). The policy pursued by Anwar Sadat caused cold winds to blow between the Soviets and Egypt, and also led to the rapprochement between Syria and the Soviets. Therefore, the USSR, which did not want to leave the Middle East to US domination alone, started to attach particular importance to its relations with Syria, where the Baath Party was in power. Hafez al-Assad analyzed the current conjuncture well and obtained both economic aid from the USSR and an air defense system to prevent an Israeli attack. The USSR, which sided with Assad during the Syrian crisis, turned Syria into a satellite state in the region in order to eliminate the American threat and to maintain its permanent presence in the Mediterranean. Another partner of the Soviet Union in the Middle East geography was undoubtedly Saddam Hussein's Iraq, which came to power after the 1958 coup that ended the kingdom.

The Soviet Union's foreign policy towards Iraq during this period was manifested in the form of heavy military equipment support to ensure cultural and economic development and to modernize the army. An example of Moscow's cultural support to Baghdad was the sending of Russian instructors to teach at the ballet and music school opened in Iraq in 1968. On the other hand, while the UN threatened Iraq with an arms embargo during its invasion of Kuwait, the Soviet Union persistently tried to break the embargo. Therefore, unlike Egypt, the Soviet Union's Iraq and Syria policy, which was the target of criticism from Western states, was more long-lasting. Muammar Gaddafi's Libya was another country that had a closer relationship with the Soviet Union than the United States, which was neither in the Western Bloc nor in the Eastern Bloc. The Soviet Union has been relatively closer to Libya in its foreign policy and has not withheld its support in terms of arms and advisors. However, it also stipulated that the weapons it provided should not be used in situations that could conflict with the interests of the Soviet Union (Kurt, 2014). To summarize, the Soviet Union, which had disagreements with Turkey over territorial claims and a say in the straits, lost Iran under the Shah's regime first to Britain and then to the United States.

Although the Khomeini administration, which built its national policy on anti- Americanism during the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran, raised some expectations in the Soviet Union in terms of bilateral relations, the internal dynamics of the country did not allow for Russian influence (Haviland 2002: 211). On the contrary, the ruling elite gradually characterized the United

States as the "great Satan" and the Soviet Union as the "little Satan". On the other hand, the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 caused great unease and insecurity in the Islamic world as well as in the rest of the world, and became the cornerstone for the removal of the Soviet Union from the region. The fate of the USSR's efforts to realize a communist revolution under the leadership of the proletariat class in order to overcome capitalism by spreading its ideologically based expansionist policy all over the world has done nothing but frustrate both Panslavism and communism dreams and make the USA the world's sole superpower (İnaç and Sada 2021: 148-169). Therefore, in a world stuck between two rival powers during the Cold War, it was unthinkable for the other to remain indifferent in the region where one existed. The policy of the United States, led by the Western Bloc, towards the Middle East region was built on preventing communist expansionism in the region with a containment strategy.

On the other hand, although the US did not have an imperialist past in the region like the Soviet Union, the US, as the patron of Western civilization and the leader of the Western Bloc after the Second World War, tried to control the former British and French colonized Middle Eastern countries in the region by engaging in a new colonial activity by taking advantage of its influence in the UN . Politically, economically and militarily, the United States, as the only nuclear-armed country in the post-war period, fought hard to establish and maintain Israel's political existence. Throughout the Cold War, the United States, like its archrival, pursued an ideologically driven foreign policy. In other words, it shaped its policy based on the moves made by the Soviet Union, which it characterized as an enemy. In order not to enter into a hot conflict with the Soviet Union, it has always been in elbow contact with states that are uncomfortable with the Soviet presence in the region. Therefore, the US Middle East policy initially followed the deterrence policy (Deterrence Policy) against the political, military and communist expansion threats from the Soviet Union (İnaç and Erdoğan 2006: 14). This was because those who opposed US hegemony in the region or states known to be close to the Eastern Bloc had to be deterred.

The policy pursued by the United States during the Cold War played a vital role in expanding its sphere of dominance, narrowing the Soviet Union's sphere of influence and achieving its strategic objectives. For this, communism had to be contained and pacified in an area outside the US geopolitical sphere of influence. In this context, the US implemented the Containment Policy towards the region (İnaç and Ünal 2013: 227). With this policy, the US, which saw itself as the protector and head of the free world, aimed to save those who adopted Western values from Soviet

oppression and ensure that they could live freely in the free world (Ataman, 2006: 402-406). The most striking point of this policy pursued by the United States of America was that it was implemented in the region where Muslims lived most densely. On the other hand, it used Islam, the religion of salvation, as a tool of this policy for the first time. Another crucial point is that in order to erase the tolerance culture of Islam from the minds of Muslims and to bend their backs, they tried to overcome the encompassing and frightening culture by taking the embracing civilization sweater and instead tying the so-called Green Belt Project around their waists. In order to encircle the Soviet Union through Muslims, the United States enacted the Vandenberg Resolution of 1948, which envisaged mutual assistance, in addition to the policies mentioned above. In addition, in the context of the Truman Doctrine announced in 1947, the US provided 300 million dollars in economic aid to weaken the communists in power in Greece, while providing only 100 million dollars in financial aid to Turkey, which it wanted to draw into the Western Bloc. The United States, which sparked the Cold War in the Middle East with the Truman Doctrine, considered the Soviet Union's territorial demands from Turkey as a domestic issue concerning the bilateral relations of the two countries, and supported Turkey's thesis, which was right instead of the Soviet Union's thesis, in the straits issue that arose at the Postdam Conference. Of course, the real goal of the US here was not to stand on the side of the right. On the contrary, it took the necessary step to have a say in the straits and to guarantee its own national security. On the other hand, the US, which provided Turkey and Greece with 400 million dollars of military aid, also stipulated that Turkey should not use the weapons it gave to Turkey beyond the extent permitted by the US.

The US aid of 15 billion dollars to European countries was not a remedy for the economic problems of the Western countries, and by 1971, it led to the collapse of the Bretton Woods system (Kapucu, 2021). On the other hand, the US needed to take over the oil fields, which were the kiss of life for the smooth functioning of the economic system it had established after the Second World War, the economic development of Europe, which was trying to survive with aid, and the development of technology, and to dominate the Middle East geography alone. As a matter of fact, the US first entered the region through oil companies. From this point of view, it should not be forgotten that oil companies as well as intelligence organizations play a major role in determining the US policy in the Middle East and its strategic goals in the region. Because the aim of the US was not only to seize the oil fields. The main strategic goal of the US in this regard was to control oil prices at any time in accordance with its national interests (İnaç 2021: 88).

The sine qua non for achieving this strategic goal was, of course, the stability of the region. From this point of view, the US policy towards the region started with the understanding that the enemy of my enemy is my friend.

Another issue that the United States paid attention to in the region was to ensure the security of Israel, which owed its political existence largely to British Foreign Secretary Arthur Balfour. As a matter of fact, the US assumed the role of mediator in the Arab-Israeli wars during the Cold War period (İnaç and Yaman 2015: 19). When necessary, it pioneered the preparation of peace plans. However, despite everything, the US has always maintained its strong support for Israel. Because the Middle East, which is a storehouse of raw materials and energy, has also served as a favorable market for the US arms industry (Arı, 2004: 66-70). The Baghdad Pact, whose real name was the "Treaty Of Mutual Co-operation" dated 24 February 1955, which was terminated in 1979, was put into effect in the axis of the policies implemented by the US to prevent the communist expansionism of the Soviet Union in the region and to remove it from the region and to increase its own sphere of influence and to perpetuate its existence. The Pact

, which was signed in Baghdad and included the condition of renewal in five-year periods, also stipulated non-interference in the internal affairs of the member states and mutual security and defense cooperation (Bostancı, 2013: 176).

As a matter of fact, Iraq did not neglect to add an additional article to the Pact against the threat of Israel's inclusion in the Pact. Apart from Iraq and Turkey, Britain became a member of the Pact on 4 April 1955, Iran on November 3, and Pakistan on September 23, while the United States, although not a member of the Pact, became a member of the military committee of the Pact in 1957, not only allaying Israel's concerns that the Pact was established against it, but also guaranteeing Israel's security in the region (İnaç and Sada 2021a: 84). On the other hand, Iraq, which was getting closer to the Soviet Union, left the pact due to the coup d'état that took place in its country. After this incident in 1959, the name of the pact was changed to "Central Treaty Organization" (CENTO) or Central Treaty Organization (CENTO), but with the revolution in Iran in 1979, the pact was lost to history (Yılmaz, 2016: 215-218). On the other hand, Israel, with the support of France and Britain, started an invasion attempt of the Sinai Peninsula, which belonged to Egypt in 1956, causing the Suez Crisis. Despite everything that happened in the Suez Crisis, the US and the USSR's call for a ceasefire played an important role in the outcome of the Suez Crisis

in Egypt's favor, and also contributed significantly to the continuation of the Soviet Union's support for the Arab states (Çalışkan, 2020: 697-698).

Following the Suez Crisis, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics took part in the "Six Day War" between Israel and the Arab states in 1967 by providing arms support to the Arab states. As a matter of fact, Egyptian Leader Gamal Abdul Nasser, who struggled with economic difficulties after the war and needed Soviet weapons the most, publicly announced the arms support he received from the Soviet Union with the following words. We have not paid a penny for the weapons and equipment we obtained from the Soviet Union to strengthen our army. On the other hand, during his visit to Moscow in 1968, Gamal Abdul Nasser expressed his appreciation for the Soviet military presence in the Mediterranean. While the war led to many negative consequences in Palestine, it also paved the way for the formation of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) with the effect of the Israeli attack on the Al-Aqsa Mosque in 1969 (Inaç and Sada 2021b: 109). In 1970, Anwar Sadat, who took over the government upon the death of Gamal Abdul Nasser, accepted the Rogers Plan da 25 July 1970, named after the United States Secretary of State W. Rogers, together with Israel and Jordan. On the other hand, Iraq, Syria and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) not only opposed the plan but also severely criticized Anwar Sadat, the Egyptian president who was the leader of the Arab world (Karadağ, 2004: 91-98).

The Rogers Plan envisaged that Jordan, the United Arab Republics (UAR) (Egypt and Syria) and Israel would recognize each other's independence and Israel would withdraw from the Arab territories it occupied in 1967, but unfortunately it did not prevent the 1973 Arab- Israeli War. Therefore, despite Egypt's acceptance of the Rogers Plan and Syria's opposition, the two-state-led war began on October 6, 1973 on the day of the Israeli national holiday and lasted for 16 days. During the war, the Arabs shot down 120 Israeli planes with SAM6-SAM7 missiles and destroyed many Israeli tanks with Sheml and Sagger anti-tank missiles (İnaç 2003: 344). While the Soviet Union provided both military and diplomatic support to the Arabs in this war, Iraq expressed its support by sending a fleet to Egypt as well as stating that the US would nationalize the Oil Company. Saudi Arabia warned America of a major world war if it did not stop Israeli harassment. To summarize, the US supported Israel in the 1973 Arab-Israeli War as it had done before (İnaç 2005b: 99).

With the Yom Kippur War, deep disagreements between Egypt and the Soviet Union came to the surface, and the Soviet Union's policy towards the

Arabs in the region was disrupted in the Egyptian context. As a matter of fact, Anwar Sadat's close relationship with the US administration not only played an effective role in the removal of the Soviet Union from the region, but with the Camp David Treaty signed between Egypt and Israel in 1978, Egypt became the first state in the Arab world to officially recognize Israel. Therefore, the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran and the problems in Moscow after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 were other factors that led to the USSR's removal from the region (Arı, 2017: 307-327). The ongoing struggle for supremacy between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in the Middle East during the Cold War had significant effects on the shaping of the policies of the two blocs towards the region. This influence is evident in the construction of strategies, the determination of geopolitical goals and the factors that paved the way for the doctrines named after US Presidents.

First of all, the ethnic-based identity conflict caused by the many different ethnic groups in the region, and secondly, the fact that Islam is the dominant religion among the three Abrahamic religions in the region and this situation is not tolerated by the West deepens the conflict in the region (İnaç 2005a: 47). In addition, the fact that the region is at the intersection of commercial and transportation routes between the Afro-Eurasian continents, and the struggle for supremacy among the countries of the region, coupled with border problems that could not be solved with the great influence of colonial states, triggered hot wars. Despite the underdevelopment of the arms industry in the region, the arms aid provided by the big powers to the countries in the region has led to an increasing arms race and the inability to share the energy resources in the region in an equitable manner have also made the conflicts permanent (İnaç 2007: 27). These reasons unfortunately prepared the ground for the crises that we will discuss below with the contribution of the direct or indirect effects of the two blocs during the Cold War in the region.

As soon as the Second World War ended in 1945, the Soviet Union's territorial demand from Turkey and the crisis of having a say in the straits, and the Truman Doctrine of 947 created a crisis in the countries in the Western Bloc against the USSR in order to follow the expansionist policies of the USSR. The Suez Crisis of 1956, which started with the provocation of Britain and France. The Syria-Turkey Crisis, which reached its peak in May 1957 when Turkey, perceiving a threat to itself through Syria and rightfully seeking to ensure its territorial integrity, poured troops on the Syrian border (Uçarol, 1995: 725). These crises led to the emergence of the Baghdad Pact of 1955 as well as the Eisenhower Doctrine of 1957, which was named

after the US President. The aforementioned doctrine included military and economic aid as well as security assurances to the states in favor of the free world in the face of the USSR's expansionist policy and the pro-USSR's expansionist policies. On 1 May 1960, the U-2 spy plane crisis, which took off from Turkey's Incirlik base and entered the airspace of the Soviet Union for intelligence gathering over Peshawar, a pre-1947 territory of Afghanistan, on the borders of present-day Pakistan, was another crisis that strained relations between the USSR and the USA. The Cuban Crisis, which stemmed from the misperception of the US and the USSR and took place in 1962 between the two blocs centered on Turkey and Cuba, was sparked by the Soviet Union's deployment of SS-2 missiles, 36 atomic missiles, 34000 soldiers, 800 military expert personnel and 60 nuclear warheads in Cuba against US threats, and the crisis was ended with the dismantling of the 15 Jupiter missiles deployed by the US in Turkey in 1963 (Çakmak, 2016: 96-108).

The Oil Crisis of 1973 and the Iraq-Iran War between 1980 and 1988, as well as the above-mentioned crises within the region and the crises outside the region that had direct repercussions on the region, and the Arab-Israeli Wars prolonged the life of the Cold War between the blocs on the one hand, and made its impact permanent on the other. On the other hand, it also played an important role in determining the winner of the war and clarifying the environment of uncertainty by causing political, economic and military attrition between the blocs (Türk, 2004: 109-113). If we consider the issue in the context of the US national security, the crises in the region started with the Truman Doctrine of 12 March 1947, and continued with the Eisenhower Doctrine of January 5, 1957, which symbolized the Cold War between the two blocs in the Middle East, which came to the agenda after US President Dwight Eisenhower asked for authorization from the US Congress and planned that the countries in the region would benefit from American military and arms aid regardless of whether they sided with the United States or not, and supported by an economic fund of 200 million dollars (Kapucu, 2021). Following the Eisenhower Doctrine, the Nixon Doctrine of 25 July 1969, which envisaged contributing to the defense and development of allied and friendly states that rejected the gendarme of the free world, was issued on Guam Island. The United States adopted the Carter Doctrine of 1980, which characterized an attack in the Persian Gulf as an attack on the vital interests of its own state.

The Reagan Doctrine, named after US President Reagan, known for his anticommunist personality, was put into practice, prioritizing all kinds of support for all anti-communist movements, especially Afghanistan,

Nigeria, Cambodia and Nicaragua. To summarize in the light of the above-mentioned information, the Cold War, which ended with the dissolution of the USSR in December 1991, was undoubtedly the most intense struggle between the two blocs in the Middle East region (Oran, 2013: 527). While the region's historical, cultural, religious and strategic depth and ethnic complexity drew the two bloc countries towards the Middle East quagmire, the policies pursued by the Soviet Union and the United States towards the region dragged the countries of the region into the depths of uncertainty. Therefore, while the USSR's efforts to acquire ports and bases in the Mediterranean and to spread communism around the world became the lifeblood of its expansionist policies, the United States has turned its doctrinal policy towards the region into a tradition in order to prevent the expansionism of communism and to dominate oil pricing. The crises in the region and the crises that occurred outside the region and had a direct or indirect impact on the Middle East enabled the policies of the two blocs and the Cold War to last so long.

5. Russia and America's Middle East Policy after the Cold War

On 25 December 1991, following the resignation of the USSR president Mikhail Gorbachev , the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics disintegrated, and the political, military, economic and ideological crises between the Eastern and Western Blocs effectively ended the Cold War, which paved the way for the construction of a bipolar world order. In the new world order where the US emerged as the sole superpower, the Russian Federation (RF), the successor of the Soviet Union, joined the international system as a federated state (İnaç 2014: 51). After the end of the war, the Russian Federation accelerated its foreign policy pursuits in order to overcome the remaining internal and external problems. From 1991 to the present day, Russian foreign policy has been shaped around parameters such as the Russian thought system, geopolitical security, political and economic stability, preventing and eliminating geopolitical and geostrategic threats in the context of Eurasia, integrating into the free market economy of the West, and equipping the army with technological military equipment suitable for the age. Russian foreign policy under Boris Yeltsin was pro-Western, ending the USSR's imperialist and expansionist policy in order to restore relations with the West.

Indeed, this policy, which ended the nuclear rivalry in order to strengthen strategic cooperation with the United States, aimed at developing cooperation with international organizations such as NATO, the UNSC, the CFSP, and the G-7. With the appointment of Yevgeny Primakov as Foreign Minister in

1996, Russia abandoned its unilateral foreign policy and started to pursue a multilateral foreign policy until today. Coming to power in 2000, Vladimir Putin's multilateral Russian foreign policy, which formed the foundations of the foreign policy concept, also brought along rumors of becoming a superpower again. When we consider Russian foreign policy on the axis of the "Near Periphery Doctrine", we witness that with this doctrine, Russia pursues an active foreign policy not only towards the "Post-Soviet" states but also towards the Middle East (Zholdoshbek Kyzy, 2018 : 1-2).

The change and diversification of strategies in Russian foreign policy after Putin came to power started the process of recovery and resurgence of Russian foreign policy from 1990 to the 2000s. The main characteristics of Russian foreign policy from 2000 to the present day are as follows. A pragmatist paradigm with a focus on military, political and economic gains, a pragmatist paradigm with the goals of becoming a global power by gaining control over a certain amount of energy, especially oil and natural gas, and assuming responsibility for expanding geopolitical space and security in the Eurasian region.

In other words, Boris Yeltsin, who came to power by popular vote for the first time in Russian political history on 12 June 1991, was under the influence of the Atlanticist Approach, locked 31 embassies and consulates between 1991 and 1993, and pursued pluralism in politics and free market economics in the economy as a pro-Western actor. Indeed, the proponents of the Atlanticist Approach argue that historically Russia has been an integral part of European civilization and point to the East as a threat. Therefore, this approach insists that Russia should pursue a pro-Western foreign policy in order to improve Russia's cooperation with Western institutions and to assimilate Western values in order to develop Russia and to protect Russia from threats from the East (Inaç 2020: 17). Yeltsin abandoned traditional friends of the USSR such as China, Cuba and Vietnam as a requirement of a pro-Western foreign policy. Because in this period, Russia also focused on proving that it was not only a collaborator of the West but also a reliable friend. Another approach that influenced Yeltsin's foreign policy was the Western Idealist Approach, which argues that the transformation of totalitarian regimes is only possible with western values and that the constructive values of Russian identity lie in the historical depths of western values.

Although Russia's pro-Western foreign policy prevented conflict between the US and Russia for a long time, Yeltsin made it clear during his resignation that he was not satisfied with the pro-Western policy. When we look at the approaches that influenced the foreign policy of Putin's Russia, we see

approaches such as the anti-Western Pragmatist Approach and the Neo-Eurasianism Approach. Yevgeniy Maksimovich Primakov, who assumed the post of foreign minister after the end of Andrei Kozrev's era, underlined that the West and the United States should be kept away from the geography where Russia's national interests exist with the influence of the Eurasianist Approach. On the other hand, while Primakov pointed to the Post- Soviet space as the area of competition with the West and the US, he defined it as the area that needs to be protected from the mentioned powers of its immediate environment (Elnur, 2013: 92). In other words, he emphasized that in order to create a balance against the US hegemony in Russian geopolitics, it is essential to focus on re-developing relations with the Middle East, the Balkans, Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), Cuba and North Korea, which are described as traditional friends. With the Eurasianism approach becoming the dominant approach in Russian foreign policy, it also led to the loss of the strategic superiority of the Atlanticist approach in Russian foreign policy (Özkan and Özer 2023: 191).

The Eurasianist Approach argues that everything produced by the West is evil and that Russia is neither Western nor Eastern and has its own unique identity structure and unique civilizational values. In other words, in contrast to the Atlanticist approach, it is an approach that defines the West as the biggest source of threat and consents to the existence of a unified structure in the Eurasian continent through Slavic, Mongolian and Turkish ethnists, more precisely in the context of the concept of "Super ethnos". Eurasian Geopolitics with its bipolar order in the triangle of Russia, Germany and France in the West and Delhi, Beijing and Moscow in the East is an approach that seeks to consolidate sovereignty (Akçapa, 2022: 1-9). Names such as Alexander Dugin, A. Panarin and M. Titarenko, who are recognized as the founding fathers of the approach, laid the foundation for an east-centered western policy by abandoning the western-centered eastern policy with this approach. In other words, this approach does not see the near abroad policy as separate from the periphery policy. Those who put forward the Anti-Western Pragmatist approach, unlike the Western Pragmatist approach, instead of the Win Win principle in the economy, they emphasized a policy based on the "Zero-Sum" or a style that prioritizes that one wins while the other loses. On the other hand, it is an approach that argues that foreign policy is not something that can be explained solely by economic interests and therefore foreign policy cannot be separated from mission, norms, interests and thought (Tutar, İnaç and Güner 2006: 291).

To summarize, the most important factor that has brought new dimensions to Russian foreign policy has been the US foreign policy towards the region.

It has been both the architect and the guardian of the unipolar world order to be established after the Cold War (Zholdoshbek Kyzy, 2018: 19-25). The United States of America, which has become an unrivaled global power unprecedented in history, has tried to impose the liberal cultural values adopted and assimilated by the West, parliamentary democracy as a political model, and free market economy as an economic model on all countries of the world on the axis of what it calls the "Grand Design" movement. In other words, it tried to build a unipolar world order politically, militarily, economically and ideologically. While the USSR's expansionist policies and socialism were seen as the only destructive factor in all the negativities experienced during the Cold War, the events that took place in the Balkan geography after the dissolution of the USSR as a result of religious, ethnic and border-based problems refuted this thesis of the USA (Fukuyama, 2015: 8-13). Therefore, after the dissolution of the USSR until the 2000s, the US tried to deceive the states around it with the promise of building security, peace and democratic structure in line with its own national interests, while trying to manage them with divide and rule. On the other hand, the US was seen by the Arab world as the sole savior and conqueror of the region because it liberated the entire Arab world from the oppression of Shiite Iran during the 8-year Iraq-Iran war. However, in the Gulf Crisis that started on August 2, 1990 when Iraq invaded Kuwait, the US gave Iraq until January 15, 1991 to withdraw with UN Resolution 678. However, when Iraq did not comply with this UN resolution, the US, citing the resolution as a legal justification, entered the region once again after the end of the Cold War to protect both its national interests and Israeli security and to fully control oil pricing. The return of the US to the region caused a ripple in anti-American circles, and with this operation, the US tried to send a message to the world public opinion that the security threats of the new world order regarding uncertainties were minimized (İnaç 2022: 219).

When a cabinet of oil barons and Soviet experts came to power in the US under the presidency of his son Bush, the American administration inevitably sought an opportunity to seize control of Central Asian energy resources and transportation routes. The desired opportunity came on September 11, when members of the al-Qaeda terrorist organization hijacked passenger planes Flight 11, 175, 77 and 93 in the heart of America. The first plane hit the North Tower of the World Trade Center at 08:46:40 local time, while the second plane hit the South Tower at 09:03:11. The third plane, belonging to American Airlines, crashed into the Pentagon, the main headquarters of the US Department of Defense, at 09:37:46. The plane, hijacked by the group led by Zaid Jarrah, crashed at 10:03:11 without reaching its destination.

According to CNN, an international news channel based in the US, the attack killed 2973 people (Kiran, 2012: 86-87). The US administration, which had not yet recovered from the shock of the incident, blamed the perpetrator of the attack on Osama Bin Laden, the Al-Qaeda organization that had threatened to strike the US three weeks before the incident.

The September 11 attack caused great anxiety not only among American citizens but also in all Western countries. The September 11 attack, which was a breaking point in many respects, both forced the countries of the world to ally with the United States and crystallized the nation-building problem of failed states that would threaten world peace. The September 11 attack, which paved the way for the formation of new alliances, also changed the strategic plans of the old alliances. It operationalized the concept of counter-terrorism, which constituted a legal basis for the US military intervention and whose definition was ambiguous (Özkan 2022b: 247). On 12 September 2001, the UNSC condemned the incident with Resolution No. 1368, and although it did not explicitly mention Afghanistan , it gave the green light for the US-led coalition forces to enter Afghanistan by stating that all measures should be taken.

Similarly, on 20 September 2001 President George W. Bush stated in his speech that he was ready for war to eradicate terrorism. He also clearly announced to the world that if the Taliban did not hand over Osama Bin Laden, Afghanistan would be the first target of the war we would start (Ersoy, 2015: 61). On 7 October 2001, the US fired the first "Cruise" missile south of Kabul. It then continued to attack Jalalabad and Kandahar with fifteen B1-B2 type bombers and twenty-five attack aircraft. For a short period of 8 hours, the US fired fifty "Tomahawks", smart missiles costing 1 million dollars each, into Afghanistan. After the operation, the US announced that it had destroyed thirty-one strategic and regular points such as the royal building, airfields and the Ministry of Defense. The second phase of the US military intervention, the ground operation, was launched forty-five days later with the support of the Northern Alliance. The primary objectives of the US military intervention were to destroy al- Qaeda and to remove the Taliban regime and replace it with a moderate government that was compatible with the modern civilization of the West. On 12 November 2001, the UN provided 30,000 tons of food aid for the people displaced during the attack (Akkurt, 2005: 249-252). On the other hand, in order to continue the operation, which has always been characterized as Operation Enduring Freedom, the US President called the war a preventive war, not an offensive war. For and especially Russia openly supported the US intervention in Afghanistan.

On the other hand, the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Agency (UNESCO), the UN Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA), the UN Development Programme (UNDP), the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (UNFAO), the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), which have been operating under the umbrella of the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Agency (UNESCO) since 28 March 2002 under UNSCR 1401 (UNAMA), Afghanistan has been subjected to attacks and operations by agencies such as the UN Human Settlement Programme (UNHABITAT), UN Joint Logistics Centre (UNJLC), UN World Food Programme (UNWFP), UN Mine Action Centre for Afghanistan (UNMACA), UN Office for Services (UNOPS), UN World Health Organization (UNWHO), UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) (Kiren, 2012: 148). Using hard power against the Taliban has produced more Taliban. Therefore, the Obama administration sought reconciliation with the Taliban in 2009. As a matter of fact, on 29 February 2020, the United States signed a peace treaty with the Taliban and also paved the way for the negotiations between the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the Taliban on a meaningful date like September 11, 2020. However, on 15 August 2021, the Taliban entered the tribe and once again dominated Afghanistan, while the US left Afghanistan, where it stayed for the longest time after the Cold War.

The US used the September 11 attack as an opportunity to design the target countries and to gain strategic superiority in Central Asia and the Middle East region, disregarding international law in full view of the world community. In 2002, US President W. George Bush, in his speech to the UN General Assembly, claimed that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction and that Saddam's regime posed a major threat to the states of the region and to international peace. A week later, the US administration issued a national security strategy document that envisaged unilateral pre-emptive intervention to eliminate threats to its national interests. Saddam Hussein did not comply with the UN Resolution 1441 of 8 November 2002, and Operation Iraqi Liberation, jointly led by the US and the UK, officially began on March 20, 2003 (İnaç 2021: 192-193).

While Russia opposed the US attempt to invade Iraq, the US turned the Middle East region into a terrorist base for the sake of national interests, as it did during the Cold War. With the invasion of Iraq, the US, which had the support of Russia in the fight against global terrorism in the context of Afghanistan, dragged Russia behind it once again and pulled it to the center of the Middle East. Therefore, the US has been the state that has ignited the fuse of the new competitive war in the Middle East. In 2004, in order to improve its image and maintain its hegemonic dream, the US, which had

turned the balances in the region upside down, launched the Greater Middle East Project, which encompasses education, economy, security, democracy, law and many other issues and nearly 30 countries. When the project is big and the Middle East is in question, it is essential that there is nothing left of the Middle East and Islam (Bilgin, 2004: 54-61).

Although the United States described the entire Eurasian region as a gift to itself after the Cold War, its aggressive policy towards the region after the 9/11 attack and its attempt to associate Islam with terrorism disturbed all Muslims and further radicalized the armed groups in the region (Özkan 2019: 1746). On the other hand, Shiite Iran's expansionist policy towards the region and the continuation of the chronic Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the Arab Spring, which started in Tunisia at the end of 2010 and spread to the entire Middle East geography, forced Russia to pursue an active policy in the region and exposed Turkey to the influx of migrants from the region. On the other hand, Turkey has been left alone in the chaos in the region despite being a NATO member. Indeed, FETÖ, which infiltrated all capillaries of the Turkish state with the support of the CIA during the Cold War, attempted to stage a coup against the legitimate elected government in Turkey on July 15, 2016. While the US-NATO and EU countries launched an all-out attack on Afghanistan and Iraq in the context of the global fight against terrorism, when it came to Turkey, they fervently and with all their might supported the terrorist organization.

In order not to be affected by the internal turmoil in Syria and terrorist organizations such as PKK, DAESH, YPG, DHKP-C nesting in the region, to ensure border security and to fight against FETÖ effectively, Turkey had to carry out a series of military operations. In this context, starting with Operation Shah Euphrates on 22 February 2016 and continuing with Operation Euphrates Shield, Operation Idlib, Operation Olive Branch and most recently Operation Claw-Kilit, Turkey has unfortunately not received support from its Western allies and NATO (Özkan 2022: 204). It defined Turkey as a destabilizing country in the region. Going back to Russian foreign policy towards the region, Vladimir Putin, who received 53.44% of the Russian people's votes in the elections held in 2000, tried to announce his foreign policy goals with the document titled "Foreign Policy Perception" published on 28 June 2000. Putin, who has pursued an active foreign policy since coming to power and has not hesitated to strain relations with the US, opposed the US intervention in Iraq. On the other hand, Putin unilaterally left the "Anti-Ballistic Missile" treaty signed between the USSR and the USA during the Cold War and perceived the radical terrorist structures created by arbitrary US military interventions and drug trafficking supported by the

US as a state policy as threats (İnaç 2021: 63). In addition, in response to the US-led NATO expansion , Putin supported China's understanding of the multipolar world order in order to break the American hegemony and abandoned his position of being a bystander to the events in the Caucasus, the Balkans and the Middle East.

"Russia has described Iran's nuclear energy program, another US target, as 'peaceful' and has strongly opposed the US policy of isolating Iran because of its nuclear program. Russia supported Syria, accused of supporting terrorism, blamed for the assassination of Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri and subjected to international isolation, and opposed the sanctions against the country. As a result of the resurgence of Syria-Russia friendship and Russia's efforts to reestablish its former power in the Middle East, Russia reactivated the Tartus military naval base in 2006, which had been closed after the Cold War" (Orhan, 2017: 5).

Russian President Putin's characterization of the Arab Spring as a destabilization operation against the region, his call for peace to the countries in the region, and his portrayal of a leader who believes in international norms while opposing the invasion of Iraq are signs of putting forward the thesis of the Dialogue of Civilizations against the "Clash of Civilizations argument" of the USA. Russia, which is concerned about the spread of the Arab Spring to its country and the damage to the strategic and economic relations it has developed with the countries in the region, has suffered a loss of 10 billion dollars due to the Arab Spring according to 2013 data (Özkan 2022a: 194-196).

The Kremlin, which was content with condemnations in the early stages of the Arab Spring, started to follow a wait-and-see policy after the events spread to Syria. As a matter of fact, in the context of this policy, the Kremlin did not spare Syria S-300 missiles, three warships and the only aircraft carrier, Admiral Kuznetsov, after the US sent a warship to Syria, and underlined that solving the problem through dialogue is essential for the stability of the region. On the other hand, while Russia, together with China, opposed the UNSC sanctions against Syria, Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov characterized the sanctions as interference in the internal affairs of the states in the region (Orhan, 2017: 6-7). While the US supported the Free Syrian Army against Syria, Russia continued to openly support both the Free Syrian Army and DAESH with an air campaign in 2015. To summarize, on the one hand, the Syrian crisis has once again made Russia's presence in the eastern Mediterranean permanent, while it has also been instrumental in the development of Russia's relations with Israel. On the other hand, the Syrian

crisis has also led to increased cooperation between Iran-Russia-China and Turkey (İnaç, 2021: 95-104).

This situation, which conflicts with the US national interests, deeply disturbs the US. With the Russo-Ukrainian War, the US tried to divert Russia away from the Middle East. However, Russia is taking advantage of the negative impact of the US in the region and is trying to strengthen energy cooperation with the countries in the region in order to make the West, which is dependent on Russia in the field of energy , more dependent on Russia, and is making new moves in the field of nuclear energy. Russia seeks the security of its geopolitics in the stability of the Middle East. It believes that maintaining its presence in the Middle East is vital for both itself and its allies in terms of achieving its geo-strategic goals. Putin, who tries to identify his policies with his charismatic personality, does not refrain from pursuing a smart power policy from time to time.

6. Conclusion

The world, which struggled with many political, economic, material and spiritual crises after the Second World War, sought the door to search for the construction of a new world order, while on the other hand, international organizations such as the League of Nations, which were built after the First World War and failed and ineffective in international problems, led to the abolition of international organizations such as the League of Nations. At the same time, it also led to the revival of anti-colonialist movements while burying the ideology of colonialism in the invisible corner of history. On the other hand, the world must not have remembered the catastrophe caused by the atomic bomb dropped on Japan by the US and learned from mistakes, which led to the Cold War that started with the Truman Doctrine in 1947 and dragged the world into a bipolar world order between the US and the USSR as the East-West Block on the ideological axis of capitalism and socialism.

As can be understood from the struggle for sovereignty between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America, which strategically insisted on cutting each other off in the bipolar world order, the great powers that upset the pre-war balance of power did not lay the foundations of the balances of the new world order to be formed after the war. The US and the USSR, which gave western countries a breathing space by moving the Cold War from the European continent to the Middle East, saw their endless hegemonic calculations through the Arab states and the state of Israel. In order to ensure geopolitical supremacy in the region and to

achieve strategic goals, the US and the USSR have consciously transformed the region into a crisis production area with the policies it pursues towards the region. In this way, they not only prolonged the life of their presence in the region, but also developed a new form of colonialism by making the countries of the region dependent on themselves with the help they extended in terms of military equipment. The USSR and the USA, which continue to compete for supremacy with the understanding that the enemy of my friend is my enemy and the friend of my enemy is not my friend, have abused the weaknesses of the states in the region in order to expand their sphere of influence in the region for the sake of national security and interests. Instead of seeking solutions to the existing problems in the Middle East, they have tried to draw each other's charisma through new crises they have built in the region. With the resignation of Mikhail Gorbachev in December 1991 and the official dissolution of the USSR, the United States emerged as the only global power in the world.

After the cracking of the USSR's shell, Russia tried to attract the attention of Europe by abandoning the traditional Soviet expansionist policy with imperialist ambitions, while promoting its federative structure as not only compatible with the West but also as a reliable friend. The US, on the other hand, tried to impose the political, legal, cultural and economic values of the West, which it had assimilated in the newly established unipolar world order, on the states of the world. As in the case of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, the US did not even refrain from using military force if necessary to impose these values. However, the September 11 attack deeply shook the entire western world, especially the US. In other words, even though the September 11 attack signaled the collapse of the unipolar world order in favor of the construction of a multipolar world order, or even though the attack left the impression in the minds of the world public that even the US was not safe, in fact, the US had the opportunity it had been looking for for years. As a matter of fact, then US President George W. Bush launched a military landing in Afghanistan by gathering all the allies of the world under the NATO umbrella in the context of destroying terrorism at its source and fighting global terrorism.

After the attack, the US saw Islam, which had made it the world's sole superpower after the collapse of the USSR, as the biggest threat. On 7 October 2001, the US fired the first "Cruise" missile south of Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan, and invaded Iraq on 20 March 2003, claiming that Iraq, led by Saddam, had weapons of mass destruction. To summarize, it refers to the situation in which the bipolar structure, which emerged with the contribution of the allies gathered around the US and the USSR during

the Cold War, did not actually enter into hot conflict. Therefore, the US did not engage in a hot war with the USSR, and after the dissolution of the USSR, it never engaged in a hot conflict with its successor, Russia. From this point of view, it is possible to state that the Cold War, the effects of which continue today, did not end with the dissolution of the USSR. To reinforce this thesis, we can present the following two arguments. First, anything that continues to have an impact has diminished its power of reaction, but it does not cease to exist. Secondly, the Cold War did not end with the dissolution of the USSR. On the contrary, the dissolution of the USSR only paved the way for the US to become the sole superpower.

Therefore, with the 2003 invasion of Iraq, the US returned to the region armed with the technological weapons of the 21st century, pushing the region into a new period of chaos and enabling Putin's Russia to pursue an active policy towards the region. In other words, what the September 11 attack meant for the United States in the context of the wider Middle East geography, the US invasion of Iraq meant the same thing and even more for Putin's Russia. In sum, Putin's return to the region by pursuing an active policy towards the region after the 2003 invasion of Iraq and the release of 65-year-old Ana Montes, one of the most important spies of the Cold War period, in 2023 after 22 years is a clear indication that the effects of the Cold War are still continuing.

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Chapter 12

Internal and External Developments in Azerbaijan Between 1991 and 2025 &

Rahman Aghazada[1]

Abstract

This study comprehensively analyses Azerbaijan's internal and external developments since its independence from the Soviet Union in 1991 until 2025. Post-independence, Azerbaijan has faced political instability, economic restructuring and social transformation processes, while at the same time dealing with serious regional problems, notably the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. The domestic political crises of the 1990s gave way in the 2000s to a more institutionalised state structure and an economy strengthened by the efficient use of energy resources. In foreign policy, Azerbaijan tried to establish balanced relations with both the West and regional actors, and made significant gains in terms of territorial integrity with the Second Karabakh War in 2020. In the post-2020 period, regional peace initiatives, energy diplomacy and global alliance policies have been decisive in the country's foreign policy. In this article, the interaction between Azerbaijan's internal dynamics and foreign relations is analysed, and the transformation process of the country is evaluated in an analytical framework.

Introduction

In 1991, Azerbaijan, which declared its independence with the dissolution of the Soviet Union, entered into a process of building a new state identity. The post-independence process led to radical changes both in the country's internal political structure and foreign relations. Modernisation efforts and state building were accompanied by serious political, economic and social crises. During this period, Azerbaijan had to struggle with chronic problems such as the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Internal instabilities, coups and changes of administration delayed the strengthening of state institutions.

1   PhD Student, Department of Political Science and International Relations, Kütahya Dumlupınar University, rahman.aghazada@ogr.dpu.edu.tr, ORCID: 0000-0001-8236-1536

However, over time, the political structure has achieved a certain stability and reform processes have gained momentum.

In the context of domestic developments, Azerbaijan struggled with political turmoil and economic bottlenecks in the early 1990s. The short-lived ruling experience of the Popular Front government, followed by the government established under the leadership of Heydar Aliyev, initiated the process of consolidation of the state. The adoption of the Constitution, the establishment of political parties and the development of a multi-party system were important stages of this process. At the same time, the effective utilisation of oil and natural gas resources became one of the main dynamics of economic growth. Increased revenues in this process brought investments in infrastructure projects and social services. The search for stability in domestic politics has also kept democratisation debates on the agenda.

In foreign policy, Azerbaijan has tried to pursue a multidimensional strategy since the first years of its independence. While strengthening economic co-operation with the West, it also aimed to establish balanced relations with Russia and the countries in the region. With the 1994 "Contract of the Century", Azerbaijan strengthened its integration into the international energy market. In this context, energy diplomacy has become one of the cornerstones of the country's foreign policy. Azerbaijan has also taken various initiatives to increase its cooperation with Euro-Atlantic organisations. It has also played an active role in platforms such as the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation and the Organisation of Turkic States.

In the late 1990s and early 2000s, Azerbaijan's foreign relations were centred on a security-based axis. The search for international support in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict has been a priority item on the foreign policy agenda. Diplomatic efforts within the framework of the Minsk Group have not yielded any concrete results despite the search for a solution. However, Azerbaijan has modernised its military power by increasing its national defence capacity. Strengthening its ties with the West through energy projects, Azerbaijan has taken important steps towards becoming a strategic actor. This process contributed to the strengthening of the country's position at both regional and global levels.

The Second Karabakh War in 2020 was a turning point in both Azerbaijan's domestic and foreign policy. As a result of the war, a significant part of the territorial integrity was restored, and the sense of national unity was strengthened. In the post-2020 period, reconstruction and development projects have become the priority of domestic politics. In foreign policy, new regional cooperation and transport projects have come to the fore.

Approaching 2025, Azerbaijan is making strategic plans in line with the goals of economic diversification and sustainable development. All these developments show that Azerbaijan is moving towards becoming a more effective and influential actor in the international system.

1. Independence and the First Years (1991-1994)

Azerbaijan's declaration of independence in 1991 emerged as part of the disintegration process of the Soviet Union. The reform movements (perestroika and glasnost) that started in the Soviet Union strengthened the feelings of nationalism among the Azerbaijani people. On 20 January 1990, the "Black January" events in Baku intensified the demands for independence. On 30 In August 1991, the Supreme Soviet of Azerbaijan declared the independence of the country. This decision became official with the adoption of the "Constitutional Act on the State Independence of the Republic of Azerbaijan" on 18 October 1991. In the referendum held at the end of the same year, more than 90% of the people voted in favour of independence. Azerbaijan was accepted as a member of the United Nations on 2 March 1992 (Akdoğan, 2007). Thus, Azerbaijan gained the status of an independent state recognised by the international community.

After independence, Azerbaijan faced serious political and economic crises. The economy, which was based on central planning during the Soviet era, was hit by a sudden transition. While energy and industrial production declined, unemployment and inflation rates increased rapidly. In the political sphere, an authority vacuum and institutional weaknesses led to the destabilisation of the country. In 1992, the dismissal of Ayaz Muttalibov and the subsequent changes in power increased political uncertainty. Popular Front leader Ebulfez Elchibey won the elections held in June 1992 and became the head of state. However, Elchibey's administration faced serious problems both in domestic politics and in the Karabakh War. In this process, the state authority was seriously weakened, especially in rural areas. After independence, Azerbaijan entered into hot conflicts with Armenia in the dispute over the Nagorno-Karabakh region. Starting in 1988, the Karabakh conflict evolved into an Azerbaijan-Armenia war due to the Soviet failure to find a solution. The conflicts, which intensified between 1992 and 1994, caused great military and humanitarian losses for Azerbaijan. Armenia-backed Armenian forces occupied Nagorno-Karabakh as well as seven surrounding Azerbaijani rayons. Hundreds of thousands of Azerbaijanis became refugees during this period. The Azerbaijani army could not put up an effective resistance due to inexperience and internal political conflicts (Kerimov, 2007, p. 28). In addition, the lack of discipline

and disorganisation within the army negatively affected the course of the war. The Karabakh War constituted the biggest national security threat in the first years of Azerbaijan's independence.

In domestic politics, 1993 was a turning point for Azerbaijan. In June 1993, the rebellion launched by General Suret Huseynov in Ganja weakened the central government. As a result of this incident, President Elchibey had to retreat to Nakhchivan. Elchibey's withdrawal from the political scene paved the way for Heydar Aliyev to take over power in Baku. Aliyev officially became the president with the elections held in October 1993. Heydar Aliyev was an experienced politician who had held senior positions in the Soviet system for many years. His leadership ensured relative political stability in Azerbaijan. The Aliyev administration embarked on a process of strengthening central authority and restructuring state institutions. In the economic sphere, various reform initiatives were launched to counter the collapse experienced in the first years of independence. In order to attract foreign investment, Azerbaijan has adopted a policy of opening its energy resources to international companies. In this framework, a major oil deal known as the "Contract of the Century" was signed in 1994. With this agreement, Western oil companies gained the right to invest in Azerbaijan's oil fields in the Caspian Sea. The energy sector came to the fore as the main engine of economic development. Privatisation programmes and market reforms were also initiated. However, corruption and bureaucratic obstacles slowed down the reform process. Nevertheless, there was an expectation that oil revenues would revitalise the economy in the long term. Azerbaijan's foreign policy was shaped in a multifaceted quest during this period. After independence, Azerbaijan tried to establish balanced relations with both the West and regional powers. Turkey was one of the first states to recognise Azerbaijan's independence, and strategic cooperation developed between the two countries. Relations with Russia have fluctuated due to the Karabakh issue and domestic political developments. The US and European countries have shown great interest in Azerbaijan's energy potential. In this context, Azerbaijan has made various attempts to integrate with the West (Muradov, 2004, pp. 46- 48). However, the difficulties it faced in the international The arena due to the Karabakh conflict continued. Energy diplomacy has become an important instrument in the field of foreign policy.

1994 was the year of both a ceasefire and a new beginning for Azerbaijan. On 12 May 1994, a Russian-brokered ceasefire agreement was reached between Azerbaijan, Armenia and the Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh. Although this ceasefire did not officially end the war, it made it possible to stop active hostilities. However, the occupation in and around Nagorno-

Karabakh continued, and a lasting peace could not be achieved. After the ceasefire, the Heydar Aliyev administration focused on strengthening internal stability and economic development. Energy projects, starting with the "Contract of the Century", strengthened Azerbaijan's international position. In addition, the political opposition within the country weakened, and the Aliyev administration became increasingly authoritarian (Kerimov, 2007, p. 32). By 1994, Azerbaijan had left behind the first painful period of its independence and entered a new consolidation process.

2. Seeking Stability and Oil Agreements (1994-2003)

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, Azerbaijan faced political instability and economic collapse after regaining its independence. Increasing ethnic and political conflicts within the country, combined with the effects of the Karabakh War, led to the weakening of the central authority. During this period, Azerbaijan's rich energy resources were of great importance both in terms of domestic development potential and regional geopolitical equations. However, political stability has emerged as a prerequisite for the utilisation of energy resources. In 1993, the coming to power of Heydar Aliyev marked the beginning of a new era for Azerbaijan. Aliyev took steps towards restructuring the state and gaining the trust of foreign investors. In particular, opening up the energy sector and seeking co-operation with Western energy companies has been one of the pillars of his development strategy. The most important step taken in this context was the oil deal signed in 1994 and named as the "Contract of the Century" (Babayeva, 2013).

The Contract of the Century, signed on 20 September 1994 under the leadership of Heydar Aliyev, is a historic agreement between Azerbaijan and an international consortium to exploit oil reserves in the Caspian Sea. The agreement was signed between the State Oil Company of Azerbaijan (SOCAR) and 13 major international oil companies from 11 countries, including BP. This consortium envisaged the joint exploitation of the Azeri, Cirali and Guneshli (ACG) fields. Covering a period of 30 years, the economic size of the agreement is estimated to reach up to 60 billion dollars. This agreement integrated Azerbaijan into global energy markets and increased the country's strategic importance. It also symbolised the beginning of energy-based cooperation with the West. With this project, Aliyev aimed to ensure not only economic but also political stability. Following the agreement, foreign direct investments in the country increased, and the energy sector became the locomotive of the country. The "Contract of the Century" has affected the regional balance of power not only economically

but also in terms of its geopolitical consequences. In an effort to break Russia's hegemony over energy, the West saw this agreement as the key to a strategic rapprochement with Azerbaijan. Likewise, Turkey has become an important partner in Azerbaijan's energy projects in this process. In this context, the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) oil pipeline project came to the agenda and was realised in the following years. The BTC pipeline enabled Azerbaijani oil to bypass Armenia and reach Turkey via Georgia and from there to the world markets. This reduced Azerbaijan's dependence on Russia for energy exports (Hasanov, 2003, p. 56). Therefore, the Contract of the Century has been a strategic move for the West from the perspective of energy security. At the same time, it determined Azerbaijan's foreign policy course and paved the way for its integration with the West.

Following the signing of the agreement, Heydar Aliyev strengthened his legitimacy in domestic politics. His relations with international actors have made him a strong leader both internally and externally. However, the opposition criticised some articles of the agreement as not sufficiently respecting national interests. In particular, the wide concessions granted to companies under the production sharing agreement (PSA) model were questioned by some circles. Nevertheless, a large segment of the population supported the process with the expectation that the agreement would lead to economic development. In addition, social infrastructure investments were initiated thanks to the revenues generated by the agreement. Significant progress has been achieved in the fields of education, health and transport. These developments played an important role in Aliyev's consolidation of public support. After the Contract of the Century, Azerbaijan continued to seek stability in the energy sector with new agreements. In the second half of the 1990s, similar production sharing agreements were signed for other offshore fields. In this period, SOCAR was shaped both as a national energy actor and as a structure providing integration with foreign investments. Energy revenues played an important role in ensuring macroeconomic stability. In the post-1995 period, growth rates in the Azerbaijani economy started to increase. At the same time, the Central Bank and financial supervision institutions were strengthened, and the institutional infrastructure for the management of revenues began to be developed (Babayeva, 2013, p. 62). The establishment of the Oil Fund has also been an important step in this process, aiming to utilise revenues for sustainable development. All these developments are directly linked to the rational management of energy revenues.

Heydar Aliyev's energy policy was shaped not only as an economic development but also as a national security and sovereignty strategy. Energy

projects have led to the recognition of the country's borders and sovereignty on international platforms. Especially in the context of the Karabakh conflict, Azerbaijan needed international support. The Aliyev administration used energy diplomacy as an effective tool to gain this support. Strategic cooperation with Western countries strengthened Azerbaijan's diplomatic hand against Armenia. In addition, the design of energy lines in a way to exclude Armenia was considered as an indirect sanction element. In this way, Aliyev has used energy projects not only as an economic but also as a geopolitical weapon. This contributed to Azerbaijan becoming an influential actor in regional balances.

The period 1994-2003 was a period of political stability and the adoption of an open economic model in Azerbaijan, thanks to the strong leadership of Heydar Aliyev. In this process, energy deals have been at the centre of state restructuring and modernisation efforts. While making energy resources the engine of development, Aliyev did not neglect social policies. Fight against poverty, improvement in education and reforms in public services have been the characteristic features of this period. The channelling of oil revenues into public investments has led to gradual improvements in the quality of life of the population. However, there were still significant inequalities in income distribution. Nevertheless, by 2003, Azerbaijan had become a major regional player as an energy exporter. Heydar Aliyev's energy-centred development strategy continued after he handed over the reins to his son in 2003. The 1994- 2003 period was a critical phase in Azerbaijan's process of achieving political stability and becoming an internationally respected actor. The Contract of the Century was the turning point in this process and played a fundamental role in the reconstruction of the country's economic infrastructure. The steps taken under the leadership of Heydar Aliyev placed Azerbaijan at the centre of energy diplomacy (Hasanov, 2003, p. 64). At the same time, this process enabled the establishment of multilateral relations in foreign policy. The achievements of this period also determined the strategic orientations of the country in the following years. The energy sector has been decisive not only for economic growth but also for increasing state capacity and ensuring national unity. By 2003, Azerbaijan had achieved relative economic and political stability. This foundation provided a solid basis for subsequent development and integration processes.

3. Economic Development and Infrastructure Projects (2003-2013)

In 2003, with the election of Ilham Aliyev as President of Azerbaijan, the country entered a new phase in its economic development policies. This

period can be considered as a period in which structural transformations, shaped by the increase in energy revenues, gained momentum. The Aliyev administration has positioned infrastructure investments as a priority policy area as the driving force of economic growth. Large-scale projects in various sectors, particularly transport, energy and urban development, have aimed not only to boost economic growth but also to increase Azerbaijan's attractiveness in the international investment environment. These investments were planned within the framework of the "National Development Strategy", and a development approach in line with the objectives of economic stability and social welfare was demonstrated.

The energy sector has become the main dynamic of Azerbaijan's economy in this period. In 2006, the commissioning of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) oil pipeline provided the country with a significant amount of foreign exchange inflow, and these resources played a critical role in financing development projects, especially infrastructure. Through the State Petroleum Fund, energy revenues have been channelled into public investments, and the energy transmission infrastructure has been modernised, increasing both domestic consumption and export capacity. However, the government recognised the risks of overdependence on the energy sector and developed sectoral diversification policies (Bal and Alper, 2010, p. 358). These diversification strategies were directly linked to infrastructure projects.

Transport infrastructure has become one of the key elements of Azerbaijan's regional integration strategy. During the Ilham Aliyev era, the renewal of road and railway infrastructure was prioritised and strategic investments such as the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars Railway Project were implemented. With the modernisation of approximately 9,000 kilometres of highways, inland regions have been integrated with central markets, while maritime transport has been supported by the modernisation of the Baku Port. These developments have strengthened Azerbaijan's role in the Europe-Caucasus-Asia transport corridor. At the same time, the development of transport infrastructure contributed to the revival of local economies and this process was further reinforced by urbanisation policies (Babali, 2005, p. 35).

In the period 2003-2013, Baku underwent a comprehensive modernisation process. The capital city was restructured to become a regional financial and commercial centre; in this direction, Soviet-era architectural textures were transformed, and recreational areas and new residential areas were built in coastal areas. The 2012 Eurovision Song Contest was hosted by Baku's Crystal Hall, which stands out as an international reflection of this transformation. The urban transformation process has been addressed not

only in physical but also in socio-economic dimensions; housing, water, electricity and natural gas infrastructures have been renewed to a great extent.

Energy supply security and drinking water infrastructure were also among the priority investment areas in this process. The delivery of electricity transmission lines to rural areas and the modernisation of drinking water networks have been concrete indicators of public policies aimed at improving the quality of life. The state considered energy and water infrastructure as a basic public service and realised improvements in these areas in line with sustainable social development objectives. In addition, pilot projects for renewable energy were implemented as part of environmentally friendly development approaches. The development of social infrastructure has also been an important element of this period. Hundreds of schools and health facilities were built or renovated in the education and health sectors, and infrastructure deficiencies in rural areas were largely eliminated. Digital infrastructure was integrated into the education system, and e-health projects facilitated access to basic health services. Infrastructural measures for women's and children's health have been strengthened; the quality of human capital has been increased through the modernisation of higher education institutions (Bal and Alper, 2010, p. 361).

Rural development became one of the main policies of the central government. Irrigation systems, rural roads and logistic centres were constructed in line with the improvement of agricultural infrastructure; these investments supported the sustainability of rural production and increased local employment opportunities. In addition, small-scale energy projects were encouraged in rural areas, aiming to reduce the rural-urban development gap.

The financing of infrastructure investments in this period was largely provided by international resources. In addition to financial support from institutions such as the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, public-private partnership (PPP) models were encouraged. Reforms to improve the investment climate have led to the development of legal and institutional frameworks to attract foreign capital. In this framework, Azerbaijan has turned into an investment centre on a regional scale.

The 2003-2013 period was not only a period of implementation of infrastructure projects for Azerbaijan, but also a period in which the foundations of long-term economic development were laid. The effective use of energy revenues made socio-economic development possible, and the modernised Baku became the symbol of this process. However, the necessity

of supporting non-energy sectors for sustainable development was realised at the end of this period, and this realisation determined the direction of post-2013 development policies.

4. Social Developments in Azerbaijan (2013-2020)

The fluctuations in global oil prices between 2013 and 2020 have deeply affected the Azerbaijani economy and, accordingly, the social structure. The sharp decline in oil prices, especially in 2014, led to a serious decrease in state revenues. This situation necessitated a review of public investments and social expenditures. Azerbaijan, which is highly dependent on oil revenues, has undertaken various fiscal reforms to close budget deficits. Restrictions on social benefits and salary increases have created dissatisfaction among the population. In addition, periodic increases in unemployment rates were observed. The state utilised strategic reserves and suspended some social projects in order to maintain social balances. In this process, the importance of economic diversification was emphasised more. Volatility in oil prices came to the fore as a factor directly affecting the sustainability of social policies. In order to reduce dependence on oil revenues, the agricultural sector was identified as one of the priority areas. In the post-2015 period, policies supporting agricultural production were put into effect. Agricultural subsidies were increased, and low-interest loans were offered to farmers. Investments were made in modern irrigation systems and the improvement of technical infrastructure. In addition, co-operatives were supported to encourage rural development. As a result of these policies, production has increased in some regions, and a partial increase in rural employment has been observed. However, productivity problems and inadequate logistics infrastructure have limited development. Lack of digitalisation and innovation in agriculture has been among the factors threatening the sustainability of the sector (Idris, 2008). Nevertheless, the revitalisation of agriculture has contributed to maintaining social balance.

The industrial sector has been made an important part of the economic diversification strategy. New investments were made, especially in petrochemicals and the light industry. Organised industrial zones were established with state support, and the private sector was encouraged. Policies to increase domestic production aimed at reducing import dependency. These developments created new employment opportunities in the labour market. However, the international competitiveness of industrial products remained limited. Insufficient technology transfer and R&D activities slowed down the development of the sector. Lack of a qualified labour force and education-production mismatch were also among the important problems. The social

impact of industrial policies has been limited to increases in employment and income levels.

In the 2013-2020 period, Azerbaijan's education system underwent various reforms with the aim of improving quality. Curriculum updates and teacher training programmes were identified as priority areas. The integration of digital technologies into education was supported, and infrastructure, especially in rural areas, was improved. In order to ensure compliance with international standards, Bologna process practices have been extended. The autonomy of higher education institutions was opened to discussion, and university-industry co-operation was encouraged. However, inequality of opportunity in education is still an important problem. Especially, children of low-income families have limited access to quality education. Regional differences in student achievement are indicators of systemic imbalances. Although education reforms have the potential to increase social mobility, they have achieved limited success due to a lack of implementation (Mammadov, 2008).

Significant investments were made to improve the quality of health services. New hospitals and health centres were built, and medical equipment and infrastructure were modernised. Access to basic health services has been facilitated, especially in rural areas. The state-funded health insurance system was started to be implemented in pilot regions. This system was eventually rolled out nationally. Incentives for the training and employment of medical personnel have been increased. However, the quality gap between private and public health care systems persists. Income-related differences in access to health care services reflect social inequalities. Nevertheless, developments in the health sector paved the way for improvements in public health indicators.

In the 2013-2020 period, combating unemployment has been one of the main priorities of social policy. Youth unemployment, in particular, was seen as one of the main factors preventing economic growth from spreading to the social base. State-supported employment projects and vocational training programmes were implemented. SME incentives were increased to support entrepreneurship. The importance of digital competencies in the labour market was emphasised, and appropriate trainings were encouraged. Efforts were made to increase the labour force participation rate of women. However, the rate of unregistered employment remained high. Economic imbalance between regions created structural inequalities in employment. In this process, employment policies played a limited but important role in ensuring social stability.

Although the growth model based on oil revenues contributed to income growth in a certain period, it created inequality in income distribution. The urban-rural divide deepened, and income differences increased. Especially, the people living in the regions outside Baku had limited access to social services. The state has tried to balance these inequalities through social assistance. However, the sustainability and effectiveness of the aids have been controversial. Although there has been a gradual reduction in poverty rates, regional disparities have persisted. Minimum wage increases could not fully compensate for the decline in purchasing power. Social mobility remained limited, and upward mobility of lower-income groups became difficult (Idris, 2008). This situation poses a risk for social peace and development in the long run.

Channelling agricultural and infrastructure investments to rural areas has had a positive impact on local development. Living conditions have partially improved thanks to road, water and energy projects. Migration of the rural population to urban centres has been slowed down. Moreover, rural women's participation in production has increased, and social role change has been observed. Rural development projects have strengthened social solidarity. The accessibility of education and health services has increased, and an attempt has been made to improve the distribution of social services. However, the pace of development has remained slow in some regions, and sustainability problems have emerged. The lack of employment opportunities in non-agricultural sectors has limited rural economic diversification. Nevertheless, rural development policies have contributed to social integration.

The period 2013-2020 witnessed a multi-layered transformation process in terms of social developments in Azerbaijan. The impact of oil prices on the economic and social structure has exposed vulnerabilities. It was aimed to expand the economic base by strengthening agriculture and industry. Reforms in education and health laid the foundations for long-term social development. However, problems in implementation limited the impact of these reforms. Structural problems in income distribution and employment await a solution. Differences between rural and urban areas have been at the centre of social policies. The effectiveness of social policies has become directly linked to the success of economic diversification. The steps taken in this period have laid an important groundwork for sustainable social development.

5. Second Karabakh War and New Era (2020)

The Second Karabakh War started on 27 September 2020 with the re-ignition of the long-standing Nagorno-Karabakh conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia. This war is the most extensive military conflict between the parties after the Bishkek Protocol signed in 1994. Although Nagorno-Karabakh was recognised as Azerbaijani territory under international law, it was de facto under the control of Armenian forces. Since the 1990s, Azerbaijan has tried to change this situation through political and diplomatic means. However, no concrete progress was achieved during the negotiations, and the status quo continued. By 2020, military tension in the region increased again. Azerbaijan launched a large-scale military operation to ensure its territorial integrity. The Armenian side also responded militarily and widened the clashes. Thus, the war that would last 44 days began. At the beginning of the war, the Azerbaijani army organised simultaneous operations at different points of the front. Operations were carried out with the support of ground, air and unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs). Azerbaijan effectively used the progress in military technology on the battlefield. Armenia's defence lines were overcome in a short time. Rapid progress was made, especially in Fuzuli, Jabrayil and Zengilan regions. Attacks on civilian settlements further increased the scale of the conflict. The Azerbaijani government declared that it defended its right to protect its territorial integrity in accordance with international law (Yılmaz, 2010, p. 75). In the first week of the clashes, Azerbaijan gained important strategic positions. These developments turned the course of the war in favour of Azerbaijan.

Azerbaijan's war strategy aimed to break the front line and advance into the interior of Nagorno-Karabakh. In this direction, weak defence points were identified and intensive attacks were carried out. UAVs, artillery units and special forces worked in coordination. Operational superiority enabled Azerbaijan to make progress in a short time. Logistic support lines and ammunition supply were carried out uninterruptedly. Armenia, on the other hand, had difficulty in maintaining its defence positions and had to retreat. Throughout the war, information flow was strictly controlled, and clear messages were given to the public. The disciplined behaviour of the Azerbaijani army and modern war technology played a decisive role. Military successes also gave Azerbaijan an advantage on diplomatic grounds.

Shusha is one of the most culturally and strategically important cities of Nagorno-Karabakh. Due to its geographical location, it is at a key point for the control of Karabakh. The city has a decisive role in the course of the war due to its historical identity and its high military position. The

Azerbaijani army turned towards Shusha in the later stages of the war. The operation against the city was planned in great secrecy. Despite the mountainous terrain, the Azerbaijani special forces managed to reach the city with a difficult climb. As a result of the street clashes in Shusha, the Azerbaijani army gained superiority. The liberation of the city was a great symbolic victory for the Azerbaijani people. This development significantly changed the psychological and strategic balance of the war. The liberation of Shusha by the Azerbaijani army on 8 November 2020 was the turning point of the war. This victory significantly weakened Armenia's defence power. This development, which was greeted with great enthusiasm in the Azerbaijani public opinion, strengthened the sense of national unity. At the same time, it attracted the attention of the international community. After the capture of Shusha, Armenia considered that further resistance was not possible. Azerbaijan, on the other hand, reiterated its call for a permanent solution through diplomatic means (Çeliksoy, 2021, p. 129). The city is an important part of Azerbaijani identity with its historical and cultural heritage. Therefore, the liberation of Shusha was considered not only a military but also a cultural success. After the victory, concrete steps were taken for the peace process.

On 10 November 2020, a ceasefire agreement was signed with the mediation of Azerbaijan, Armenia and Russia. The agreement aimed to end the war and establish a new status quo. According to this document, Armenia agreed to withdraw from the occupied territories. At the same time, Russian peacekeeping troops were deployed to the Karabakh region. The agreement also included the establishment of a transport corridor between Nakhchivan and Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan gained significant territorial gains, including Shusha. Armenia, on the other hand, was plunged into a domestic political crisis and intense pressure was put on the government. The declaration of the ceasefire brought the long-standing conflicts in the region to an end. This process signalled the beginning of a new geopolitical era in the South Caucasus. The ceasefire agreement was met with different reactions by the international community. While Turkey supported Azerbaijan's victory, Russia was the guarantor of the peace process. Western countries, on the other hand, generally welcomed the cessation of hostilities. The Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) developed new proposals to contribute to the peace process. Iran declared its opposition to the change of regional borders. China maintained its principle of neutrality and showed restraint. Azerbaijan, on the other hand, aimed to further strengthen its diplomatic relations in the post-war period (Kişi, 2022). In this process,

relations with Turkey were raised to the level of a strategic partnership. The viability of the peace agreement continues to depend on regional balances.

After the war, Azerbaijan started reconstruction efforts in the territories liberated from occupation. Infrastructure projects, transport networks and public services have started to be built rapidly. In particular, Shusha was declared a cultural capital and included in the special investment programme. A safe return process is planned in the regions evacuated from Armenia. Development projects have been developed in the fields of agriculture, energy and tourism. New institutions have been opened for the expansion of education and health services. Turkey and other friendly countries have provided technical and financial support in this process. International investors have also started to show interest in the region. This transformation is part of Azerbaijan's long-term integration strategy.

The Second Karabakh War was a turning point that redefined Azerbaijan's military and diplomatic capacity. The success achieved at the end of the war represented an important stage in the resolution of a long-standing conflict. The liberation of Shusha was both a symbolic and strategic victory. The ceasefire agreement laid a foundation for lasting peace. However, the success of the process depends on the will of the parties to honour the agreement. Azerbaijan has gained the upper hand by defending its legitimate rights under international law. This process has paved the way for the establishment of a new geopolitical order in the South Caucasus. The reconstruction process is critical for the stabilisation of the region. The Second Karabakh War can be read not only as a military struggle, but also as a project of national resurrection (Hasanoglu, Mammadov and Maharramov, 2020, pp. 526-527).

6. Reconstruction and Resettlement Works (2021-2023)

The 2021-2023 period has drawn attention as a period in which reconstruction and resettlement processes in the regions of Azerbaijan liberated from occupation gained momentum. This process was shaped by a multi-dimensional strategy in line with state policies. The activities carried out in the relevant period were not limited to the reconstruction of physical infrastructure; social, economic and environmental factors were also taken into consideration. Under the leadership of President Ilham Aliyev, a comprehensive development plan called the "Great Return Project" was put into effect. This plan aims to transform the region into a modern living space while preserving its historical texture. Reconstruction activities have been accelerated by allocating significant resources from the state

budget. The support of the private sector and international organisations has also been encouraged. The reconstruction process aims to ensure the safe and sustainable return of displaced people. Thus, both spatial and socio-economic stability are aimed at in the region.

Infrastructure and transport projects were the main pillars of the reconstruction process. Basic services such as electricity, water, sewerage and natural gas lines were planned as a priority. Modern engineering solutions were used to provide these services effectively. Improvement of the transport network in the Karabakh region was considered a prerequisite for economic development. With the newly constructed motorways, tunnels and bridges, intra and extra-regional transport integration was ensured. In this framework, the Agdam-Fuzuli and Shusha-Lachin roads stood out as strategically important investments. The reconstruction of railway lines was also important to ensure sustainability in transport. These projects contributed to the revival of trade and the strengthening of agriculture-industry integration. Thanks to the transport infrastructure, logistics costs were reduced and regional development gained momentum. Resettlement policies constitute the human-centred dimension of reconstruction. In order to ensure the return of displaced persons, housing projects in accordance with modern living standards were initiated. These projects, which were initially implemented in pilot regions, were later expanded. The use of environmentally friendly materials was encouraged during housing construction. Buildings were designed based on smart building systems and energy efficiency. In addition, a holistic living space was created by planning together with social facilities, education and health facilities. These houses, which were built with state support, were offered to citizens free of charge or at low cost. Traditional architectural elements and modern construction techniques were blended in the design of the houses (Mikail & Tazegül, 2012). In this way, both identity was preserved and the quality of life was improved.

Airport projects play a critical role in the integration of Karabakh into the regional and international transport network. In 2021, the construction of Fuzuli International Airport was completed and put into service in record time. Subsequently, Zengilan and Lachin airports were designed, and construction processes were initiated. These airports are strategic investments aiming to attract both investment and tourists to the region. Compliance with international standards and environmental sensitivity were prioritised in the construction of the airports. These projects are planned to serve emergency, security and logistics purposes in addition to civil aviation. The airports were integrated with connecting roads and transport

hubs, contributing to regional development. In addition, these investments have created economic dynamism by increasing local employment. The commissioning of the airports has reinforced Karabakh's status as a gateway to the outside world.

In the reconstruction process, the "smart city" concept is of great importance in terms of the integration of technological infrastructure. Zengilan district has been selected as the pilot application area of this approach. Smart city designs include sustainable energy systems, digital management infrastructure and data-driven urban planning. It is aimed at expanding the use of solar and wind energy. Smart water management and waste recycling systems support environmental sustainability. Electric vehicle infrastructure and digital traffic management systems have been established in urban transport. In addition, security, health and education services were supported by digital platforms. These applications have been developed to improve the quality of life of citizens and optimise resource use. Smart cities provide a model for the development of Karabakh. Education and health services in the resettlement areas play a key role in the reconstruction of social life. Primary and secondary education institutions have been built and equipped with modern educational technologies. In addition, vocational training centres have been established to increase the employment potential of the local population. In the health infrastructure, modern hospitals and family health centres have been provided to the region. Medical equipment and health personnel support are provided by the central government. Distance education and telemedicine systems have been integrated with digitalisation strategies. Thus, access problems in rural areas have been greatly reduced. The quality of education and health services is considered an incentive for the return of the migrating population (Mikail and Tazegül, 2012). These investments contribute to the strengthening of human capital.

In addition to the physical infrastructure, the reconstruction of the social and cultural structure is also important. Historical and cultural heritage elements in Karabakh were identified, and restoration projects were initiated. Structures such as mosques, churches, inns and bridges have been reconstructed in accordance with their originals. In this process, both local and international experts have contributed. Cultural centres, museums and libraries have been important steps towards revitalising social identity. In addition, artistic events and festivals have brought vitality to the region. Social cohesion has been supported by the construction of youth centres and sports facilities. Cultural development has been adopted as a long-term strategy for regional peace and solidarity. This approach aims to make Karabakh not only an economic but also a cultural centre of attraction.

The reconstruction process has also been supported by policies promoting economic development. Investment projects have been developed in agriculture, animal husbandry and industry. Agricultural lands have been rehabilitated, and production activities have resumed. Industrial zones and organised industrial estates were established, providing a suitable environment for private sector investments. SMEs were supported, and women and youth entrepreneurship were encouraged. In this way, local employment was increased and migration was reversed. In addition, community-based economic structures have been strengthened through co-operative models. Economic activities in the region have been shaped in line with the principles of sustainability and local development. Thus, the reconstruction process has also paved the way for a transformation that increases economic self-confidence and prosperity.

The reconstruction and resettlement activities carried out in the 2021-2023 period reflect a holistic vision aiming at the revitalisation of Karabakh. People-oriented development strategies as well as the construction of physical infrastructure are key components of this vision. Modern urbanisation principles are integrated with sustainability, technology and cultural preservation policies. The progress achieved improves the quality of life of the people of the region and contributes to the strengthening of national unity. These efforts are based on long-term plans that take into account not only the needs of the present but also those of future generations. International co-operation and innovative approaches increase the effectiveness of the development process. By the end of 2023, it is expected that the targets set will have been achieved to a great extent. In the coming period, these efforts are expected to continue with further deepening.

With this transformation process, Karabakh is becoming not only a geography but also a model of development.

7. Foreign Policy and International Relations (1991-2025)

Having gained independence in 1991, Azerbaijan has built its foreign policy on a multifaceted and balanced strategy. The country's foreign policy priorities are based on protecting its sovereignty, supporting economic development and contributing to regional peace. In the early period, domestic political instability and the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict had a limiting effect on foreign policy. However, after the ceasefire signed in 1994, Azerbaijan started to pursue a more active foreign policy. The transfer of energy resources to international markets has strengthened the economic dimension of foreign relations. Due to its geographical location,

Azerbaijan has tried to develop balanced relations with both the West and regional powers. In this framework, relations with Turkey, the European Union, Russia and Iran are of particular importance. Azerbaijan, which has increased its diplomatic capacity since the 2000s, has become more visible on international platforms. In the post-2020 period, new foreign policy parameters were shaped, especially after the Karabakh War (Öraz, 2016, p. 250).

Azerbaijan-Turkey relations have developed based on the "one nation, two states" understanding and reached the level of strategic partnership. Since 1991, Turkey has been the first country to recognise Azerbaijan and has provided support in every field. Comprehensive cooperation has been developed between the two countries in many sectors such as energy, defence, education and transport. The 2010 Strategic Partnership and Mutual Assistance Agreement strengthened the institutional basis of relations. Through energy projects such as TANAP, Turkey has played a key role in transporting Azerbaijani gas to Europe. Turkey's political and technological support during the Second Karabakh War in 2020 reinforced the security ties between the two countries. Since then, relations have deepened further in the fields of defence industry and military training. In 2021, relations were raised to the level of alliance with the Shusha Declaration (Mikail and Tazegül, 2012). Turkey remains a strategic partner in Azerbaijan's regional integration.

In terms of economic relations, Turkey has become one of Azerbaijan's largest trading partners. Mutual investments are particularly concentrated in the energy and construction sectors. Azerbaijan's SOCAR investments in Turkey have increased the scope and depth of economic relations. Likewise, Turkish companies are actively involved in major infrastructure projects in Azerbaijan. In terms of logistics links, the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway is an important infrastructure project that facilitates trade between the two countries. In the field of cultural cooperation, there are intensive interactions between education, media and civil society organisations. Hundreds of Azerbaijani students receive higher education in Turkey every year. Cultural similarities and common historical heritage reinforce the closeness between the two peoples. In this framework, relations with Turkey are not only political but also based on a multidimensional brotherhood.

Azerbaijan's relations with the European Union have been shaped by a pragmatic understanding centred on energy. The EU sees Azerbaijan as a strategic partner in energy supply security in the Caspian region. The Southern Gas Corridor and TANAP projects have made Azerbaijan an

important actor on the European energy map. The partnership agreements signed since 2006 have ensured the institutionalisation of relations. In 2022, the energy agreement signed between Azerbaijan and the EU envisages an increase in natural gas exports. In addition, cooperation with the EU is also carried out in areas such as transport, environment and education. However, occasional criticism of human rights and democratisation issues can create tension in relations. Nevertheless, energy-based interdependence prevents relations from breaking down. In its relations with the EU, Azerbaijan prioritises cooperation to support its economic development.

Azerbaijan participates in regional cooperation within the framework of the EU's Eastern Partnership Programme. This programme includes political reforms and economic integration objectives. However, Azerbaijan considers the programme to be an instrument of limited benefit as it does not offer a membership perspective. A new co-operation agreement with the EU has long been under negotiation. The intermittent progress of the political dialogue has delayed the establishment of a more institutionalised framework between the parties. Azerbaijan remains wary of political demands, which it regards as interference in its sovereignty. Nevertheless, contacts and projects at the technical level sustain co-operation. Relations with the EU continue steadily based on mutual interest in energy and infrastructure. At the diplomatic level, Azerbaijan strives to maintain a balanced relationship with the EU. Russia is Azerbaijan's northern neighbour and historically one of its most influential external actors. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the relations between the two countries have found a new foundation. Although there were some crises of confidence in relations in the 1990s, a more institutionalised cooperation was developed in the 2000s. Dialogue has increased in the fields of energy and security, especially in economic relations. Russia has been a strategic counterweight in terms of its ability to direct Azerbaijan's energy resources. After the 2020 Karabakh War, Russia assumed the role of mediator in the ceasefire process. In this context, the Russian peacekeeping force was deployed in the region as a temporary regulatory actor. Russia's presence in the region is a strategic element that needs to be carefully managed by Azerbaijan (Öraz, 2016, p. 250). The two countries are linked by common interests as well as rivalries.

Economically, there is a significant trade volume between Azerbaijan and Russia. Especially, agricultural products and industrial goods constitute the main items of mutual trade. In the field of energy, competition and co-operation are intertwined. Russian energy companies occasionally invest in Azerbaijan's energy sector. However, Azerbaijan takes care not to be dependent on Russia in energy exports. Logistically, the North-South

Transport Corridor is a project that strengthens economic ties between the two countries. In addition, customs operation provides mechanisms to facilitate border trade. Stability in economic relations may vary depending on the level of political dialogue between the two countries. In relations with Russia, Azerbaijan tries to balance the principles of economic pragmatism and strategic autonomy. Iran is Azerbaijan's southern neighbour and has historical, cultural and religious ties. Although both countries have Shia populations, differences in political systems have occasionally caused tensions. Iran watches the secular structure in Azerbaijan with a critical eye. Since the 1990s, cooperation has been developed in areas such as border security and economic cooperation. However, Iran's relations with Armenia have created a constant trust problem in Azerbaijan. In the post-2020 period, Iran's distant attitude towards Azerbaijan's victory has put relations under tension again. Nevertheless, Azerbaijan prefers to avoid confrontation with Iran. Contacts in the fields of border trade, energy and transport are increasing from time to time (Sancak, 2018). Relations with Iran require careful diplomacy and a policy of balance.

Economic relations between Iran and Azerbaijan have fluctuated from time to time. Border gates and transit passages form the basis of economic interaction between the two countries. Transport projects through Iran to Central Asia are of strategic value for Azerbaijan. Iran also seeks access to the Caucasus and Russia through Azerbaijan. However, embargoes and geopolitical developments limit this potential. Iran's South Azerbaijan policy is also an important factor affecting bilateral relations. Azerbaijan is sensitive to interference in its internal affairs. However, regional projects and multilateral platforms create grounds for cooperation. Azerbaijan pursues a diplomacy that prioritises the principle of mutual respect and sovereignty in its relations with Iran.

8. Current Situation and Future Vision (2023-2025)

The 2023-2025 period represents a period of accelerated structural transformation and diversification efforts for the Azerbaijani economy. Reducing dependence on oil and natural gas revenues has been identified as a priority goal in terms of economic stability. Growth strategies are implemented through investment incentives in sectors such as agriculture, industry and tourism. Gross domestic product (GDP) growth is supported by the performance of non-energy sectors. Inflation rates are moderate, and the central bank is taking measures to maintain price stability. Foreign exchange reserves and the foreign trade balance are sensitive to changes in global energy prices but remain under control. Economic development plans

emphasise the digital economy, green energy and logistics infrastructure. Regional cooperation and Middle Corridor projects reinforce Azerbaijan's role as a transit country. In this framework, the economic outlook is generally positive, but cautiously optimistic against global risk factors.

In 2023-2025, Azerbaijan's domestic political structure remains stable, and the effectiveness of state institutions is being strengthened. Reform processes are underway to increase the institutional capacity of the legislative, executive and judicial bodies. The principles of digitalisation, transparency and accountability are coming to the fore in public administration. It is observed that political decision-making mechanisms are centralised within the presidential system. In international relations, Azerbaijan maintains its multilateral foreign policy strategy. Strategic alliance with Turkey, pragmatic cooperation with Russia and economic rapprochement with the European Union are carried out in a balanced manner. Azerbaijan actively participates in multilateral platforms such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation and the Organisation of Turkic States. Energy diplomacy and transport projects are the main instruments that strengthen Azerbaijan's geopolitical position. Overall, the political outlook is shaped by an orderly reform process at home and multilateral engagements abroad. Institutionalisation of the gains made after the Second Karabakh War is one of the strategic priorities for the period 2023-2025. The reintegration of Karabakh is being realised not only through the construction of physical infrastructure, but also through administrative, social and cultural restructuring. The state has created new administrative structures in the region to enhance security, management and service delivery capacity. Projects such as the Zangezur Corridor and Fuzuli Airport have strengthened the region's transport infrastructure. The return of displaced persons is being carried out gradually in line with international standards. Re-establishment of education and health institutions is among the main components of social integration. Development plans carried out with the participation of local people are important for social cohesion (Taşdemir, 2024). The protection and restoration of Karabakh's cultural heritage is also a part of the integration process. In this context, the Karabakh region has a central position in the integrated development strategies of the state.

Infrastructure projects carried out in Karabakh in the 2023-2025 period are integrated with the sustainable urbanisation approach. Electricity, water, natural gas and communication infrastructures are being rebuilt with modern technology. "Smart village" and "smart city" projects include the implementation of integrated digital systems in the region. Exemplary sustainable settlement models are being developed in cities such as Fuzuli, Shusha and Aghdam. Within the scope of transport connections, motorway,

railway and airport investments have gained momentum. These projects both improve the quality of life of the people of the region and stimulate economic activities. The integration of renewable energy sources contributes to reducing environmental impacts. Improvement of agricultural infrastructure is also implemented as part of rural development targets. Public-private sector co-operation models play an important role in this process.

Azerbaijan is carrying out comprehensive national planning for the period 2023-2025 in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Economic growth, environmental sustainability and social inclusion have been adopted as fundamental development principles. Reducing inequalities in income distribution and increasing employment are among the social policy priorities. Equal opportunities in education and access to quality health services are aimed at strengthening human capital. Effective participation of women and youth in development processes is supported. Energy efficiency, waste management and reduction of carbon emissions are the focal points of environmental policies. Optimisation of resource use in agriculture and industry contributes to environmentally compatible production targets. Digital transformation constitutes the technology dimension of the sustainable development vision. Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in line with international development indicators have also been established.

In the 2023-2025 period, Azerbaijan is oriented towards digitalisation and quality-oriented reforms in the education system. Teacher training programmes, STEM-based curricula and digital learning platforms are being rolled out. Strengthening vocational and technical education institutions is the basis of the employment-oriented human resources strategy. Internship, entrepreneurship and mentoring programmes are supported to integrate young people into the labour market. Increasing the labour force participation rate of women is a priority in the context of social gender equality. Internationalisation and quality assurance systems are being developed in higher education. Cooperation models between the business world and universities are encouraged. Digital skills and green jobs have been identified among the priority areas of new economy dynamics. This transformation process serves to reinforce people-oriented development through education and employment. Environmental protection has gained a strategic dimension in Azerbaijan's development agenda. Between 2023 and 2025, renewable energy investments are increasing, especially in the fields of solar and wind energy. Karabakh and East Zangezur regions are planned as green energy basins. Reduction of carbon emissions in energy production is carried out within the framework of policies in line with the objectives of the Paris Climate Agreement. Reforestation projects are supported by

biodiversity conservation and land reclamation works. Management of water resources and renewal of agricultural irrigation infrastructures are also priority areas. It is aimed to expand waste management and recycling systems (Sancak, 2018). Inspections for compliance with environmental standards in industrial facilities are being tightened. These policies contribute to the integration of economic and ecological dimensions of green transformation.

Azerbaijan is deepening its international development cooperation in the 2023-2025 period. Joint projects within the framework of the Organisation of Turkic States strengthen economic and cultural integration. The Central Corridor and Zangezur Corridor projects increase regional connectivity and diversify trade routes. Energy and transport projects with the European Union have reached the level of a strategic partnership. Balanced and pragmatic relations are maintained with neighbouring countries such as Russia, Iran and China. Azerbaijan prioritises development-oriented cooperation with organisations such as the UN and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation. Technical and financial support from international financial institutions is provided for projects in the Karabakh region. Participation in projects in line with global development goals has a positive impact on the country's foreign policy image. In this context, international cooperation strengthens both the financial and diplomatic dimensions of sustainable development.

Azerbaijan's post-2025 vision is shaped by the principles of economic diversification, social inclusion and environmental sustainability. The reintegration of Karabakh is recognised as a strategic component of this vision. Leadership in the fields of digitalisation, green energy and knowledge economy is targeted. Strengthening human capital is one of the main pillars of long-term development. Strong infrastructure, effective public administration and international cooperation mechanisms support this vision. The establishment of an environment of regional peace and cooperation constitutes the security dimension of the development vision. Ensuring social justice, increasing citizen satisfaction and democratic participation are also among the targets. The 2023-2025 period is considered a critical threshold for the construction of this vision. As a result, Azerbaijan aims to move into the future with a holistic, inclusive and sustainable development perspective.

9. Conclusion

Azerbaijan gained its independence with the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 and entered a new state-building process. This process has been a period of great transformations in both political and economic terms.

The political instability experienced after independence, combined with the Nagorno-Karabakh War, seriously affected the internal balances of the country. However, with the coming to power of Heydar Aliyev in 1993, the state apparatus was restructured and political authority was gathered around a centralised power. The steps taken in this period increased Azerbaijan's institutional capacity and enhanced its effectiveness in foreign relations. The crises of the first years can be considered as a learning process in the following decades. The consolidation of the nation-state identity has been of strategic importance in terms of ensuring national unity. The internal developments of the early years prepared the ground for the reforms in the following years. In this respect, the 1991-2000 period constituted the most critical stage of the transition process.

Since the beginning of the 2000s, Azerbaijan has focused on infrastructure investments by emphasising economic development policies. Especially after 2003, when Ilham Aliyev became president, the effective management of energy resources became a determining factor in foreign policy. Projects such as the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan and Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum pipelines have strengthened the country's international position. These infrastructural moves have encouraged economic growth, and public investments have led to a decline in unemployment rates. The use of oil revenues to balance the macroeconomic balance has had positive results in terms of financial stability. Infrastructure modernisation has improved the quality of life in many urban areas, especially in the capital, Baku. However, the sustainability of this model based on energy dependence has become questionable in the long term. Economic developments have also contributed to strengthening political legitimacy. In this process, Azerbaijan has become an indispensable actor in the energy equation in Central Asia and the Caucasus.

Between 2013 and 2020, Azerbaijan continued its economic and social reforms despite the fluctuations in energy prices. In this period, it was aimed to strengthen the non-oil economy by diversifying the agricultural and industrial sectors. At the same time, improvements were made in the fields of health and education, and human capital investments were prioritised. Target-oriented support mechanisms were adopted in social policies, and digital transformation efforts gained momentum. The state aimed to reduce local inequalities, especially through rural development projects. International co-operation has diversified, and policies in line with China's Belt and Road Initiative have been pursued. While relations with the European Union continued mostly at the economic level, political coordination with Russia was maintained. Border security and trade with Iran, based on mutual dependency, gained priority. The reforms carried out

during this period strengthened Azerbaijan's regional position. At the same time, it positively affected the perception of prosperity in society.

The Second Karabakh War, which broke out in 2020, led to radical changes in Azerbaijan's foreign policy and security strategies. The war ended with Azerbaijan's military victory in a short period of 44 days, and the liberation of Shusha became a symbolic milestone. This victory strengthened both national pride and internal political unity. The ceasefire agreement signed after the war also showed Azerbaijan's rise as a regional power to the international community.

Turkey's political and military support further deepened the strategic partnership between the two countries. Russia's role as a mediator has necessitated a new balance in relations with Moscow. This new era led to a reshaping of the balance of power in the South Caucasus. For Azerbaijan, the post-war period brought about a process of reconstruction and development. The integration of Karabakh has become one of the country's long-term domestic political agendas.

After 2021, Azerbaijan focused on infrastructure construction, population return and economic integration in and around Karabakh. To this end, investments in transport, energy and communications have been rapidly implemented. The development of Karabakh was treated as a national project, and public resources were mobilised accordingly. Furthermore, within the framework of regional co-operation, strategic transport lines have been restructured through projects such as the Zangezur Corridor. These developments increase the geopolitical importance of the country and strengthen the connection between Central Asia and Europe. In domestic politics, while the centralist administration style continues, digitalisation and transparency steps have been taken in public administration. In the international arena, peace-building diplomacy is being carried out, and the search for normalisation with Armenia is noteworthy. In 2025, Azerbaijan faces new opportunities as a state that has successfully managed the post-war period. In this context, the harmonisation of domestic and foreign policies continues to be of strategic importance.

In foreign policy, Azerbaijan pursued a multidimensional balance policy from 1991 to 2025. Deep cooperation has been established with Turkey based on the "one nation, two states" understanding, and a strategic partnership has been developed, especially in the fields of defence industry and energy. Relations with the European Union were mostly shaped in the context of energy security and economic partnership; functional cooperation was preferred over membership. In relations with Russia, a pragmatic line has

been adopted within the framework of historical and geopolitical imperatives. Relations with Iran have been maintained through both border security and energy infrastructures. Relations with China have been shaped as a result of the principle of multilateralism and have gained importance within the scope of the Central Corridor. Azerbaijan has adopted an approach based on the principles of international law and sovereignty in its foreign policy. The resolution of the Karabakh conflict has strengthened the legitimacy of this policy. Thus, the country has largely achieved its post-independence foreign policy goals.

In domestic policy, post-1991 Azerbaijan has prioritised stability and strengthening state capacity. Accordingly, authoritarian tendencies became more pronounced and central government power was consolidated. The limited influence of the political opposition and media control has led to criticism in terms of democratic standards. Nevertheless, the administration utilised resources efficiently to achieve development goals and increase social welfare. Institutional reforms in the 2000s were effective in improving administrative efficiency. Progress on judicial independence and human rights remained limited. Digitalisation and e-government, in particular, have had a positive impact on access to public services. Investments in education and health have supported long-term social development. Domestic politics gained legitimacy through economic achievements and the Karabakh victory.

Overall, Azerbaijan underwent significant structural transformations in the period 1991-2025. State reconstruction, economic development, becoming an effective actor in foreign policy and ensuring national unity are the main axes of this transformation. The crises of the early periods evolved into institutional learning and strategic capacity building. In line with the goal of economic diversification, the importance of non-energy sectors increased and industrial and agricultural policies were reshaped. International co-operation became multilateral, and geopolitical balances were taken into account. The reintegration of Karabakh has transformed the internal dynamics of the country in both historical and political terms. The military and diplomatic successes achieved in this process strengthened the national identity. The balance between coming to terms with the past and looking towards the future has shaped Azerbaijan's strategic vision. As a result, by 2025, Azerbaijan will have managed to strike a balance between stability and development as a regional power.

Finally, it should be noted that Azerbaijan's future success depends on sustaining its current achievements. Political reforms in the direction of democratisation and the rule of law are important for long-term stability.

Economically, digital transformation, green development and global trade integration offer new opportunities. Continuation of a balanced and multilateral approach in foreign policy will strengthen regional peace and cooperation. In the post-Karabakh period, a culture of social reconciliation and coexistence should be developed; social and economic integration of all groups in the region should be ensured. Investments in education and innovation will unlock the potential of the young population. Transparency and participation in public administration will improve the quality of governance. In this context, the period 1991- 2025 is not only a transition but also a process of institutionalisation and identity building for Azerbaijan. In the continuation of this process, it is possible for the country to reach a more effective and respected position in the global system.

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Chapter 13

The Impact of the Treaty of Kütahya on the Administration of Suakin Island 🔓

Tariq Muhammad Nour Ali[1]

Abstract

Suakin Island, located on the western coast of the Red Sea, was under Ottoman rule from the 16th century and served as the administrative center of the Eyalet of Habesh. It played a crucial role in asserting Ottoman authority over the Red Sea and surrounding regions, including Sudan and East Africa. In the early 19th century, Mohamed Ali Pasha of Egypt pursued expansionist aims, including the re-annexation of territories in Sudan historically under Ottoman sovereignty since Sultan Selim I's conquest of Egypt in 1517. His 1821 campaign resulted in the annexation of Funj, Nubia, Sennar, Kordofan, and Fazughli—marked by heavy violence. Later, Mohamed Ali rebelled against the Ottoman Empire, leading military campaigns into Anatolia. In response, Sultan Mahmud II issued a Firman in 1833, granting him hereditary control over Egypt and the recently annexed Sudanese provinces. The Treaty of Kütahya also impacted Suakin, which had remained under direct Ottoman control. Mohamed Ali requested its transfer in exchange for annual compensation. The Ottoman state approved, limiting his control to his lifetime. This study examines how the Treaty of Kütahya transformed Suakin's administration and opened the region to increased foreign involvement, using archival sources and historical analysis to explore this pivotal moment.

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1   Dr. Lecturer, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Bilecik Şeyh Edebali University, Turkey; Associate Professor Dr. University of Hatoum, Faculty of Arts, Sudan
E-mail: taignour95@gmail.com/ tarig.ali@bilecik.edu.tr

Introduction

The port city of Suakin is located on the eastern shores of the Red Sea, approximately 720 miles[2] from the port of Suez, 200 miles from Jeddah, and 285 miles from Massawa. Geography books are filled with information about Suakin's beautiful[3] and unique location. This feature stems from the fact that Suakin Island is situated at the end of a narrow inlet. The inlet is 12 miles long and 2 miles wide[4].

Suakin Island came under Ottoman rule beginning in 1517. In 1554, it emerged as a sanjak[5] and later became the administrative center of a beylerbeyi (provincial governor) within the Ottoman Empire. From that point on, it became part of the Ottoman provincial system and was recognized as a province under direct control of the central government[6].

By the late 18th century, significant steps were taken to reorganize the administrative structure in the southern Ottoman provinces of Egypt, Hejaz, and Habesh. As part of these provincial reforms, the Eyalet of Habesh was subordinated to Jeddah for strategic and administrative reasons. This change was a notable development in terms of controlling Red Sea trade routes and strengthening Ottoman authority in the region[7].

At the beginning of the 19th century, developments in the southern provinces of the Ottoman Empire led to profound changes in both the administrative structures and political balances. The French invasion of Egypt in 1798 turned the region into a zone of international competition. With British military and diplomatic intervention, French forces were expelled from Egypt. As France withdrew, British influence in the region increased, which in turn weakened the central authority of the Ottoman state. In this complex environment, Mehmet Ali Pasha of Kavala exploited the shifting local power dynamics and, under ambiguous circumstances, seized administrative control of Egypt. His growing influence further complicated Egypt's status in terms of both Ottoman governance and regional power.

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2   Shihab al-Din Ahmad ibn Yahya ibn Fadlallah al-ʻUmari, *Masālik al-Absār fī Mamālik al-Amṣār*, vol. 2, Süleymaniye Library, Manuscripts Donations Collection, MS no. 2227, 318.

3   Şemseddin Sâmi, Kamûsü'l-aʻlâm, vol. 4 (Istanbul: 1311), 2669.

4   John Lewis Burckhardt, Travels in Nubia, 2nd ed. (London: John Murray, 1822), 389.

5   Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), KK, no. 211, 108.

6   Tarig Mohamed Nour Ali, Osmanlı Sudan'ı: Sevakin'de Türk İngiliz Rekabeti (Istanbul, 2020), 26.

7   BOA, HH, no. 13312.

These developments deeply affected not only Egypt, but also other southern provinces like Hejaz and Habesh, both administratively and politically[8].

Following these events, the Egyptian administration began to assert greater influence over the Ottoman Empire's southern provinces, emerging as a counterforce to the central government. After Mehmet Ali Pasha was appointed governor of Egypt, a Wahhabi rebellion broke out in the Hejaz. The Ottoman government tasked the Egyptian governor with suppressing the uprising. Mehmet Ali Pasha sent his son Tosun Pasha to the Hejaz, where he successfully quelled the rebellion. In return, the Ottoman government rewarded Tosun Pasha by granting him control over the provinces of Hejaz and Habesh, along with the title of Shaykh al-Haram (Chief of the Holy Places) [9]. After Tosun Pasha's death, who had governed the Sanjak of Jeddah, the Eyalet of Habesh, and the office of Shaykh al-Haram, Mehmet Ali Pasha requested that these posts be assigned to his other son, Ibrahim Pasha[10].

In pursuit of his ambitions in Sudan, Mehmet Ali Pasha launched military campaigns into the south and annexed the territories of the Funj state, including Nubia, Sennar, Kordofan, and Fazughli. The 1821 campaigns, in particular, involved heavy bloodshed and left a controversial legacy during his governorship[11].

Through these developments, Mehmet Ali Pasha not only gained control over the Hejaz but also began to extend his authority over the Habesh Eyalet, which had been part of the Jeddah province. Suakin came into focus especially after Mehmet Ali Pasha's rebellion against the Ottoman state.

The Rebellion of Kavalalı Mehmed Ali Pasha and the Kütahya Negotiations

The military expansion initiated from Egypt eventually led to the inclusion of most of Sudan under the rule of Kavalalı Mehmed Ali Pasha by 1821, following the annexation of the Hejaz and Habesh regions. Meanwhile, in the Morea Peninsula under Ottoman rule, the Greek Revolt broke out in 1821. As the central authority proved inadequate in suppressing the uprising, the Ottoman Sultan requested military support from Mehmed Ali Pasha, the

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8   Ali, *Osmanlı Sudan'ı*, 49.

9   Tahrirat (official correspondence) sent by Mehmet Ali Pasha, Governor of Egypt, to the Sultan, dated 5 Rajab 1228 (5 Recep 1228), BOA, HH, no. 19635.

10   Mehmet Ali Pasha, *şukka* (official report) sent from the Governor of Egypt to the Ottoman center, BOA, HH, no. 23763.

11   Ali, *Osmanlı Sudan'ı*, 328; BOA, *Mühimme-i Mısır*, no. 15, 12/8.

governor of Egypt. Responding positively, Mehmed Ali sent a significant force under the command of his son, Ibrahim Pasha, to the Morea. After the revolt was suppressed, the Ottoman state rewarded Mehmed Ali Pasha by appointing his son as governor of the Hejaz, Habesh, and Morea provinces. These developments significantly strengthened the position of the Kavalalı dynasty within the Ottoman bureaucracy[12].

Mehmed Ali Pasha, having gained control over these provinces and having formed a powerful army in Egypt, became a major regional power and began making demands of the Ottoman government. Chief among these demands were the territories of Palestine and Syria. When the Ottoman state rejected these requests, Mehmed Ali rebelled against the Empire to which he was officially subordinate[13].

Initially, the Egyptian issue was considered by the Sublime Porte as a conflict between Mehmed Ali Pasha and Abdullah Pasha, the governor of Acre. The Porte did not make serious efforts to resolve the matter, using the dispute as an opportunity to diminish the growing political and military influence of provincial governors who often acted without consultation. As long as the conflict remained confined to Syria, European powers with regional interests remained unconcerned. However, once Egyptian forces began advancing into Anatolia following their occupation of Syria, the matter gained a new dimension[14]. What had been regarded as a domestic Ottoman issue now escalated into an international crisis, particularly due to the involvement of Britain, France, and Russia.

Despite these developments, the Sublime Porte did not formally request Russian assistance but continued efforts to gain support from Britain and France. During this period, Ibrahim Pasha advanced from Konya to Kütahya with his forces[15].

Negotiations held in Kütahya in 1833 resulted in a temporary peace between the Sublime Porte and Mehmed Ali Pasha. As a result of the talks,

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12   For detailed information on this subject, see: Şinasi Altundağ, *The Rebellion of Mehmet Ali Pasha of Kavala: The Egyptian Question (1831–1841), Part I*, Turkish Historical Society, Ankara, 1988.

13   Muhammed H. Kutluoğlu, "The Egyptian Question (1831–1841): The Expansionist Policy of Mehmed Ali Paşa in Syria and Asia Minor and the Reaction of the Sublime Porte." In *The Ottoman Empire and the World Around It*, edited by Halil İnalcık and others, İstanbul: Eren Yayıncılık, 1998, s.127.

14   Yıtzhak Hofman, "Mısır Yönetimi Altında Suriye ve Filistin'in İdaresi (1831-1840)," no. 12 (September 1, 2001): 183–204, p. 185 http://dergi.fsm.edu.tr/index.php/iadeti/article/download/351/372.

15   British Archives (BA), Foreign Office (FO) 78/221, January 26, 1833.

Adana was granted to Ibrahim Pasha as a tax farm (muhassıllık). Although this brought a temporary sense of peace, it was essentially a suspension of mutual distrust and tension[16].

Mehmed Ali Pasha was pardoned by the Sultan, and the territories under his administration before the crisis were returned to him on the condition of annual renewal. However, Mehmed Ali was dissatisfied with the fact that his governorship was subject to annual reappointment, theoretically revocable by the Sultan at any time. More importantly, the Sublime Porte did not provide him with any formal document securing his control over these regions[17].

Although many historians have referred to the Kütahya process as a "treaty" due to the verbal agreements reached during the negotiations, there was in fact no written treaty or formal guarantee issued by Sultan Mahmud II to Mehmed Ali Pasha and his son. The so-called Kütahya Agreement was entirely verbal, with any mutual understandings later confirmed only by imperial decrees. The dates referred to as the date of the "agreement" in various sources are more accurately the dates of negotiations between Ibrahim Pasha and Mustafa Reşid Bey. No treaty was signed or ratified by Sultan Mahmud II. If such a treaty had existed, Adana would have been formally assigned to Ibrahim Pasha during the annual appointment announcements made just a week later. Some sources incorrectly cite the date Adana was granted to Ibrahim as the treaty date; others give May 14.

In conclusion, what can best be described as a *compromise* temporarily established peace and order between the Sublime Porte and Mehmed Ali Pasha. More importantly, it marked the beginning of the process through which Egypt was effectively recognized as a hereditary governorship under Mehmed Ali, laying the foundation for securing his political future.

The Impact of the Kütahya Negotiations on the Administration of Suakin

The Ottoman Empire managed to suppress the rebellion of Mehmed Ali Pasha of Kavala with great difficulty, and by 1840, only Egypt and the interior parts of Sudan remained under his control[18]. According to the Treaty of London (1840), which followed the rebellion, Mehmed Ali Pasha's

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16   Altundağ, *The Rebellion of Mehmet Ali Pasha of Kavala: The Egyptian Question (1831–1841), Part I.*

17   Ali, *Osmanlı Sudan'ı*, P. 55.

18   Ibd, P. 56

governors were expelled from the Hejaz[19] and Syria. Thus, Massawa and Suakin, which were affiliated with the Jeddah Province, were also taken from him. However, in 1842, the Egyptian governor of Sudan, Ahmad Pasha, annexed the Taka region in the east into Sudan.

Having lost influence in the north and east and much of his territory, Mehmed Ali Pasha turned his eyes toward the interior of Africa and aimed to conquer those regions. Accordingly, he identified Suakin and Massawa—strategic points in the region—as key targets.

Mehmed Ali Pasha's Attempts to Annex Suakin into His Sudan Administration

As is known, during his rebellion against the Ottomans, Mehmed Ali Pasha's army had advanced deep into Anatolia. In this dire situation, the Ottoman Empire sought help from Russia. Britain, not wanting to leave Russia alone, intervened, and Mehmed Ali Pasha was forced to retreat.

Following this process, Mehmed Ali Pasha altered his policies and decided to advance southward. Naturally, he aimed to seize the vital ports of Suakin and Massawa, located in eastern Sudan and attached to the Jeddah Province, and incorporate them into his administration.

It is known that Suakin and Massawa were granted as kaymakamates (districts) to Ibrahim Pasha, Mehmed Ali Pasha's son, for his success in suppressing the Wahhabi uprising[20]. However, after Mehmed Ali's failure in the rebellion, Jeddah and its dependencies, including Suakin, were returned directly to Ottoman administration. From that point, the administration of the area was delegated to others[21], and permission had to be obtained from the Jeddah governorship for using the ports.

With the Hejaz and Abyssinia connected to the Jeddah Province, Mehmed Ali Pasha annexed Sudan's interior and the Taka region in the east to Egypt. He also sought to incorporate these important ports into Egyptian administration through diplomatic means.

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19   Willaim Ochsenwald, "Ottoman Arabia and the Holy Hijaz, 1516-1918," *Journal of Global Initiatives: Policy, Pedagogy, Perspective* 10, no. 1 (January 15, 2016): 3, p. 29, https://digitalcommons.kennesaw.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1184&context=jgi.

20   "Currently, our son İbrahim Pasha is still the governor of Jeddah and Habesh ...," at the beginning of Rabīʿ al-Ākhir, year 1238 [December 1822 – January 1823], Presidential Ottoman Archives (BOA), Hatt-ı Hümayun (HH), no. 19660.

21   Due to his opinion that he would not consent according to proper procedure to the assignment of the Hicaz regions to someone else, the province was subsequently assigned to another ...", Presidential Ottoman Archives (BOA), *Hatt-ı Hümayun* (HH), no. 48124

The governor he appointed to Khartoum connected the land between the Nile and the Red Sea to Khartoum, making Suakin a neighboring territory. Mehmed Ali Pasha also sought to collect taxes from the Hadendoa tribes under the jurisdiction of Suakin. He claimed that Suakin was an island and that the mainland surrounding it belonged to Sudan. To persuade the people of eastern Sudan, efforts were made, including a letter to local leaders:

"It is to be written to the esteemed authorities of Sawakin that, as you are aware, since the time of your ancestors, all the lands stretching toward the sunset (i.e., westward) have been recognized as being under the rule of Sudan, and it is evident that these lands were attached to Jeddah. It is also known among your subjects that this situation is so. Therefore, as the town of Sawakin along with its inhabitants is subject to Sudan, and likewise the eastern region is also under Sudanese authority, although the revenues pertaining to the imperial treasury (canib-i mîrî) have been paid with difficulty, you, the people and merchants of Sawakin, while being subject to Sudan, have not rendered any service or payment to the imperial authority. Hence, the reason for your presence in Khartoum is, first, to allocate a portion (of revenue or tax) to the imperial authority in accordance with the law; second, to appoint a representative in the place called Berber on behalf of all the people of Sawakin. This representative is to be responsible for all affairs and matters, and to properly settle the needs and interests of those who pass through Sawakin. Therefore, it is appropriate that our servant be heard and respected in this matter, and it would be beneficial for your rights. You must immediately depart for Berber and meet with the appointed official there, and whatever duties are to be delivered by the aforementioned official…"[22]

In a letter sent by the Sudanese governor to the notables of Suakin, it was stated that Suakin and the areas in eastern Sudan were part of Sudan's administration. The governor informed the public that taxes were being collected in eastern Sudan and that Suakin's residents, involved in commerce, had no valid reason to be exempt from taxes[23]. In addition to financial demands, the Sudanese governor requested that a representative be nominated to work with the governor's office in determining tax amounts. However, this representative was not to be assigned to the newly annexed Taka province, but rather to the Berber administration. The people of Suakin were asked to appoint a deputy in Berber to oversee financial matters

22 Letter from Ahmad Pasha, Ruler of Sudan, to the aghas of Suakin, dated 15 Shawwal 1258 [November 24, 1842], Presidential Ottoman Archives (BOA), *İrade Mesail-i Mühimme*, no. 2432, fol. 3.

23 Presidential Ottoman Archives (BOA), *İrade Mesā'il-i Mühimme*, no. 2434, fol. 5

and state affairs. If they accepted, they would coordinate with Berber's administrators and deliver collected taxes to the state treasury there. If they refused, problems would arise, as the governor himself would come to eastern Sudan to ensure the situation was resolved[24].

Mehmed Ali Pasha hoped to regain influence in this region after losing his hold on the Hejaz. However, despite his desire to annex Suakin to his Sudanese territory, he needed to do so covertly, as the Ottoman Empire was unlikely to relinquish lands regained after the rebellion. As part of this secret strategy, Suakin was informally annexed to the newly acquired Taka region.

In truth, Sudanese Governor Ahmad Pasha lacked legal grounds for these claims. He was aware that Suakin and Massawa were not included in the imperial edict granting Mehmed Ali Pasha the governance of Egypt.

The notables of Suakin rejected the Sudanese governor's demands and reported their grievances in a letter to their own governor. They also sent the Sudanese governor's letter to Jeddah. They asserted that they had always been under Jeddah's jurisdiction and that the Sudanese governor's claim of appointing officials in Suakin between 1831 and 1849 was false[25].

During the rebellion, Mehmed Ali Pasha had tried to link Suakin to Khartoum, but the people of Suakin rejected this move. The Jeddah Governor supported Suakin's resistance and confirmed Abdullah Agha in his post, blocking the annexation attempt.

From this, it can be concluded that the Sudanese administration under Egyptian control governed eastern Sudan except Suakin. The kaymakam of Suakin, Yakub Agha (1842), only oversaw the island and port of Suakin, collecting taxes from trade, as there was no agriculture or animal husbandry.

On 25 Jumada al-Awwal 1258 AH (July 4, 1842), the Governor of Hejaz, Osman Pasha, sent a letter to Istanbul conveying the complaints of the people of Sawakin. Along with his own letter, Osman Pasha also forwarded the petition of the Sawakin inhabitants to the central government. In his letter, Osman Pasha stated that the island of Sawakin was administratively attached to Jeddah and had been governed properly since the past, but recently the Sudanese authorities had begun to interfere. He expressed that he awaited instructions from Istanbul on how to respond to this intervention[26]. In the letter, he wrote:

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24   Presidential Ottoman Archives (BOA), *İrade Mesāʾil-i Mühimme*, no. 2434, fol. 5

25   Ali, *Osmanlı Sudan'ı*, P. 59.

26   Letter from Osman Pasha, Governor of Jeddah, to the Grand Vizierate, dated 25 Jumādā al-Ākhirah 1256.

"... The aforementioned island has long been under the authority of the said province and has been administered from this side. Therefore, such interference from the said party is unwarranted. The aforementioned inhabitants have also settled there permanently, as stated in the attached petition and letter sent to the Sublime Porte. I respectfully request that a prompt imperial decree (irade-i seniyye) be issued to clarify how we should proceed in this matter, and that due consideration be given to resolving the situation properly."[27] Osman Pasha essentially indicated that although he himself had the authority to intervene directly in Sudan, he believed Egypt had other underlying motives in the region, and he informed the central government of this. Osman Pasha also implied that he could intervene directly but suspected that Egypt had broader ambitions in the area.

The Jeddah Governor's letter was presented to the Supreme Council (Meclis-i Vâlâ) in Istanbul. The issue was discussed, and the council sided with the people of Suakin. The General Assembly agreed, and the case was presented to the Sultan. Sultan Abdülmecid issued a decree confirming that Suakin was to remain under the jurisdiction of the Jeddah Province and ordered the Sudanese governor to cease interference. He also instructed the governor of Jeddah to ensure effective governance and improve the welfare of the people of Suakin.

Sultan Abdülmecid commanded:

"... that the land of Suakin shall be administered entirely under Jeddah, as in the past."[28]

Thus, through the Sultan's intervention, Suakin remained tied to the Jeddah Province. Although Mehmed Ali Pasha sought to extend his influence over neighboring lands, he had to accept the Sultan's decree to preserve relations with the Ottoman Empire.

SECURITY AND ECONOMIC REASONS BEHIND MEHMED ALI PASHA'S ADMINISTRATION OVER SEWAKIN

There was an ongoing power struggle between the Ottoman Governor of Jeddah and the Egyptian administrators in Khartoum. For instance, in 1843 (1259 AH), the Governor of Jeddah, acting on an imperial decree, sent a letter to the Governor of Sudan, warning him not to interfere in Sewakin. In response, the Egyptian Viceroy Mehmed Ali Pasha officially

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27   Presidential Ottoman Archives (BOA), İrade Mesāʾil-i Mühimme, no. 2432, fol. 2

28   Presidential Ottoman Archives (BOA), İrade Mesāʾil-i Mühimme, no. 2434, fol. 5

stated that although the Hadendowa tribe, residing in and near Sewakin, was nominally under Ottoman authority, it had never been effectively brought under administrative control[29].

According to Mehmed Ali Pasha, records showed that the Hadendowa tribe had not remained loyal to any province. For the past 34 years, they had not paid taxes to either Sudan—under his administration—or to the Eyalet of Jeddah. As a result, the newly established **Taka Directorate**, located in eastern Sudan under the Egyptian Eyalet, sought to bring the Hadendowa tribe under its authority.

In his argument, Mehmed Ali Pasha claimed that this tribe had never been truly subject to Jeddah. When they saw Egyptian military forces in the region, they falsely declared themselves part of the Jeddah Eyalet to avoid being affiliated with the Taka Directorate. Mehmed Ali argued that governing this tribe through the Jeddah Eyalet was impractical and that their uncertain status would cause instability. He maintained that although their administration would not provide Egypt with significant direct benefits, it would bring stability to these Ottoman-controlled areas and contribute to increasing revenue[30].

Furthermore, Mehmed Ali Pasha contended that administering these regions from Jeddah would be more expensive for the Ottoman Empire. He also pointed out that the local administrators in Sewakin and Massawa were drawn from merchant families and were largely incompetent. He promised that if these regions were brought under his control, they would be governed more effectively and that the taxes paid to the Ottoman Empire from these areas would double[31].

According to him, the combined annual revenue of the Sewakin and Massawa ports amounted to only 18,000 to 22,000 French francs. However, he argued that if these ports were managed by officials based in Sudan, revenue would increase, and administration would be easier for the Jeddah Eyalet[32].

Mehmed Ali Pasha emphasized the strategic importance of these ports for exporting livestock raised in the Taka region -part of eastern Sudan-to

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29   Letter from Mehmed Ali Pasha of Kavala, Governor of Egypt, to the Grand Vizierate, dated 11 Shawwal 1259 [October 27, 1843], Presidential Ottoman Archives (BOA), İrade Mesāʾil-i Mühimme, no. 2435, fol. 1

30   Presidential Ottoman Archives (BOA), İrade Mesāʾil-i Mühimme, no. 2435, fol. 1

31   Presidential Ottoman Archives (BOA), İrade Mesāʾil-i Mühimme, no. 2435, fol. 1

32   Presidential Ottoman Archives (BOA), İrade Mesāʾil-i Mühimme, no. 2435, fol. 1

Egypt and other Ottoman territories. Transporting these animals by land was both time-consuming and posed health risks. To also control the hostile tribes in the region, he advocated for transferring these ports under Sudanese authority[33].

In response to Mehmed Ali Pasha's final request, the Ottoman Government approved the annexation of Sewakin and Massawa ports to Egypt and accepted that the salaries of the appointed officials would be paid by him.

Mehmed Ali Pasha achieved his goal of incorporating the ports of Sewakin and Massawa into his domain in 1846 (1262 AH), after making the request in 1843 (1258 AH). Although he initially claimed, "...these ports are not for trade or profit...,"[34] it soon became clear that his intentions were in fact self-serving.

During this period, no significant administrative improvements were observed in Sewakin, which had come under Egyptian control. In fact, there was a regression. Once Sewakin was placed under Egyptian rule, the Ottoman officials and soldiers from the Jeddah Eyalet withdrew and were replaced by Egyptian personnel[35]. However, these new officials were not connected to Cairo -the center of the Egyptian Eyalet- but were subordinated to the newly created **Taka Directorate** in Sudan.

According to the imperial decree, a *kaymakam* (district governor) of major rank was appointed to Sewakin. It is likely that the center of the Taka Directorate was in Kassala. No further administrative innovations were introduced in the Sewakin and Red Sea regions during this time.

Despite the lack of administrative reform, the military presence in Sewakin was reinforced. Mehmed Ali Pasha deployed troops to Sewakin in an effort to establish control over the Red Sea coast and the eastern African interior. However, the local population was displeased with the behavior of the Egyptian administrators and soldiers. Mehmed Ali Pasha and his administration were not liked by the locals, who suffered from oppression. They reported increased taxation, pressure, and confiscation of agricultural lands. Complaints were submitted to the Governors of

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33   Presidential Ottoman Archives (BOA), İrade Mesāʾil-i Mühimme, no. 2435, fol. 1

34   Letter from the Grand Vizierate to the Sultan, dated 24 Jumādā al-Ākhirah 1262 [June 23, 1846], Presidential Ottoman Archives (BOA), *İrade Mısır*, no. 330, fol. 2

35   Presidential Ottoman Archives (BOA), *İrade Mısır*, no. 401, fol. 2

Jeddah and Abyssinia, and many residents fled to Abyssinia to escape the oppression[36].

The people were deeply uncomfortable with Egyptian rule over Sewakin and Massawa. The Ottoman government, which had reluctantly accepted Mehmed Ali Pasha's demands, began seeking remedies.

With the annexation of these ports[37], Egyptian control expanded southward toward the Equatorial lakes and along the eastern coast of the Red Sea, extending parallel to the Abyssinian border as far as the Somali coast. During this period, Egypt aimed to exploit Sudan and the African interior more effectively using new economic methods. Meanwhile, European influence grew increasingly significant in Egypt's administrative and economic reforms.

Sonuç

Kütahya Antlaşması, o zamana kadar doğrudan merkezî Osmanlı yönetimi altında olan Sevakin Limanı'nın idari yapısı üzerinde de önemli etkiler yaratmıştır. Mehmet Ali Paşa, adanın idaresinin kendisine devredilmişti. Tarihi öneme sahip Kızıldeniz limanı olan Sevakin, Kütahya'da yapılan müzakerelerinin etkilerini ile idare bakımında değişiklik uğratmıştı. Bunun sayesinde bölgedeki yabancı müdahalelerini nasıl kolaylaştırdığını ortaya koymaktadır. Mısır eyaletinin başına gelen İsmail Paşa, hem Avrupa'nın etkisinde kalmış hem de kendi hayatında batılı tarzı benimsemişti. Bu sayede Mısır Eyaleti ve de Sudan bölgesinde olan Osmanlı topraklarını Batılı devletlerinin ellerine bırakmıştı. Aslında bu dönemlerde, Osmanlı Devleti paylaşma tehlikesiyle karşı karşıya getiren felaketler yaşanmaktaydı. Balkanlar'da Rusya'nın etkisiyle savaşlarla gerçekleştiği gibi, Arap yarımadası ve Afrika'nın kuzey doğusunda olan Sudan'da İngiliz ve Fransızlar etkisiyle yaşanmaktaydı..

Osmanlılar eyaletlerinde geleneksel hale getirilen bazı hususlar bulunmaktadır. Bunlar arasında yeni bir vali atandığı zaman "güvenlik" ve "refah" konusundan bahsedilmesidir. Mısır tevcilerinde de bulunduğu gibi, Kavalalı Mehmet Ali Paşa Sudan'ı ilhak ettikten sonra Sudan'daki Nubya, Sinnar ve Kordufan bölgeleri tevcihinde bu güvenlik meselesi ve

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36   Petition (mazbata) sent by the people of Suakin to the Grand Vizierate, dated Rajab 1268 [April–May 1852], Presidential Ottoman Archives (BOA), *İrade Mısır*, no. 516, fol. 6.

37   As previously noted, this subject appears under various classifications within the Presidential Ottoman Archives. In addition to *İradeler* and *Mısır Mühimme* collections, other catalogues are also significant. For example: BOA, *A. MKT. MHM*, no. 323/68.

ahalinin refahının temin emredilmekteydi[38]. Fakat yerine bu tarihlerde halk bundan rahatsız olmuştu. İsmail Paşa da geçmişteki Mısır eyaletine tevcihinden sonra 1873 yılında hem Mısır hem de yeni eklenen bölgelerde yeni imtiyazlar kazanmıştı. Zira yeni elde edilen bu imtiyazlar ile artık Mısır idareciler büyük çıkarlar elde etmiş ve İsmail Paşa Hıdiv lakabını da almıştı. Kısa bir süre sonra da idaresine yeni eklenen Sevakin tevarüsen ailesine intikal ettirmişti.

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38 «... *hüsn-i idare ve i'marına ve ahali ve sekenenin istihsal-ı asayış ve refahiyet-i hallerine...*» BOA, **İrade Mısır**, no: 245, lef2.

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Chapter 14

The Impact of the Zangezur Corridor on the Connectivity Between the Turkic and Arab Worlds ⊋

Alptekin Cihangir İşbilir[1]

Abstract

Recent transformations in international relations and the restructuring of global security architecture have triggered the emergence of new trade routes and strategies. Security challenges in maritime trade and ongoing conflicts have further underscored the strategic value of land-based corridors. In this context, the concept of connectivity has gained prominence as a key metric for the efficiency of such corridors. Ensuring the sustainability of flows of goods, services, and data—alongside securing energy supply—has become one of the defining challenges of the coming decades.

In this regard, global, continental and regional-scale initiatives like the Belt and Road Initiative, the Middle Corridor, and the India-Middle East-Europe Corridor (IMEC) have gained traction. Alongside these, micro and regional-scale projects such as the Iraq Development Road and the Zangezur Corridor have become focal points of policy and investment. The success of these extensive land-based corridor projects, however, depends critically on peace and stability along their routes.

As emphasized in heartland and rimland theories, both the Turkic and Arab worlds are situated at the core of global corridor initiatives. The Zangezur Corridor—which is planned to connect the Azerbaijani mainland to the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic via Armenia—also aims to connect Türkiye directly to the Turkic World. Once operational, the corridor will serve as a key link within the Middle Corridor framework. When considered together with the Development Road initiative, the Zangezur Corridor offers unparalleled opportunities for both China and Europe, establishing a strategic bridge between the Turkic and Arab worlds.

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1   Dr., ORCID: 0000-0001-8884-5275, Email: cihangir.ishbilir@khazar.org

The anticipated final peace agreement between Armenia and Azerbaijan is therefore not only crucial for the South Caucasus but is also vital for the uninterrupted functioning of the Middle Corridor that links Asia and Europe.

This study explores the multiplier effect of the Zangezur Corridor on relations between the Turkic and Arab worlds, particularly in light of its role in enhancing interregional connectivity through the Development Road (Aykan, 2024). The paper also analyzes how seamless flows of goods, services, and data could influence regional peace and stability. Furthermore, the strategic function of the Zangezur Corridor as a linchpin in connecting China and the UK via the Middle Corridor is discussed.

The growing interconnectivity between the Turkic and Arab worlds through such infrastructure will inevitably impact the region's politics, economy, and sociocultural dynamics. This shift could enable the resolution of regional disputes and crises based on win-win logic rather than zero-sum formulas. In this context, the Zangezur Corridor is poised to become a "corridor of peace and stability." The study concludes by offering policy recommendations aimed at improving the corridor's efficiency and long-term viability.

Introduction

The concepts of the "Turkic World" and the "Arab World" have historically been used to denote both cultural and geographical domains. Although demographic shifts and migratory movements have broadened the meaning of both terms beyond their original geographic boundaries, they still predominantly refer to states populated by Turkish and Arab societies, respectively. Throughout history, both Turks and Arabs have established numerous states, often uniting to form powerful political, economic, and cultural centers of gravity in international affairs. Their interactions and shared experiences—especially those forged through the common bond of Islam—have played a pivotal role in shaping major historical transformations.

The dissolution of the Ottoman Empire after World War I marked both a period of fragmentation and a renewed aspiration for unity across the Turkic and Arab worlds. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union at the end of the Cold War, newly independent Turkic republics re-emerged on the international stage. At the same time, Arab states—after enduring invasions, wars, and internal conflicts throughout the 20th century—have continued to pursue stability, sovereignty, and socio-economic development in the 21st century. In this context, the early decades of this century have witnessed the most promising moment in over 150 years for renewed cooperation between the Turkic and Arab worlds.

Historically, the Turks achieved political unity on four major occasions, notably through the formation of the Asian Huns, the First and Second Göktürk Empires, and the European Huns. Known for their organizational capabilities, spiritual resilience, and strong social fabric, the Turks founded numerous states throughout history. However, the conquest of the Altınordu by Russia in 1480 and the fall of the Kazan Khanate in 1552 led to centuries of Russian domination in Turkestan, from which the region did not fully emerge until the dissolution of the Soviet Union. This prolonged detachment of Turkestan from Anatolia constituted the principal barrier to a unified Turkic World (Bayramol, 2025).

During this period, resistance and revival movements emerged, such as the Jadidism movement initiated by the Crimean intellectual Ismail Gaspirali, who promoted the ideal of unity "in language, thought, and action." Despite these efforts, a politically integrated Turkic entity did not exist for five centuries.

The emergence of the Organization of Turkic States (OTS) today marks the first institutional realization of this centuries-old dream. The Nakhchivan Agreement, signed in 2009 and entering into force in 2010, became a milestone in advancing integration among Turkic states. The 2021 Istanbul Summit, where the new name "Organization of Turkic States" was formally adopted, laid out a comprehensive action plan based on six main pillars and 121 objectives, covering cooperation in political, economic, cultural, security, and institutional domains. One of the key goals of the OTS is to enhance internal connectivity among Turkic states and with external partners, including the Arab World.

This study focuses specifically on the role of interconnectivity through strategic corridors—namely the Zangezur Corridor for the Turkic World and the Development Road Project for the Arab World—and their potential contributions to this broader vision of unity.

Historically, it is also difficult to speak of a unified Arab World (İslam Ansiklopedisi, 2025). While numerous Arab states have existed over time, they did not coalesce into a singular, cohesive union. The Arab world's most prominent political unity was achieved under Islam, especially during the Abbasid and Umayyad Caliphates. Arab–Turkic interaction dates back to the 7th century, when Turks began to encounter Islam, and by the 9th century, many were already holding significant administrative positions within Islamic states (Horata, 2017).

The Arab World experienced its first comprehensive unity under the Ottoman Empire. Following the empire's collapse, the Arab world was fragmented. The Arab League (T.C. Dışişleri Bakanlığı, 2025), established in 1945 and now composed of 21 member states, remains a significant—albeit not fully unified—platform for Arab solidarity.

Turkish-Arab relations span twelve centuries, encompassing collaboration, cultural exchange, and occasional tensions. The dissolution of the Ottoman Empire triggered one of the most disconnected and turbulent periods in Turkish-Arab history, as many Arab regions fell under colonial rule. Türkiye's connections with the Arab World were significantly weakened in the first half of the 20th century. Scholars often divide this era into periods such as: "Stagnation and Suspicion" (1918–1947), "Turning Point in Relations" (1948–1951), "Breakdown of Relations" (1952–1964), "Self-Critique" (1965–1971), and "Deepening Cooperation" (1972–1990) (Dakuki, 1994).

These transformations were shaped not only by religion, geography, and culture but also by the pressures of a bipolar world order, colonial legacies, and the complex trajectories of modernization and democratization.

Given the geostrategic advantages, socio-economic wealth, and shared historical and cultural roots of the Turkic and Arab worlds, renewed cooperation holds great promise—particularly amid the fluid global security landscape marked by uncertainty and transformation.

Although this study emphasizes transportation-based connectivity, it acknowledges that physical corridors inevitably lead to increased flows of goods, services, data, and culture. Accordingly, the Zangezur Corridor—key to the connectivity of the Turkic World and linking the Middle Corridor and Caspian transit routes to Europe via Türkiye—will be examined in terms of its political and economic potential. Subsequently, the Development Road Project, which aims to connect the Arabian Gulf to Anatolia and, by extension, Europe, will be analyzed. This study also assesses Türkiye's strategic role as a convergence point for both corridors and evaluates the extent to which these projects may strengthen interregional connectivity between the Turkic and Arab worlds.

While both projects present considerable strategic opportunities, they also face significant risks. For example, although the liberation of Karabakh was a major step toward the opening of the Zangezur Corridor, the lack of a final peace agreement remains a key obstacle. Similarly, persistent instability in Iraq, tensions between Iran and Israel, the unresolved situation in Syria

and Yemen, and above all the deepening crisis in Palestine, all represent critical risks for the Development Road.

Despite these challenges, these two corridor projects have the potential to significantly enhance Turkic-Arab connectivity. If fully realized, they may represent a turning point in modern regional integration. Nonetheless, the greatest dangers in such analyses are reductionism and overgeneralization. Connectivity is a complex equation with numerous variables. Yet projects like the Zangezur Corridor and the Development Road may serve as critical multipliers in shaping peace, development, and regional equilibrium.

The Zangezur Corridor Project

Initially proposed as a transportation initiative, the Zangezur Corridor has come to symbolize the geographical reunification of the Turkic World. The name "Zangezur" is derived from the Oghuz Turkic tribe of Zengene and refers to a historically strategic region. The demographic structure of this ancient Turkic land was radically altered following the Treaties of Gulistan (1813) and Turkmenchay (1828). Armenian populations were resettled in the region from Iran, initiating a process of "Armenianization" that laid the groundwork for many of the disputes that persist to this day (Gelir, Saygılı, 2024).

Although most of Zangezur is currently within Armenian territory, between 1918 and 1920, Turks living there were subjected to massacres, and the area was eventually handed over entirely to Armenia. This development not only severed the physical link between mainland Azerbaijan and Nakhchivan but also geographically isolated the Turkic World from Anatolia. Following Azerbaijan's liberation of Karabakh, renewed attention was drawn to the Zangezur issue, and the Zangezur Corridor project was reintroduced to the regional agenda.

After the 44-day Second Karabakh War, a trilateral declaration was signed on November 10, 2020, by Azerbaijan, Russia, and Armenia. Article 9 of this declaration stipulated the re-establishment of transportation infrastructure in the region and included Azerbaijan's intention to open the Zangezur Corridor. This commitment was reaffirmed during the second trilateral meeting in Moscow on January 11, 2021 (Yeşilot, Akarslan, İnalcık, 2024).

The first formal reference to the "Zangezur Corridor" in an international document appeared in the Shusha Declaration, signed between Türkiye and Azerbaijan on June 15, 2021, which elevated the corridor from a regional land dispute to a broader initiative aimed at fostering peace, stability, and cooperation (Aslanlı, Yalçın, 2024).

Numerous connectivity-focused projects are currently being pursued in the Turkic World. In this context, the strategic significance of the Zangezur Corridor has grown substantially, leading to increased momentum and coordinated efforts. Work has intensified to harmonize customs operations and regulatory frameworks among Turkic states. The Caspian-transit Middle Corridor, energy transmission routes, and initiatives aimed at establishing a "Digital Silk Road" have gained considerable prominence, elevating the issue of connectivity to the top of the regional agenda.

Beyond its logistical and commercial importance, the Zangezur Corridor also carries profound psychological significance. For the first time since the fall of the Kazan Khanate, the physical reunification of the Turkic World appears feasible. From the Turkmenchay Treaty to the Shusha Declaration, changing regional and global dynamics now necessitate the opening of the corridor. Zangezur has become a key to regional peace and stability.

Despite opposition and skepticism from countries like Iran, Armenia, Georgia, and Russia at various times, the Zangezur Corridor holds substantial potential to benefit all regional stakeholders. If successfully implemented, it could catalyze regional development and enhance engagement between Asia, the Mediterranean, and North Africa through the ports situated along the Middle Corridor.

However, regional perspectives on the corridor vary considerably. For the project to advance, concerns from neighboring countries must be addressed, and the shared economic and strategic benefits must be emphasized.

From Iran's perspective, the creation of the Zangezur Corridor could disrupt the geopolitical balance in northern Iran by severing its border with Armenia and limiting its access to Europe. This would leave Iran dependent on Türkiye for overland connections to Europe, while Azerbaijan and Türkiye would become less reliant on Iranian transit routes. Furthermore, as an alternative to the traditional Silk Road route from China to Europe, the corridor might undermine Iran's economic interests.

The project also poses a national security concern for Tehran, which fears that the corridor could invigorate Pan-Turkist sentiment in Iranian provinces such as East Azerbaijan, West Azerbaijan, and Ardabil. Although Iran has vocalized its concerns, it lacks a comprehensive strategic plan beyond rhetorical threats. On September 5, Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi reiterated that any change to regional borders constitutes a "red line" for Iran.

Russia, while recognizing Tehran's apprehensions, has taken a more assertive and pragmatic stance. The divergence in Russian and Iranian positions on the South Caucasus reveals that Tehran lacks a cohesive regional policy and continues to rely on a fragile alliance with Moscow.

Russia's economic ties with Israel and strategic cooperation with Türkiye and Azerbaijan have led it to adopt a more flexible, multi-directional strategy that conflicts with Tehran's interests. Additionally, the Ukraine conflict and the resulting Western sanctions have forced Russia to seek alternative trade routes, thereby increasing its interest in the Middle Corridor. The opening of the Zangezur Corridor could offer Moscow a path to break out of isolation and increase trade volumes. However, support for the project might also strain Russia's ties with Armenia and exacerbate tensions with the West.

Despite the trilateral ceasefire agreement, Armenia has yet to take any tangible steps to open the corridor, contributing to an impasse in peace negotiations with Azerbaijan. Although the issue was temporarily set aside to facilitate talks, Azerbaijan insists that the Zangezur Corridor remains a priority. Azerbaijani presidential envoy Hikmet Hajiyev clarified that the issue had not been abandoned but deferred: "By mutual agreement, we decided to remove this clause from the peace agreement and revisit it at a later stage." This postponement opens the door to renewed dialogue, and perhaps even renegotiation of elements such as Russian control over the corridor, which has raised concerns in Azerbaijani public opinion.

Nonetheless, the delay in resolving the Zangezur Corridor issue does not guarantee a smooth peace process. Another major obstacle is Armenia's constitutional reference to territorial claims over Azerbaijan, which Baku insists must be removed for any lasting agreement. It is therefore evident that comprehensive peace between the two countries will not be achieved in the short term.

The Zangezur Corridor is a multidimensional initiative involving Türkiye, Central Asia, Europe, and Asia. Iran, seeking to mitigate its losses, has proposed the Aras Corridor as an alternative. However, the potential benefits of Zangezur—including enhanced regional prosperity—apply to Iran as well. Rather than weakening the Zangezur initiative, alternative projects may actually reinforce its strategic importance (Ketenci, 2022).

Connectivity of the Development Road Project with the Zangezur Corridor

The ongoing Russia–Ukraine war and persistent conflicts in the Middle East have prompted global actors and states to search for new trade routes,

resource access points, and markets to ensure the continuity of international trade. In this context, China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) stands out as a comprehensive global response designed to break the economic containment imposed by the West, while also establishing sustainable trade corridors and networks to distribute its goods worldwide.

Parallel to this, the intensifying strategic rivalry between China and India has extended into the domain of trade corridors, leading to the emergence of alternative initiatives like the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC). This competition is also evident in the Middle East and the South Caucasus, which together represent the shortest and most secure route between Asia and Europe under current geopolitical conditions.

In the South Caucasus, the Zangezur Corridor represents a critical node, while in the Middle East, the Development Road Project is the primary strategic artery. When coordinated effectively, these two corridors could transform the Middle East and South Caucasus into a global trade hub. The convergence of these projects positions the region at the crossroads of Eurasian connectivity (Çamaş, 2024).

As emphasized earlier, the renewed engagement between the Turkic and Arab worlds offers a historical opportunity to generate not only economic but also cultural synergy. One of the most vital elements in reinforcing this interconnectivity is undoubtedly the Development Road Project.

The Iraqi government is actively working to integrate Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Iran into the Development Road framework. This broader regional inclusion will not only enhance the project's impact but will also create the long-awaited link between the Development Road and the Middle Corridor via the Zangezur Corridor (Yılmaz, 2024).

However, for such integration to be successful, the establishment of regional peace and stability is a prerequisite. The trajectory of the Iran–Israel conflict and its implications for the region will significantly influence global trade flows and will likely prompt renewed focus on alternative corridor strategies. This development may also compel Iran to reconsider its positions on both the Development Road and the Zangezur Corridor.

The China–India rivalry reflects a broader competition for dominance in global connectivity strategies. Both states seek to expand their influence in the Middle East and the Caucasus. Given their rich hydrocarbon reserves, Middle Eastern states such as Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Iraq are indispensable players in the global energy market. China, as one of the region's largest energy importers, is also heavily investing in ports, infrastructure, and

overland corridor projects to streamline the supply and distribution of goods across and beyond the region.

The Caucasus represents another critical geostrategic junction. Including Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Georgia, the South Caucasus serves both as a bridge between Europe and Asia and as a key transit route for energy exports from the Caspian Sea to Europe. This region is pivotal to China's ambition to connect with Europe through its Belt and Road Initiative. India, too, is seeking to strengthen its presence by building strategic relationships with countries in the region.

The geopolitical contest between China and India in the Middle East is now also being played out in the Caucasus. For instance, Georgia is a major stakeholder in the Trans-Caspian Transport Network, and China has made significant investments there. Likewise, China is actively investing in Azerbaijan's transportation infrastructure, including the Baku–Tbilisi–Kars railway and Baku Port, which are critical for Asia–Europe connectivity. China's engagement in the region is primarily driven by economic interests and is supported by targeted infrastructure development.

India, on the other hand, is focused on expanding its connectivity through the International North–South Transport Corridor (INSTC), which links India to Europe via Iran and the Caucasus, circumventing Pakistan. In this context, Chabahar Port is a key asset for India. The corridor is also beneficial for Afghanistan and Central Asian states, reducing their dependence on China.

Importantly, this initiative also strengthens the India–Iran–Armenia axis, offering an alternative to the Development Road and seeking to limit its influence. As with the Zangezur Corridor, the success and efficiency of these routes depend heavily on regional peace and stability.

The Caucasus, which hosts energy corridors such as the Baku–Tbilisi–Ceyhan pipeline, plays an essential role in east–west energy flows. As the competition between China and India intensifies, the region is increasingly becoming a focal point of global geopolitical rivalry.

In conclusion, both China and India view the Caucasus as a strategic element in their global connectivity agendas. Azerbaijan sits at the heart of both the Middle Corridor and the North–South Transport Corridor, thus enhancing the geostrategic importance of the Zangezur Corridor (Çamaş, 2024).

In this regard, the emerging trilateral cooperation between Türkiye, Azerbaijan, and Pakistan will likely play a decisive role. The increasing

feasibility of the Zangezur Corridor and the realization of the Development Road Project—as well as their convergence into a coherent connectivity strategy between the Caucasus and the Middle East—depend on the strength of this strategic alliance.

Conclusion

In an era defined by uncertainties, intense regional turbulence, and a rapidly evolving global security architecture, enhanced connectivity and alliance mechanisms between the Turkic and Arab worlds—as in historical precedents—promise numerous strategic advantages and transformative potential. The Zangezur Corridor, while ostensibly a transportation project, is in fact a critical node linking regional and global trade networks. More importantly, it serves to interconnect the Turkic World internally and link it to the Arab World externally.

As elaborated in this study, connectivity is influenced by far more than infrastructure alone; it depends on numerous interacting regional and global factors and actors. However, the Zangezur Corridor holds the potential to act as a strategic battering ram—once sustainability is ensured, it can dismantle entrenched obstacles and catalyze new linkages across sectors and geographies. In this sense, it possesses a game-changing character and function.

For the corridor to be opened, activated, and made effective, political will alone is not sufficient. A cosmopolitan and multi-layered diplomatic approach is required—one that fosters bottom-up and top-down interaction, using the Zangezur Corridor not just as a route but as a strategic reference point. Every form and level of engagement must be maximized—from culture and education to sports, media, commerce, agriculture, defense industries, and technology.

Such comprehensive cooperation is vital to the corridor's functionality and overall efficiency. Regional peace and stability, therefore, are both a prerequisite and a byproduct of corridors like Zangezur. The implementation of this corridor—along with similar initiatives—will not only connect states physically, but also weave together economic, social, and strategic fabrics.

The joint reemergence of the Turks and Arabs on the stage of history, as strategic actors capable of reshaping the rules, requires elevating their level of connectivity by land, air, sea, underground, and even in space. Through geopolitical, astropolitical, and technopolitical cooperation, the Zangezur Corridor assumes a central role, while the Development Road Project stands as a complementary route.

Reviving the historical unity of these civilizations through infrastructure development aligns with the idea that "the road is civilization." These projects can spark a new civilizational leap with benefits extending beyond the region to humanity at large.

From a regional perspective, the Zangezur Corridor will have a direct and positive impact on countries such as Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Iran, and Türkiye, linking Turkestan with the South Caucasus and establishing seamless connectivity with Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan through the Caspian Transit.

Furthermore, the South Caucasus will be connected to the Middle East, Eastern Mediterranean, and North Africa via the Development Road, creating uninterrupted links to Iraq, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, and the Gulf states, as well as to Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco.

At the global level, the Zangezur Corridor will become a critical convergence point for East–West connectivity (China to Europe) and North–South routes (Russia to the Red Sea). In its role as a connectivity hub, Zangezur is of inestimable geopolitical value and is steadily becoming one of the strategic centers of gravity for both regional and global peace (İsbilir, 2024).

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Chapter 15

History of Turkish-Algerian Relations ⊝

Lakrout Lakhdar[1]

Abstract

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1   Phd Stdent in Political Sceince and International Relations Departmen of Algeria hassiba Bin BouAli University

Introduction

In recent decades, Turkish–Arab relations have experienced a significant transformation driven by regional instability, shifting global power structures, and the reconfiguration of Middle Eastern and Mediterranean geopolitics (Aydin & Acikmese, 2017; Kurson, 2018). Turkey's foreign policy orientation toward the Arab world has increasingly emphasized multidimensional engagement, combining political dialogue, economic cooperation, and cultural diplomacy. This approach reflects Turkey's broader effort to reconnect with its historical geography while adapting to contemporary international dynamics.

Within this framework, Turkish–Algerian relations constitute a particularly distinctive case. Unlike many bilateral relations in the Arab world that are shaped primarily by short-term strategic interests, relations between Turkey and Algeria are deeply embedded in shared historical experience and collective memory (Yilmaz, 2015). Algeria's role as a key actor in North Africa, combined with its strong anti-colonial identity and Ottoman heritage, positions it as both a strategic and symbolic partner for Turkey.

This paper argues that Turkish–Algerian relations should be understood through a lens of historical continuity rather than episodic diplomatic interaction. The central claim is that the durability of bilateral relations stems from the transformation of shared history into a contemporary strategic asset. By examining Ottoman-era foundations, the impact of French colonial disruption, and the role of cultural diplomacy and economic cooperation in the post–Cold War period, the study contributes to the literature on Turkish–Arab relations and post-colonial international relations.

Methodologically, the paper adopts a qualitative historical approach, drawing on secondary historical sources, contemporary policy documents, and theoretical insights from soft power and constructivist perspectives. It seeks to demonstrate that identity, memory, and culture remain influential variables in shaping state behavior and international cooperation.

Historical Background of Turkish–Algerian Relations

The foundations of Turkish–Algerian relations can be traced back to the early sixteenth century, when Algeria entered into a political relationship with the Ottoman Empire in response to increasing Spanish incursions along the North African coast (Pasha, 2015; Abun-Nasr, 2004). Unlike many imperial expansions characterized by conquest, the Ottoman presence in Algeria

emerged through local appeals for protection, resulting in a relationship marked by mutual strategic interest rather than domination (Yilmaz, 2015).

Under Ottoman rule, Algeria developed a semi-autonomous regency system that allowed local elites to participate in governance while maintaining allegiance to Istanbul. This arrangement fostered political stability and enabled Algeria to function as a major maritime power in the Mediterranean (Shaw & Shaw, 1976). Ottoman legal traditions, administrative practices, and military institutions became integrated into Algerian political life, creating a durable institutional framework.

Beyond governance, the Ottoman period facilitated extensive cultural and social exchange. Architectural styles, religious institutions, culinary traditions, and linguistic elements became deeply embedded in Algerian society (Pasha, 2015). These interactions generated a shared cultural repertoire that would later serve as a foundation for collective memory and identity.

Colonial Disruption and Historical Continuity

The French invasion of Algeria in 1830 represented a decisive rupture in Ottoman–Algerian relations and marked the beginning of a long period of colonial domination (Abun-Nasr, 2004). French colonial policies sought not only to dismantle existing political structures but also to erase Ottoman influence from Algerian historical consciousness. Colonial historiography systematically portrayed the Ottoman period as backward, thereby legitimizing French rule (Yilmaz, 2015).

Despite these efforts, Ottoman heritage persisted within Algerian society through religious institutions, urban structures, and family networks of Ottoman origin. These elements functioned as reservoirs of collective memory, preserving a sense of historical continuity beneath the surface of colonial disruption (Burke, 2014). Following independence in 1962, Algeria actively reclaimed its pre-colonial past, reintegrating Ottoman heritage into national identity narratives.

From a theoretical standpoint, this process illustrates how colonialism reshapes but does not eliminate historical identity. Collective memory played a critical role in sustaining symbolic ties between Algeria and Turkey, facilitating the reactivation of relations in the post-colonial period (Assmann, 2011).

Shared Identity and Cultural Ties

Shared identity remains one of the most significant dimensions of Turkish–Algerian relations. The presence of families of Ottoman origin in Algeria, bearing surnames such as *Othmani, Agha, Pasha,* and *Bey*, reflects the depth of social continuity established during the Ottoman period (Yilmaz, 2015). These families have preserved cultural practices and historical narratives that continue to link Algerian society to its Ottoman past.

Material culture further reinforces this shared identity. Ottoman-era mosques, fortifications, and urban layouts remain prominent features of Algerian cities, while culinary traditions such as baklava and shared clothing styles illustrate everyday forms of cultural continuity (Pasha, 2015). Such elements function as tangible expressions of historical connection.

Symbolic representations also play an important role. Cultural expressions such as the Turkish folk song *"Cezayir, Cezayir"* contribute to the emotional dimension of bilateral relations, reinforcing positive perceptions and mutual affinity (Kurson, 2018). These symbols operate as informal instruments of soft power, shaping societal attitudes beyond formal diplomacy.

Economic Relations and Strategic Cooperation

In the contemporary period, economic cooperation has emerged as a central pillar of Turkish–Algerian relations. Turkish investments in Algeria, particularly in industry, construction, and manufacturing, reflect a strategic approach aimed at long-term partnership rather than short-term economic extraction (Turkish Ministry of Economy, 2022).

Large-scale industrial projects contribute to Algeria's economic diversification and employment objectives, while infrastructure initiatives strengthen bilateral interdependence (Turkish Embassy in Algeria, 2022). Algerian investments in Turkey, particularly in energy-related sectors, further reinforce reciprocal engagement.

These economic ties align with both countries' efforts to diversify foreign partnerships and enhance South–South cooperation in an increasingly multipolar global economy (Altunisik, 2014).

Cultural Diplomacy and Soft Power

Cultural diplomacy constitutes a key mechanism for sustaining Turkish–Algerian relations. Academic exchanges, university partnerships, and archival cooperation foster long-term intellectual and societal ties (Kurson, 2018). Facilitating access to Ottoman archives enables a more balanced

understanding of shared history and counters colonial-era narratives (Yilmaz, 2015).

From a soft power perspective, these initiatives enhance mutual attraction and trust, reinforcing the normative foundations of bilateral cooperation (Nye, 2004).

Conclusion

Turkish–Algerian relations illustrate how historically grounded ties can be transformed into a sustainable strategic partnership. The Ottoman legacy, preserved through collective memory and cultural continuity, continues to shape contemporary cooperation. By integrating history, identity, and pragmatic engagement, Turkey and Algeria offer a model of partnership adaptable to the demands of the modern international system.

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Chapter 16

Sovereignty, Strategy, and Shared History: Reframing the Treaty of Kütahya in International Law 🔓

Nancy Qablan Tütüncü[2]

Abstract

This study provides an advanced legal–historical reinterpretation of the Treaty of Kütahya (1833), analyzing its structural impact on sovereignty formation, administrative governance, and regional political evolution within the Ottoman Empire. By applying a layered sovereignty framework, the study demonstrates how Ottoman juridical authority, Egyptian executive control, and localized customary power coexisted and interacted across the Arab provinces—particularly Palestine and Transjordan. The research shows that Palestine became the earliest administrative laboratory for bureaucratic modernity, while Transjordan emerged as a proto-administrative frontier. It further argues that modern Turkey continues to draw upon this shared Ottoman–Arab legacy in its diplomatic engagement with Jordan and its legal–political advocacy for Palestine. The Treaty of Kütahya is thus reframed not as a temporary military settlement, but as a foundational moment in the evolution of sovereignty and international legal order in the Middle East.

INTRODUCTION

The Treaty of Kütahya (1833) occupies a pivotal position in the legal and political history of the Middle East. Far from being a mere bilateral agreement between the Ottoman Empire and Egypt, the treaty reflects a sophisticated restructuring of sovereignty, administrative authority, and territorial governance within an imperial system facing rapid internal and external transformation. This research re-examines Kütahya through the lens of modern international legal theory—particularly concepts of layered sovereignty, shared jurisdiction, and hybrid governance—while grounding the analysis in historical evidence from Palestine and Transjordan.

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2   Assistant Prof. Dr. Independent Researcher, Email: Qablannancy@gmail.com

The study adopts an interdisciplinary methodology integrating Ottoman historiography, international law, administrative history, and regional political analysis. Through this approach, the research traces the long-term institutional consequences of Kütahya, demonstrating its profound influence on the administrative evolution of Palestine and Transjordan, the legal codification of land and property regimes, and the formation of early municipal and judicial structures. Furthermore, the study highlights how Turkey's modern foreign policy continues to reinterpret and operationalize this shared Ottoman–Arab legacy in its strategic partnership with Jordan and its legal–diplomatic support for Palestine.

CHAPTER ONE: Imperial Reconfiguration and the Recalibration of Sovereignty (1820–1833)

The period between 1820 and 1833 represents one of the most pivotal phases in the political and administrative transformation of the Ottoman Empire. Contrary to classical historiography that described this era as a period of imperial decline, emerging scholarship demonstrates a structural reconfiguration of sovereignty influenced by provincial assertiveness, Egyptian modernization, and intensified European diplomatic intervention. As Halil İnalcık demonstrates, the Ottoman imperial order historically operated through a flexible multilayered sovereignty system combining imperial legitimacy, delegated authority, and local customary autonomy (İnalcık, 1994, pp. 57–63). However, the political equilibrium began to erode by the early nineteenth century, necessitating a comprehensive recalibration that culminated in the Treaty of Kütahya.

1. Egypt's Proto-Modern State Formation: Emergence of Effective Sovereignty

The reforms initiated by Muhammad Ali Pasha constituted the earliest full-scale modernization experiment within an Ottoman imperial province. His administrative project included:

- Compulsory conscription,

- Standardized taxation,

- Centralized governance structures,

- Industrial development,

- and the establishment of a standing army.

British diplomatic correspondence—particularly Campbell's memoranda submitted to the Foreign Office—documented Egypt's accelerated rise in

administrative capacity and its ability to rival Istanbul's effective sovereignty (FO 78/226; FO 78/227). Fahmy (1998) confirms that by 1830, Egypt exercised unprecedented functional authority.

İlber Ortaylı characterizes this transformation as the emergence of a "post-feudal administrative mentality" replacing fragmented provincial rule with hierarchical bureaucratic institutions (Ortaylı, 2015, pp. 131–135). According to Prof. Hüsamettin Inatç, this period marked the transition from juridical sovereignty centered around symbolic legitimacy to capacity-based sovereignty (Inatç, 2019, pp. 42–44), positioning Egypt as an alternative center of political authority within the imperial hierarchy.

2. Palestine as the Administrative Vanguard of Early Modernity

Between 1831 and 1833, Palestine became the central testing ground of Egyptian reform. Ibrahim Pasha introduced:

- Cadastral land surveys,

- Fixed tax schedules,

- Judicial restructuring,

- and Regulated market oversight.

British dispatches from Jerusalem and Acre describe these reforms as "systematic administrative discipline unprecedented in southern Syrian provinces" (FO 78/245; FO 78/246). These policies reshaped sovereignty through institutional changes including:

a. Cadastral Registration (Tapu)

Egypt's land-documentation reform formalized territorial boundaries and transformed land into taxable property (Çakar, 2010, pp. 212–216). Ottoman archival records further verify these reforms (BOA, MVL 23/17).

b. Expansion of Sharia Courts as Bureaucratic Hubs

Sharia courts began registering:

- Contracts,

- Property transfers,

- Commercial disputes,

- And Waqf administration.

Gerber emphasizes that this phase marked "the bureaucratization of Sharia judicial authority" (Gerber, 1985, p. 249).

c. Proto-Municipal Governance

Cities such as Jerusalem, Gaza, and Nablus undertook:

- Market regulation,

- Communal taxation,

- Administrative policing,

- And Infrastructure oversight.

French consular reports classified these developments as "the earliest municipal prototypes in Syrian-Arab provinces" (MAE, Série Levant 87/3).

3. Transjordan: Between Tribal Autonomy and Proto-Administrative Order

Although Transjordan remained formally outside Egyptian territorial expansion, the region underwent institutional change driven by conflict-based stabilization strategies.

Masters defines this phase as "a frontier corridor where tribal authority, Sharia law, and imperial administration intersected" (Masters, 2009, pp. 88–93).

Reforms included:

a. Administrative Recognition of Tribal Leadership

Posts such as mukhtar and shaykh al-Mashāyikh were formally recognized, establishing administrative channels for taxation, conflict resolution, and provincial communication (BOA, A.MKT 12/44).

b. Transition from Arbitrary Levies to Standardized Taxation

British files record the shift toward fixed tax schedules (FO 78/282), forming pre-modern fiscal order.

c. Emergence of Documented Property Claims

Transjordan witnessed early written ownership practices anticipating later codification under the 1858 Land Code.

As Prof. Dr. Hüsamettin İnatç emphasizes, this transformation did not merely formalize tribal authority, but constituted "a proto-administrative sovereignty through which traditional legitimacy was re-institutionalized within emerging state structures" (İnatç, 2019, p. 53).

4. European Internationalization of Ottoman Sovereignty

The Egyptian–Ottoman confrontation drew strategic intervention from Britain, France, Russia, and Austria. Palmerston's analyses reveal European determination to preserve Ottoman territorial coherence while preventing Egyptian dominance (FO 96/19). This resulted in a tripartite sovereignty distribution:

Layer	Actor	Legal Function
Juridical Sovereignty	The Sultan	International legitimacy
Administrative Sovereignty	Muhammad Ali	Effective governance
Customary Sovereignty	Local elites & courts	Social acceptance

French foreign office documents confirm that mediation shaped the conditions that later emerged in Kütahya (MAE, Politique 65/12).

As Quataert concludes, European involvement "internationalized Ottoman sovereignty by elevating internal administrative matters into the realm of diplomatic legal negotiation" (Quataert, 2006, pp. 201–204).

Thus, by 1833, sovereignty in the Ottoman Provinces was no longer singular, but layered—derived from administrative competence, social legitimacy, and imperial symbolism. The Treaty of Kütahya formalized this structure and represents the first legal codification of negotiated sovereignty within the empire—setting the analytical foundation for Chapter Two.

CHAPTER TWO: Layered Sovereignty and the Legal Reconfiguration of Power: Reinterpreting the Treaty of Kütahya Through an International Law Lens

The Treaty of Kütahya constitutes one of the earliest legally structured settlements within Ottoman provincial governance, redefining sovereignty not as an indivisible, territorially exclusive concept, but as a negotiated, layered, and functional system. Rather than resolving a temporary military dispute, the treaty formalized the coexistence of three levels of authority— imperial, executive, and customary—producing a hybrid legal order that would shape administration in Palestine and Transjordan throughout the nineteenth century.

As İlber Ortaylı notes, sovereignty in the Ottom

an Empire was never "absolutist," but operated through shared jurisdictional layers embedded in administrative structures rather than territorial boundaries (Ortaylı, 2015, pp. 211–215). Halil İnalcık similarly

asserts that Ottoman sovereignty was historically constituted through relational legitimacy—where legal recognition, military capacity, and local compliance intersected to form actual authority (İnalcık, 1994, pp. 77–81). The Treaty of Kütahya codified this paradigm within a definitive legal moment.

1. The Legal Anatomy of Layered Sovereignty

Level of Sovereignty Actor Operational Domain Legal Effect

Juridical Sovereignty Sultan Imperial legitimacy, foreign policy Basis of external recognition

Executive Sovereignty Muhammad Ali & Egypt Administration, taxation, security Effective governance

Customary Sovereignty Local elites & Sharia courts Social regulation Stability and legitimacy

The system of governance established after Kütahya may be understood through a three-level matrix:

Karpat identifies this model as a "polycentric legal order" where authority was contingent on administrative performance rather than territorial exclusivity (Karpat, 2001, pp. 120–124).

Foreign Office correspondence confirms that the Sublime Porte continued to be treated internationally as the lawful sovereign, even though the effective power on the ground lay in the hands of Egypt (FO 96/19; FO 78/246).

2. Kütahya as a Pre-International Legal Settlement

Although predating formal international treaties regulating internal sovereignty, the Treaty of Kütahya resembles modern structures such as:

- Special administrative regions,
- Functional sovereignty transfer,
- Delegated authority systems,
- Differentiated jurisdiction.

British diplomatic memoranda drafted by Lord Palmerston, particularly those dated June–August 1833, explicitly recognized Egypt's governing authority, while preserving official Ottoman sovereignty (FO 244/3; FO 78/227). French archives further illustrate the bilateral–international nature

of the arrangement, emphasizing that "the legality remained Ottoman; the administration became Egyptian" (MAE, Politique 65/12).

This hybrid formulation parallels later practices in international law such as:

- Mandate authority,

- Trusteeship systems,

- Shared administrative regimes.

3. The Treaty as a Regulatory Instrument of Power Distribution

The legal arrangements arising from Kütahya produced documented results:

a. Egypt Acquired Executive Authority

This included:

- Tax collection mechanisms,

- Enforcement of military conscription,

- Institutional restructuring of public administration.

British reporting from Jerusalem reveals detailed implementation instructions sent directly from Cairo to local authorities (FO 78/245).

b. Ottoman Juridical Legitimacy Maintained

In legal documentation, court proceedings, tax registers, and land deeds, the name of the Sultan continued to appear as supreme sovereign (BOA, HR.MKT 51/27).

This continuity preserved:

- Religious legitimacy,

- International recognition,

- Imperial cohesion.

c. Local Customary Autonomy Recognized

Sharia courts, tribal arbitration, and communal waqf institutions retained authority in matters of:

- Inheritance,

- Contract validation,

- Land division,

- Family disputes.

Gerber stresses that this legal pluralism did not represent administrative weakness, but rather "institutional elasticity ensuring compliance across multi-legal communities. (Gerber, 1985, pp. 255–259).

4. Operationalization in Palestine

Kütahya reorganized Palestinian governance into a dual-structured authority:

1. Legal center → Istanbul

2. Administrative center → Cairo

Evidence includes:

- land title registrations bearing Ottoman formulas but collected under Egyptian supervision (BOA, MVL 23/17; FO 78/226);

- Judicial registers issued in the name of the Sultan but executed via Egyptian-appointed officials.

Khalidi identifies this as the earliest moment at which "law became institutionalized through documentation, not only memory" (Khalidi, 1997, pp. 29–33).

5. Operationalization in Transjordan

Unlike Palestine, Transjordan experienced indirect but profound impact.

Shifts included:

- Appointment of mukhtars as administrative intermediaries (BOA, A.MKT 12/44),

- Adoption of written tax declarations (FO 78/282),

- Initiation of property documentation preceding formal registry systems.

This produced what Inatç describes as a "proto-administrative zone," where sovereignty became applied through relational governance rather than territorial control (Inatç, 2019, p. 53).

6. Kütahya as Framework for Later Legal Reform

The layered sovereignty system enabled subsequent legal codification, particularly:

✔ 1858 Land Code

✓ 1864 Vilayet Law

✓ Municipal Law Regulations

✓ Codification of court procedure

These reforms rested on the administrative infrastructure created after 1833.

The Treaty of Kütahya represents a foundational legal transformation that converted sovereignty from singular imperial authority into a differentiated, shared, and territory-activated jurisdiction. In combining symbolic legitimacy, executive effectiveness, and customary stability, the treaty produced a legal arrangement unprecedented in imperial governance.

Its importance lies not only in resolving a crisis, but in providing the conceptual and administrative infrastructure for later legal modernization in Palestine and Transjordan, and shaping modern Middle Eastern sovereignty models.

CHAPTER THREE: Palestine as the Administrative Vanguard of Modern Governance (1833–1840)

Palestine represents the earliest region in which the post-Kütahya layered sovereignty model translated into systematic administrative practice. During Egyptian rule (1831–1833) and subsequent Ottoman re-integration (1833–1840), the province witnessed the first structured transformation of governance into a bureaucratic, documented, legally enforceable administrative order. Evidence from British, Ottoman, and French correspondence confirms that Palestine became the "testing ground" for new practices of taxation, land registration, judicial centralization, and municipal organization—developments that later shaped both Ottoman reforms (Tanzimat) and British Mandate administrative law.

As Rashid Khalidi affirms, Palestine was not merely a territory under occupation; rather, it functioned as "the earliest institutional laboratory for bureaucratic modernity in the Arab provinces" (Khalidi, 1997, pp. 28–33). Egyptian command, Ottoman sovereign legitimacy, and local elite adaptation converged to generate long-term structures still visible within Palestinian administrative and legal frameworks.

1. Land Registration (Tapu) as the Foundation of Territorial Legal Order

Egyptian authorities initiated comprehensive cadastral land mapping through:

- Property boundary surveys,

- Classification of land tenure,

- Creation of enforceable title deeds,

- And Integration of taxation with documented ownership.

British Foreign Office reports from Acre and Jerusalem (FO 78/245; FO 78/246) confirm the introduction of formalized land deeds and the imposition of taxation according to registered acreage.

Ottoman archival registers (BOA, MVL 23/17) document:

- Ownership certificates signed under Egyptian administrative authority,

- Renewed validation under Ottoman jurisdiction upon retrenchment,

- And Early codification precedents later embedded in the 1858 Land Code.

Çakar describes this shift as:

"The transition from communal memory to documentary legality"

(Çakar, 2010, pp. 213–217)

Which later formed the legal basis of:

✓ Ottoman registry books,

✓ Mandate-era property case files,

✓ Modern Palestinian land court procedures.

2. Sharia Courts as Hybrid Administrative–Judicial Institutions

Before 1833, Sharia courts mainly handled:

- Family law,

- Inheritance,

- Marriage contracts,

- And Waqf documentation.

However, under Egyptian reforms, their role expanded into administrative and regulatory governance.

Court records document:

- Notarization of commercial contracts,

- Transfer of agricultural plots,

- Disputes involving Muslim–Christian–Jewish litigants,

- Taxation-related arbitration,

- And State-sanctioned waqf consolidation.

Gerber confirms that Sharia courts became:

"Embedded bureaucratic institutions integrating legal validation into the administrative system"

(Gerber, 1985, p. 249)

British reports from FO 78/282 note that tax disputes were no longer settled orally but through written judicial rulings sealed with court signatures.

This institutional expansion represents:

✔ legal centralization,

✔ Erosion of informal custom,

✔ And legal legitimization of administrative authority.

3. Early Municipal Formation and Urban Regulation

Palestinian cities—especially Jerusalem, Nablus, Gaza, and Hebron— exhibited structured municipal traits, described in French consular correspondence (MAE, Série Levant 87/3) as:

"The earliest proto-municipal governance model introduced in Syrian lands."

Municipal-type activities included:

- Regulating wheat and olive markets,

- Licensing trade stalls,

- Imposing sanitation and waste removal,

- Street renovation,

- Collection of communal taxes,

- Supervision of caravan and pilgrimage services.

These practices later evolved into Ottoman municipal codes beginning 1864.

"Producing an urban administrative identity, wherein the city functioned as a regulated unit rather than an informal commercial arena."

(Khalidi, 1997, pp. 33–35)

Such institutional urbanism preceded municipal structures in Damascus, Beirut, and Baghdad.

4. Socio-Economic Realignment and Rise of an Administrative Class

With the weakening of old urban notable families—such as Tuqān, Jarrār, Husayni, and Khalidi—the Egyptian governance introduced a new cadre of state-linked elites:

- Scribes (kātibs),
- Tax-commission officers,
- Appointed judges,
- Egyptian-trained administrators,
- Commercial agents linked to Cairo.

British intelligence reports (FO 78/227) describe them as:

"The Cairo-aligned class who replaced hereditary intermediaries."

These officials:

✓ Enforced taxation,

✓ Administered land records,

✓ Supervised public funds,

✓ and controlled municipal marketplaces.

This transformation created administrative elites rather than hereditary oligarchies, influencing later Ottoman and Mandate-era governance.

5. Ottoman Reassertion and Institutional Consolidation

When Ottoman rule was re-established in 1840, it did not dismantle Egyptian reforms. Instead, Tanzimat administrators:

- Validated land records through Ottoman seals,
- Incorporated municipal practices into centralized vilayet law,
- Codified tax assessment based on documented ownership,
- And preserved dual judicial–bureaucratic structures.

Archival decrees (BOA, HR.MKT 51/27) show explicit instructions to:

- Maintain cadastral records for tax standardization,

- Align Sharia rulings with administrative edicts,

- And regulate urban markets through official councils.

Karpat observes: "Ottoman reform was not invention; it was institutional continuity supported by renewed central legitimacy." (Karpat, 2001, pp. 217–220)

Thus, Palestine emerges not merely as a region influenced by central policy, but as the first formalized administrative setting in which layered sovereignty became operationalized into law, documentation, taxation, and institutional identity.

This transformation forms the structural basis of Chapter Four, where sovereignty shifts eastward into Transjordan and evolves into proto-state formation.

CHAPTER FOUR: Transjordan and the Proto-Formation of State Structures (1833–1921)

Transjordan represents a distinct but complementary context to Palestine in understanding the deeper effects of layered sovereignty after the Treaty of Kütahya. Although the region was not directly annexed to Egypt, its strategic location between Damascus, Jerusalem, and the Hijaz made it a critical frontier of negotiated authority—where tribal autonomy, imperial oversight, and emerging administrative practices intersected.

Bruce Masters identifies Transjordan as

"a liminal legal and administrative space, where law derived from negotiation rather than imposition."

(Masters, 2009, pp. 87–90)

This period produced the earliest proto-state formations that would later provide the administrative foundation for the Emirate of Transjordan in 1921.

1. Tribal Sovereignty Before Administrative Integration

Before 1830, Transjordanian governance was characterized by a decentralized order led by major tribal confederations such as:

- Bani Sakhr,

- Adwan,

- Majali,

- Huwaytat.

Political authority derived from:

✔ Arbitration councils (sulh),

✔ Oral governance traditions,

✔ Clan-based protection networks,

✔ Collective usufruct land rights.

Ottoman influence was nominal—applied through annual tax demands and informal alliances with tribal elites.

Yet this order began shifting when imperial stability was challenged and Egypt's rise became a direct diplomatic concern.

2. Recognition of Tribal Leadership as Institutionalized Administrative Authority

The Egyptian–Ottoman confrontation compelled both centers of sovereignty to formally restructure their engagement with tribal leadership in Transjordan. For the first time in the region's governance history, authoritative positions such as:

- Mukhtar,

- Shaykh al-Mashāyikh,

- Local tax intermediaries and communal notables,

Were not merely acknowledged socially, but incorporated into the imperial administrative hierarchy.

This development is explicitly documented in Ottoman administrative correspondence:

BOA, A.MKT 12/44 – an imperial directive recognizing appointed mukhtars in Karak and Salt as official intermediaries responsible for tax collection and dispute reporting.

British diplomatic dispatches corroborate this transformation, noting that tribal heads became institutional mediators rather than informal negotiators:

FO 78/282 – reports describing tribal leaders as legally recognized agents facilitating land taxation, resolving communal disputes, and representing provincial interests.

This shift signifies a structural redefinition of local authority:

tribal chiefs transitioned from customary arbiters into semi-formal administrative representatives, operating on behalf of the imperial center.

Prof. Hüsamettin Inatç conceptualizes this transformation as the emergence of:

"Proto-administrative sovereignty",

where functional power is exercised through local actors whose legitimacy is derived simultaneously from customary recognition and state appointment

(Enaj, 2019, pp. 51–54).

This institutionalization constituted the first stage in the administrative integration of Transjordan, later facilitating:

- Standardized taxation practices,

- Inclusion of tribal communities into the imperial fiscal system,

- and the reorientation of tribal leadership toward legal, rather than purely customary, authority.

3. Codification of Taxation and Emergence of Fiscal Compliance

Egyptian reforms indirectly forced taxation stabilization in Transjordan:

- Standardization replaced irregular levy systems,

- Taxation became connected to documented land plots,

- Tribal collections were regulated through official agents.

Foreign Office memoranda (FO 78/245) report fixed tax schedules for Salt, Karak, and Tafilah.

Masters concludes that this move:

"Turned taxation from personal loyalty into administrative obligation."

(Masters, 2009, pp. 92–95)

This marks the moment when sovereignty shifted from relational authority → to legal-administrative authority.

4. Emergence of Written Property Claims and Territorial Consciousness

Although limited, written property statements began circulating, primarily in:

*Karak, **Salt, *** Ajlun districts.

These claims anticipated the later application of the 1858 Ottoman Land Code.

Ottoman legal registers (BOA, MVL 44/20) refer to early certifications of agricultural holdings.

The implications were profound: ✔ Ownership became transferable,

✔ Land disputes became ad judicable, ✔ Inheritance gained written documentation,

✔ And Territorial boundaries became legally meaningful.

Transjordan thus moved from tribal usufruct territory → towards registered territorial rights.

5. Legal Hybridization: Customary, Sharia, and Imperial Oversight

A three-tier legal ecosystem emerged:

1) Customary Law (ʿUrf): Handled blood money, pastoral disputes, tribal war cessation, grazing boundaries.

2) Sharia Courts: (Operating from Jerusalem & Damascus administrative influence)

Handled: ✔ Marriage, ✔ Inheritance, ✔ Guardianship, ✔ Waqf consolidation.

3) Ottoman Oversight / Gradual — not imposed — manifesting through:

- Tax directives,
- land adjudication requests,
- Dispute documentation.

Gerber describes this as:

"Integrative legal pluralism that institutionalizes compliance."

(Gerber, 1985, pp. 254–257)

This is foundational for Jordan's contemporary judicial dualism:

- Civil administration with Sharia jurisdiction preserved.

6. Formation of Administrative Corridors and Inter-Urban Linkages

Commercial and political corridors emerged along:

- Salt ↔ Nablus , Karak ↔ Jerusalem , Damascus ↔ tribal south

They fostered:

✔ Trade registration,

✔ Legal enforcement mechanisms,

✔ Settlement of debts,

✔ Regulated movement of caravans.

French diplomatic entry (MAE, Levant 93/11) notes that Salt:

"had the commercial structure of a town before it had formal urban institutions."

This evolution created pre-urban governance before Ottoman municipal codes.

7. Proto-State Pattern Prior to 1921

By the end of the nineteenth century, Transjordan possessed all the basic structural elements of state formation:

Notables → Acting as intermediaries

Documented in BOA administrative circulars,

Sharia courts → Issuing binding judgments

Especially for land litigation between tribal families,

Market regulation → Producing fiscal accountability,

AND MOST IMPORTANTLY:

Territorial consciousness emerged.

So, when Emir Abdullah arrived in 1921:

He encountered:

• A functioning elite administrative layer,

• Embedded judicial norms,

• Tribal leadership with political legitimacy,

• And Preliminary land registries.

Thus, state-building did not emerge ex nihilo—it rested on incremental layered sovereignty established after Kütahya.

Transjordan represents the second arena in which layered sovereignty transformed from legal abstraction into institutional formation. What began

as negotiated tribal authority evolved into proto-administrative frameworks capable of sustaining centralized governance.

This evolution sets the legal-historical foundation for Chapter Five, where the post-Kütahya period generates codified legal reforms culminating in Ottoman land codes, judicial institutionalization, and municipal governance that remain active pillars in Jordanian and Palestinian law today.

CHAPTER FIVE: The Ottoman Legal Legacy and Its Enduring Influence on Jordan and Palestine (1858–Present)

The legal-administrative infrastructures established between 1833 and the mid-nineteenth century set the foundation for what later became one of the most transformative legal reform periods in Ottoman history: the Tanzimat. While often approached as imperial modernization, the Tanzimat reforms were, in fact, institutional consolidations of mechanisms already tested in Palestine and partially activated in Transjordan after Kütahya. The Ottoman legal legacy that followed—especially through land legislation, judicial structuring, and municipal codification—remains embedded today in contemporary Jordanian and Palestinian legal institutions.

As İnalcık explains, Ottoman reform was "not merely legislative innovation, but institutional continuity based on earlier administrative experimentation" (İnalcık, 1994, pp. 119–123). Palestine, where cadastral registration and judicial-institutional integration had already matured, became the most direct beneficiary of legal codification. Transjordan, on the other hand, internalized these reforms gradually, shaping its administrative identity and later facilitating state formation.

1. The Ottoman Land Code of 1858: Legal Transformation of Territorial Ownership

The Ottoman Land Code of 1858 (Arazi Kanunnamesi) constitutes the most enduring legal instrument affecting property systems in Jordan and Palestine. Its principal contributions included:

- Legal definition of land categories:

Miri, Mulk, Waqf, Mewat, Metruke,

- Creation of title-based land rights and obligations,
- Transferability of land through documented title deeds,
- Taxation tied to cadastral registration,
- Expansion of state authority over agricultural territories.

Ottoman archives (BOA, İ.MMS 112/45) confirm the standardization of land registration offices across Jerusalem, Nablus, Hebron, and Salt.

Foreign Office dispatches note increased litigation over land following documentation:

"Tax was no longer an informal communal contribution, but a recorded legal obligation"

(FO 78/311).

Long-term consequences for Palestine

- British Mandate land courts adopted the same classification system.

- Palestinian property disputes today still reference Ottoman title deeds (ḥujaj).

- Large waqf estates remain protected under Ottoman-based legality.

Khalidi concludes that the Ottoman Code created

"the first coherent territorial legal identity in Palestine"

(Khalidi, 1997, pp. 39–42).

Long-term consequences for Jordan

- Registered agricultural estates in Salt and Karak formed modern property inheritance bases,

- Taxation became standardized across districts,

- Urban land markets emerged in areas such as Irbid and Madaba,

- Ottoman tenure concepts still present in Jordanian civil law.

2. Institutionalization of Waqf as Protected Legal Entity

The Ottoman waqf model did not merely represent charitable endowments—it constituted an integrated governance mechanism involving:

- Religious property preservation,

- Judicial supervision,

- Social service financing,

- Urban land allocation.

Jerusalem registers (BOA, EV.MKT 177/12) record:

mosques, madrasas, markets, and residential quarters classified as waqf lands.

This introduced a legal regime where waqf property:

✔ Could not be seized,

✔ Could not be taxed without judicial decree,

✔ Could not be sold except under documented necessity.

İhsanoğlu describes waqf as:

"the institution that anchored urban continuity across Ottoman Arab domains"

(İhsanoğlu, 2004, pp. 278–282)

Persistence today

✔ Jordan's awqaf system still applies Ottoman validity clauses.

✔ Jerusalem's waqf council remains legally derived from Ottoman administrative statutes.

✔ Palestinian institutions preserve Ottoman-period waqf title deeds as supreme legal evidence.

3. Judicial Continuity: Sharia Courts as Administrative Legal Forums

Unlike continental European territories where Sharia courts were abolished or marginalized, Jordan and Palestine retained them structurally.

Their authority today remains based on Ottoman foundations:

- Adjudication of personal status law,
- Guardianship and inheritance cases,
- Execution of waqf contracts,
- Property transfer authentication.

Gerber emphasizes that Sharia courts represented

"legitimacy grounded in social recognition rather than state coercion"

(Gerber, 1985, pp. 255–259).

Modern legal continuity includes:

Jordan

✔ Personal status law derived from Ottoman Mejelle

✔ Inheritance distribution based on Ḥanafī jurisprudence

✔ Procedural evidence rules mirroring Ottoman registers

Palestine

✔ court records referencing Ottoman case precedents

✔ documented waqf contracts still enforceable

✔ land cases adjudicated through sighted Ottoman hujjat

4. Municipal Governance and Urban Administration

Municipal structures emerged first in Palestine due to the earlier administrative experimentation, and later in Transjordan:

First Municipalities Recorded:

- Jerusalem (1863)
- Nablus (1869)
- Gaza (c. 1870)
- Salt (c. 1880)

Municipal councils executed:

- Public sanitation,
- Market oversight,
- Road maintenance,
- Urban tax collection,
- Protection of public spaces (ḥarīm al-madinah).

French consular archives describe municipal councils as:

"the earliest regulated urban governance structures in Ottoman Arab provinces"

(MAE, Levant 93/11)

These municipal functions remain the same today:

- City tax,
- Land zoning,
- Building permits,
- Local policing.

Thus, modern local governance in Jordan and Palestine is fundamentally Ottoman in origin—not British or post-independence.

5. Legal Echoes in Contemporary Institutions

In Jordan:

Many contemporary statutes incorporate Ottoman legal concepts, particularly:

- Property transfer registration,
- Waqf custodianship,
- Municipal jurisdiction,
- Classification of rural land.

Even Jordanian Civil Law analogizes Ottoman usufruct rights.

In Palestine:

- land cases before the Palestinian High Court of Justice reference Ottoman evidence norms,
- Titles issued prior to 1917 remain legally valid,
- Ottoman-based waqf foundations still govern Al-Aqsa administration.

Karpat argues that Ottoman administrative influence persists

"not as nostalgia, but as functioning institutional architecture."

(Karpat, 2001, pp. 217–220)

The Ottoman legal legacy did not vanish with imperial withdrawal; instead, it provided the durable legal scaffolding upon which Jordan and Palestine built modern legal identities.

This legacy shaped:

- Definitions of land,
- Validity of documents,
- Jurisdiction of religious institutions,
- Municipal governance,
- Evidentiary standards,
- And legitimacy sources.

The enduring legal structures established after Kütahya therefore form the conceptual foundation for Chapter Six, where modern Turkey strategically repositions this legacy within contemporary foreign policy toward Jordan and Palestine.

1- Modern Turkey and the Strategic Reinterpretation of Kütahya's Legacy

The Treaty of Kütahya did not remain a transient nineteenth-century arrangement; instead, its structural logic has been selectively re-mobilized in Türkiye's contemporary legal-political engagement with Palestine, Jordan, and the wider Arab region. Through diplomatic advocacy, state-led humanitarian jurisdiction, cultural custodianship, and development-based cooperation models, Türkiye continues to activate a layered sovereignty configuration first crystallized in 1833.

1. Legal Continuity Through Historical Legitimacy and Diplomatic Discourse

Modern Turkish foreign policy often invokes legal continuity with Ottoman governance to frame its diplomatic positions, especially concerning Jerusalem. Following the U.S. decision in 2017 to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital, Türkiye asserted:

"The status of Jerusalem remains regulated by existing international legal instruments; unilateral recognition does not produce lawful effect."

(UNGA ES-10/19, 2018)

President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's discourse emphasized Palestine not as purely contemporary territorial advocacy, but as a legal-historical mandate rooted in:

• Ottoman custodial authority over al-Quds,

• Endowment-based property institutions,

• Intergenerational administrative delegation.

This legal memory reproduces the same framework introduced after Kütahya, wherein symbolic sovereignty, administrative authority, and social legitimacy operated simultaneously.

2. Jordan as the Institutional Continuation of Ottoman Administrative Geography

One of the most visible outcomes of layered sovereignty appears in Jordan's custodial mandate over Jerusalem. Jordan's administration of Islamic

Waqf institutions—affirmed through agreements in 1948, 1967, 1994, and 2013—represents not an innovation, but an institutional evolution.

Recent scholarship emphasizes that this form of fiduciary-administrative custodianship derives from nineteenth-century legal arrangements. President of Kütahya Dumlupınar University, Prof. Dr. Süleyman Kızıl Toprak, argues that:

"Post-Ottoman custodial authority in the Arab provinces did not emerge abruptly, but developed from administrative trust structures embedded in nineteenth-century legal practice."

(Kızıl Toprak, 2017, pp. 76–79)

This statement reinforces that Jordan's current role is genealogically rooted in administrative continuities structured after 1833.

3. TİKA and AFAD: Functional Sovereignty as Modern Institutional Deployment

Türkiye operationalizes sovereignty not through territorial control, but through state-to-community service provision:

TİKA activities include:

• Reconstruction programs in Gaza,

• Restoration of Ottoman-era archives and mosques,

• Municipal partnership agreements,

• Educational cooperation.

AFAD functions through emergency-based authority shaped by humanitarian law obligations.

Researchers categorize this form as:

"Infrastructure-based sovereignty where legal authority derives from service capacity rather than territorial jurisdiction."

(Büyükkara & Demirtaş, 2020, p. 44)

This functional authority mirrors the administrative sovereignty the Egyptians exercised after Kütahya.

4. Sovereignty Through Energy and Connectivity

The TANAP project constitutes not merely an economic transit pipeline, but a legal-territorial corridor. In Ottoman practice, sovereignty frequently followed infrastructure routes—postal caravans, tax-roads, pilgrimage

routes. Today, sovereignty reappears through energy-security obligations rather than land taxation.

Hence, modern corridor diplomacy reflects historical sovereignty logic.

5. Jerusalem as a Reactivated Symbolic Sovereignty Node

The nineteenth-century legal status of Jerusalem as a uniquely administered provincial space preserved:

- Waqf-based land rights,

- Multiple judicial platforms,

- Long-standing custodial legitimacy.

Türkiye's diplomatic interventions—in OIC statements, UN declarations, and bilateral dialogues with Amman—reactivate this symbolic layer.

For example:

"Jerusalem exists under an internationalized legal regime that cannot be altered by unilateral execution."

(OIC Session Proceedings, 2018)

This confirms the sovereign-legal continuity constructed after Kütahya. The analysis in this chapter indicates that Türkiye's contemporary engagement— whether through diplomatic support for Palestine, strategic coordination with Jordan, humanitarian interventions, heritage stewardship, municipal collaboration, or regional transit initiatives—does not represent a rupture from Ottoman legal history, but a modern continuation of its structural foundations. In this sense, Kütahya represents the earliest formalization of differentiated sovereignty, the origin of Ottoman–Arab administrative interdependence, and the legal framework through which Jordan's custodial mandate later evolved. Its doctrinal influence remains visible in twenty-first-century regional policy, demonstrating that sovereignty in the Middle East has never been merely territorial, but layered, negotiated, and historically reproduced.

CONCLUSION

The Treaty of Kütahya (1833) stands not merely as a diplomatic settlement in the aftermath of military confrontation but as a structural legal innovation that reshaped sovereignty in the Ottoman Middle East. By codifying differentiated layers of authority—imperial, administrative, and customary—the treaty institutionalized a model of negotiated sovereignty

that redefined the relationship between center and province and laid the foundations for modern governance structures in Palestine and Transjordan.

Palestine emerged through this framework as the earliest administrative laboratory of bureaucratic modernity. Land registration systems, municipal structures, and the transformation of Sharia courts into hybrid judicial–administrative institutions created enduring legal mechanisms that continued into the Tanzimat reforms, the British Mandate, and contemporary land and judicial institutions. Likewise, Transjordan evolved from a tribal frontier governed through customary law into a proto-administrative region where recognized leadership, taxation discipline, and documented property relations later supported the establishment of the Emirate of Transjordan in 1921.

At the level of international intervention, European diplomacy transformed Kütahya into one of the earliest examples of sovereignty being partially internationalized, where strategic foreign influence shaped internal governance arrangements. This anticipates later international legal doctrines concerning shared territorial mandates, administrative autonomy, and external guarantees of authority.

In contemporary contexts, Türkiye reinterprets this legacy through diplomatic advocacy for Palestine, strategic alignment with Jordan's custodial authority over Jerusalem's Islamic Waqf, and humanitarian statecraft implemented through modern functional institutions such as TİKA and AFAD. Thus, the legal logic introduced at Kütahya remains operational—not as a static historical memory, but as an active structuring principle shaping regional diplomacy, institutional continuity, and territorial arrangements.

The study concludes that the Treaty of Kütahya should not be understood as a temporary compromise, but as a foundational legal paradigm illustrating that sovereignty in the Middle East historically functioned not as a singular territorial construct, but as a layered, negotiated, and institutionally distributed framework. Its implications extend into the present, offering an interpretive lens through which to understand sovereignty formation, administrative continuity, and regional political identity in Türkiye, Palestine, and Jordan today.

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Chapter 17

The Second Syrian War and the Decline of Mehmet Ali Pasha's Measures ⧟

Mohamad Ismail[1]

Abstract

The historical interaction between Egypt and the Ottoman Empire during the first half of the nineteenth century marked one of the most decisive moments in shaping regional governance. Following the Treaty of Kütahya, Syria—particularly Damascus—emerged as the central territorial space where the political ambitions of Sultan Mahmud II and Muhammad Ali Pasha collided, transforming local administrative decisions into a wider geopolitical confrontation.

This study examines Syria as the primary territorial, political, and analytical space through which the dynamics of the Egyptian–Ottoman conflict unfolded. Rather than approaching Syria as an extension of broader territorial expansion, the discussion situates Damascus as the focal point of transformation, escalation, and eventual reversal. The enforcement of conscription policies, the changing administrative structures, and reactions expressed by local communities did not remain internal affairs; instead, they were translated into diplomatic narratives that shaped European policy decisions.

Furthermore, the study highlights how military achievements in Syrian territory—most notably at Nezib—not only reshaped local balances of power, but also determined the strategic positioning of both states within the international system. Syria thus served simultaneously as the foundation for Egyptian leverage and as the geographic space through which defeat became formalized through the London Treaty and the Imperial Firman of 1841.

Accordingly, Syria stands historically not as a passive recipient of policy shifts, but as the element through which the entire conflict was defined, shaped, and concluded.

1   Master Student, Kütahya Dumlupinar University, Institute of Graduate Studies, Department of Political Science and International Relations, mohamad.ismail0@ogr.dpu.edu.tr

Introduction

The significance of Syria in shaping the trajectory of the Egyptian–Ottoman struggle emerges not merely from its geographic location, but from its role as the central platform through which competing visions of governance materialized. After the Treaty of Kütahya, Syria represented the territorial boundary where Egypt's model of autonomous administration confronted the imperial objective of central consolidation. The region became a practical test for administrative reforms, revenue collection, military organization, and legal restructuring. What unfolded in Syria was therefore not incidental, but foundational; the policies applied in Damascus and its surrounding districts formed the basis through which the political intentions of both states were evaluated.

Understanding the Syrian context is essential in reconstructing the complexity of the conflict. The tension did not originate solely from military confrontation, but from an administrative competition involving revenue systems, recruitment obligations, and shifting public loyalties. These developments transformed Syria into a defining territorial space: the territory through which the Egyptian government reached its most organized form, and simultaneously the territory through which decline began once that authority was challenged. It is within this interaction that Syria transcends its provincial status and assumes analytical centrality in determining why the Egyptian political project eventually reached its structural limit.

Chapter One

Damascus and Syria within the Context of the Crisis between Sultan Mahmud II and Muhammad Ali Pasha

The aftermath of the Treaty of Kütahya revealed that the settlement reached between Sultan Mahmud II and Muhammad Ali Pasha was not a definitive resolution but rather a temporary territorial understanding awaiting future revision. Although the treaty formally transferred Syria to Egyptian authority, neither party interpreted this decision as final. Cairo regarded Syria as the gateway that would secure political continuity for Muhammad Ali's household, while Istanbul viewed it as a provisional concession that would eventually be reversed. Thus, Syria was not received as territory with fixed status but as a contested space whose administrative fate remained suspended.

The geopolitical importance of Syria emerged immediately after the negotiations. It represented the first geographic zone where the authority

of the Sultan came into direct confrontation with Egyptian administrative expansion. Damascus, in particular, symbolized this intersection: it was simultaneously a strategic frontier, an administrative capital, and a political symbol of regional sovereignty. Control over Damascus was therefore more than territorial possession—it defined the legitimacy of broader claims.

This suspended condition shaped the political atmosphere between the two centers of power. Reports exchanged between Cairo and Istanbul expressed continuous suspicion about future intentions. The Egyptian court feared that the Sultan would attempt to reverse his concessions at the earliest diplomatic opportunity, while the imperial palace doubted that Muhammad Ali would limit his ambitions within provincial administration. The unresolved nature of these expectations positioned Syria as the space in which reconciliation would either materialize or collapse.

Local communities became aware of this uncertainty. Syrian notables, merchant families, and religious authorities recognized that the agreement did not establish long-term clarity, and therefore adopted differentiated positions. Some collaborated with Egyptian administration, anticipating greater commercial privilege and administrative organization, while others maintained symbolic loyalty to the Ottoman palace. Consequently, the Syrian region was not unified under the new authority; it reflected parallel affiliations shaped by ideological, economic, and social considerations.

In this way, Syria marked the first historical point in which contradictions between administrative reform, sovereignty, and loyalty were expressed openly. The dispute did not begin once military confrontations resumed; rather, it began when Syria entered an undefined status—neither integrated securely under Egypt nor restored confidently to the imperial center. This ambiguity constituted the foundational condition through which the later conflict developed.

The developments that followed the Treaty of Kütahya demonstrated that the settlement between Sultan Mahmud II and Muhammad Ali Pasha was fragile and incomplete, particularly regarding Syria and Damascus. Although the treaty was formally considered a resolution, it did not provide a genuine or lasting settlement of the conflict, as neither party considered the agreement final. Sultan Mahmud remained determined to reassert Ottoman authority over Syria, while Muhammad Ali continued to aspire toward consolidating his administrative reforms and securing the political future of his family.

Despite agreements related to the tribute and the settlement of arrears, the atmosphere between the two sides never evolved into genuine peace. Suspicion persisted within both political centers—Constantinople and Cairo—and the Syrian territories became the first geographical space where this distrust materialized. The envoy sent by Muhammad Ali to the imperial palace was subjected to humiliating treatment, revealing that reconciliation did not translate into mutual respect or administrative normalization.

Damascus emerged as a focal point within this climate of uncertainty. The region, which represented the administrative and symbolic extension of Egyptian authority, simultaneously constituted the contested space that the Sultan considered essential for restoring imperial sovereignty. Syria therefore became the early indicator of escalation, serving as the intersection between Egypt's political extension and the Ottoman desire to reverse the territorial settlement.

Throughout this period, the political tension surrounding Syria was not passive; rather, it manifested through diplomatic reports, military mobilization, and administrative instructions. The unresolved nature of the treaty and the continuous anticipation of renewed confrontation meant that Syria—and Damascus specifically—stood as the first setting where negotiations collapsed into strategic preparation. In this manner, Damascus did not merely witness events; it became the territorial embodiment of the conflict's next phase and a definite focal point in determining the trajectory of the crisis.

Chapter Two

Conscription Policies and Egyptian Administration in Syria and Their Impact on Damascus

The enforcement of compulsory military conscription in Syrian territories marked one of the most defining turning points in the relationship between the local population and Egyptian rule. What began as an administrative directive soon evolved into the most visible form of public unrest and rejection, particularly in areas surrounding Jerusalem and Nablus, with ripple effects reaching Damascus.

The developments in Syria after the treaty demonstrate that the region was not merely administered as a provincial extension, but as the main field through which Egyptian authority was tested. The introduction of conscription, in particular, represented more than a military arrangement. It altered demographic dynamics, disrupted the traditional role of households,

and directly challenged the autonomy of local communities. Families who had never previously been subjected to recruitment were suddenly included within a centralized administrative system, which signaled a new type of state presence.

Resistance expanded gradually from rural clusters into urban quarters. Market closures in Aleppo and Damascus reflected not simply economic obstruction but political signaling. The Egyptian administration responded with punitive measures, yet these actions only reinforced the perception that Damascus had become the ultimate testing ground for Egyptian reform. When several influential figures were executed publicly, the city experienced a visible decline in loyalty, demonstrating the limitations of authority once applied in Syrian space.

The original administrative plan was not immediately framed as a threat to Syrian society; however, the method of execution transformed conscription into a dramatic social concern. Local households were assigned quotas of young men to be delivered to the Egyptian authorities, and failure to comply resulted in raids, arrests, or severe punitive measures. The anger reached its peak when popular calls to resist were voiced publicly. Historical accounts describe an incident in which a preacher climbed a mosque minaret in Nablus, urging people to resist Ibrahim Pasha, claiming he had departed from the principles of Islam, associating with monasteries, and adopting practices that contradicted established customs.

The response of the Egyptian administration was immediate and decisive. Three leading figures of the resistance were arrested and executed in front of Muhammad Ali, establishing a precedent of direct punishment that reasserted Cairo's authority. Despite temporary rebellion, Syrian society could not overturn the Egyptian military structure. The text clearly emphasizes that these uprisings "did not shake the Pasha's authority," which remained intact in Damascus and its surrounding regions.

The impact of conscription did not remain limited to ideological resistance—it extended into the daily economic reality. In cities such as Aleppo, markets closed abruptly, mosques and shops shut down, and basic goods such as bread and meat disappeared for days. The level of distress drove groups of young men to disguise themselves as women to escape across the borders into Ottoman-controlled territory. Yet even there, they discovered that Sultan Mahmud II had begun implementing the same policy of compulsory recruitment.

In the midst of this growing turbulence, Damascus developed a strategic position between two pressures: the requirements of the Egyptian administration on one side, and the increasingly reactive sentiments of local society on the other. The city thus served as the spatial reference point from which Egyptian authority was administered and through which social rejection was expressed. What began as a policy of military recruitment ultimately revealed the limits of Egyptian reform, particularly when imposed within Syrian territory.

Chapter Three

European Consular Influence and the Internationalization of the Syrian Question

The Syrian issue transitioned rapidly from a local administrative matter into a subject of international attention, largely due to the narratives produced by European consular officials within Syrian cities, especially Damascus. Consuls leveraged episodes of public discontent—primarily those tied to conscription—to craft diplomatic reports portraying Egyptian authority as oppressive, arbitrary, and destabilizing.

European involvement escalated precisely because Syrian events presented diplomatic leverage. Consular authorities did not treat conscription as a local administrative matter but as an indicator of instability with potential regional consequences. Reports sent from Damascus exaggerated disturbances, representing temporary riots as wide-scale revolt. Local merchants understood the value of consular affiliation, seeking exemptions that undermined the cohesive legal system that Muhammad Ali attempted to enforce. Consequently, Damascus transformed from an administrative center into a diplomatic reference point, shaping decisions in London, Vienna, and St. Petersburg.

Many local merchants in Damascus and Aleppo secured foreign "protection" through paid affiliations with consulates. These affiliations exempted them from taxation, judicial prosecution, and administrative accountability. This disrupted the unified legal order that the Egyptian administration sought to construct. In response, investigative missions were dispatched to Syria, tasked with assessing the legitimacy of complaints presented by consular offices.

Reports sent to European capitals often exaggerated events, portraying limited unrest as widespread rebellion, and isolated punishments as systemic persecution. In cases involving Christian communities, consuls claimed

that forced recruitment occurred—despite Cairo's written declarations that Christian residents were exempt. Some residents tattooed crosses on their arms to prove their identity when approached by military registrars. Such actions, although symbolically protective, reinforced the perception abroad that religious minorities were endangered.

London, Vienna, and St. Petersburg soon viewed Syria not as a local extension of Egyptian administration, but as a strategic corridor. British observers feared that tension between Muhammad Ali and the Sultan would eventually allow Russia to acquire stronger influence through intervention. Consequently, Syria was transformed into the region where international diplomacy converged.

Damascus, as a symbolic and administrative center, became the geographic space where international narratives intensified. It was no longer merely governed—it was interpreted, negotiated over, and discussed across foreign ministries. What began as local dissatisfaction became the foundation of international negotiations, placing Syria at the center of a conflict that moved far beyond military lines.

Chapter Four

The Heightened Military Preparedness in Syria and Its Impact on the Regional Balance

As the political dispute intensified, Syria—particularly its central routes that connected Damascus with the northern frontier—began to display a distinctly militarized atmosphere. Administrative directives gradually shifted toward reinforcing military infrastructure, increasing supplies, and fortifying the Syrian terrain. The Taurus Mountain passes were selectively strengthened, and strategic communication roads that linked southern and northern Syrian districts were closely monitored.

British diplomatic correspondence cited in the original material emphasized that "everything in Syria has taken on a military character," a statement that reflects not only specific preparations but also regional anxiety about how these military provisions might translate into renewed confrontation with the Ottoman forces.

The militarization of Syrian space reached an advanced stage. Caravans transporting military supplies passed through Damascus toward Aleppo, creating visible patterns of mobilization. Checkpoints were installed at agricultural routes, preventing mobility without written authorization. Although Egyptian officials framed these measures as defensive, residents

interpreted them as preparation for broader conflict. As a result, Damascus served not only as a logistical crossing zone, but as the symbolic height of expansion. European observers remarked that control of Syria meant strategic access toward Asia Minor, and thus assumed that Egypt might attempt further advance.

The Egyptian authorities described these preparations as defensive and necessary to maintain stability; however, beyond Egypt's interpretation, observers in Istanbul and European capitals viewed Syria's military buildup as proof of political expansion. This perception became stronger when news circulated that Sultan Mahmud II had reorganized his army and sought external expertise—particularly German officers—to modernize Ottoman artillery and infantry.

Damascus therefore stood between two conflicting strategic impulses:

1.   Egypt's attempt to preserve its territorial hold, and

2.   the Ottoman objective to reclaim authority.

Consequently, the Syrian territory became an active setting where administrative legitimacy turned into military anticipation. The region transitioned from being only a governed province to becoming a decisive positional advantage that both powers attempted to secure. This shift transformed Syrian space into more than a geographical extension—it became the structural foundation of the second phase of the conflict.

Chapter Five

The Battle of Nezib, the Collapse of Ottoman Forces, and Its Strategic Repercussions on Syria

The culmination of military buildup materialized through the Battle of Nezib (Nisibin), where the Ottoman forces suffered a sudden and overwhelming defeat. The original historical account highlights that this confrontation did not evolve into a prolonged battle; rather, it ended abruptly in a collapse of Ottoman defensive lines. Ibrahim Pasha's troops seized large quantities of artillery, supplies, and formal documents.

What distinguished the Battle of Nezib was not only the military collapse of Ottoman forces, but the political consequences directly expressed through Damascus. News of victory reached the city rapidly, emboldening administrative offices to issue temporary decrees without referencing Istanbul. For several weeks, local governance functioned as if Damascus were the permanent capital of the Egyptian front. However, when Muhammad

Ali halted the advance, this momentum stalled. Syria thus stood between two opposite instructions: consolidation and retreat. The hesitation revealed that Egyptian expansion reached its threshold in Syrian space, not beyond it.

This military victory elevated Syria into the central space of strategic decision-making. News of Sultan Mahmud II's death—arriving soon after the defeat—generated political instability at the imperial level. Additionally, the defection of the Ottoman fleet to Alexandria amplified Egypt's influence, presenting a circumstance in which the road from Syria toward Constantinople appeared open.

Yet, at the peak of this leverage, Muhammad Ali ordered a halt to military advancement. Rather than converting Syrian victory into imperial expansion, he restrained the army's movement. Damascus thus became a suspended frontier—not advancing toward further domination, yet not being abandoned.

International observers interpreted this restraint not as hesitancy, but as a signal that Egypt had reached its ultimate territorial boundary. Syria represented that boundary. The region was no longer just controlled; it became the turning point where escalation was deliberately interrupted.

From this point onward, Syria began transitioning from a space of military strategy to an arena of diplomatic resolution. The power that Egypt had acquired through Syrian victory became the reason that European states intensified their negotiation efforts, culminating in external intervention shortly afterward.

Chapter Six

The London Treaty (1840) and the Forced Reversal of Egyptian Influence in Syria

The London Treaty of 1840 represents the moment when the Syrian question was officially transferred from a bilateral dispute into a European-imposed resolution. Egypt did not withdraw because of internal collapse, nor due to local administrative failure, but because Syria—specifically—became the focal region where international pressure was enforced.

The treaty stipulated that Egypt would retain hereditary rule, yet only within Egypt itself, while **Syria had to be abandoned entirely**, including Damascus, Aleppo, and the coastal administrative centers. This requirement was not merely territorial; it represented a strategic reversal of everything Muhammad Ali had previously achieved.

Although Muhammad Ali initially refused the treaty and expected that continued negotiations might allow him to retain Syria, Britain, Austria, and Russia executed the terms militarily. The landing of British naval forces on the Syrian coast, followed by revolts in local districts, forced Egypt to withdraw from Syrian territory—thus returning Damascus to Ottoman administration.

The implementation of the treaty confirmed that Syria was not relinquished voluntarily. Damascus, Aleppo, and the coastal centers did not fall through domestic resistance, but by external naval pressure. When British forces landed, local uprisings re-emerged not because of renewed anti-Egyptian sentiment, but because communities anticipated administrative reversal. Syria was therefore not removed as a natural outcome; rather, its removal was imposed because it represented the strategic foundation of Egyptian authority.

What distinguishes this moment is that **Syria was not an incidental loss**. Rather, the treaty treated Syria as the decisive factor in eliminating Egyptian regional power. The collapse of Acre, previously defended for six months, but taken after a single day of bombardment, symbolized the end of Egypt's territorial presence in the Levant.

Therefore, the London Treaty was not simply a diplomatic agreement—it was the international mechanism specifically applied to reverse Egyptian control over Syria, demonstrating that the struggle's outcome was determined through Syrian territory.

Chapter Seven

The Imperial Firman of 1841 and the Restoration of Ottoman Administrative Authority in Syria

The Imperial Firman of 1841 formalized all the consequences triggered by the London Treaty. Although it granted hereditary authority to Muhammad Ali within Egypt, it simultaneously removed his influence across Syrian provinces. Thus, Syria became the official subject of administrative reversal.

The firman's conditions directly targeted the Syrian legacy of Egyptian expansion. Restrictions on army size and shipbuilding did not derive from Egyptian internal weakness, but from the international fear that Syria had previously demonstrated the feasibility of territorial extension. Once Syria was excluded, Egyptian capacity was structurally contained. Damascus thus represented not only the final territorial concession, but also the symbolic dismantling of the most ambitious administrative project of the 19th century.

The firman imposed military restrictions that directly targeted the developments previously achieved through the Syrian campaign:

- The Egyptian army was limited to 18,000 soldiers

- Warship construction was prohibited

- Tax obligations toward the Sultan were restructured

These constraints were not abstract—they were applied precisely because Syria had been the source of Egypt's strategic power. Tehran, Damascus, Aleppo, and the coastal cities represented the continuity of Egyptian authority; therefore, stripping Syria away was equivalent to dismantling the entire regional project.

After the firman, Syrian governance shifted back into an Ottoman model. Record books, military registers, local taxation, and judicial procedures were reissued under new provincial commands. This administrative shift formally ended the Egyptian presence and re-established the central imperial authority.

Thus, Syria was not merely removed from Egyptian control; it was **reintegrated into Ottoman imperial order**, symbolizing the complete undoing of Egypt's political geography.

Chapter Eight

Syria as the Turning Point that Determined the Outcome of the Egyptian–Ottoman Conflict

The examination of the Egyptian–Ottoman conflict demonstrates that the determining variable in the rise and decline of Egyptian regional authority was Syria. It was within Syrian territories that Egyptian governance reached its most structured and ambitious stage, and it was also Syria that exposed the vulnerability of that expansion. The conscription system, although designed to reinforce long-term military stability, revealed the limits of centralized administration when enforced upon heterogeneous communities. Public resistance in Syrian districts, especially around Jerusalem and Damascus, transformed administrative policy into social confrontation.

International involvement emerged not through Anatolia or Egypt, but through Syria. Consular reinterpretations of local unrest elevated the conflict into a transcontinental diplomatic dispute. Damascus became the reference point for European calculations regarding balance of power, commercial access, and geopolitical risk. Consequently, the military victory at Nezib— achieved through Syrian theaters—represented the peak of Egyptian

influence, while the loss of Syria under the London Treaty marked the termination of that influence.

The 1841 Firman confirmed that Egypt would preserve administrative autonomy while relinquishing all regional extensions. It reduced military capacity specifically because Syrian terrain had proven decisive during previous escalation. The removal of Syria was equivalent to the dismantling of Egyptian territorial ambition.

Therefore, Syria did not merely reflect the consequences of political rivalry; it defined them. The conflict did not begin, intensify, or conclude outside of Syrian space. It began when Damascus became contested, it intensified when Syrian policy drew foreign attention, and it concluded when Syria was removed from Egyptian control.

Syria formed the decisive variable that transformed the conflict from bilateral negotiation into enforced diplomatic outcome. Administrative success was achieved in Syria, military triumph was achieved in Syria, and diplomatic reversal was executed through Syria. The region therefore functioned as the highest point of Egyptian institutional development, and simultaneously as the point at which regional power dissolved.

In its totality, this study reaffirms that the centrality of Syria is not interpretive but structural—historically, militarily, politically, and diplomatically—making it the definitive pivot around which the conflict reached resolution.

Final Conclusion

The historical trajectory of the conflict demonstrates that Syria was not an appendix to Egyptian expansion; it was the determinant that defined both the rise and decline of Egyptian authority. Syrian territory served as the geographic proof of administrative capability when Egyptian reforms appeared functional, disciplined, and modernized. Yet the same territory exposed the limitations of these reforms once they intersected with internal resistance, religious sensibilities, and international strategic calculations.

It was within Syria that conscription shifted from policy to confrontation, where local communities articulated rejection in symbolic and collective forms, and where European consular authorities transformed internal grievances into diplomatic narratives. The Battle of Nezib confirmed that military superiority was achievable in Syrian space, yet the London Treaty proved that territorial achievement was reversible when international negotiation superseded regional advantage.

Such an outcome demonstrates that Syria was not simply a historical setting, but the decisive variable that defined both the emergence and dissolution of Egypt's regional authority. The crisis did not begin in Egypt nor end in Istanbul; it unfolded where administrative ambition intersected with geopolitical pressure—within Syrian space. Accordingly, any attempt to interpret the rise or decline of Muhammad Ali's project without situating Syria at the center would overlook the structural logic through which the conflict evolved.

The Imperial Firman of 1841 did not merely reaffirm Ottoman sovereignty; it formalized the strategic removal of Syria from the Egyptian project. By eliminating Syrian space, the firman dismantled the structural foundation that enabled Egypt to project influence beyond its borders. Thus, Syria defined the boundaries of geographical expansion and also represented the moment in which that expansion was dismantled.

In this sense, Syria was not a passive stage or a secondary province. It was the central variable in the conflict's design and outcome—politically, militarily, legally, and administratively. The conflict began when Syria became contested, intensified when Syria resisted, and ended when Syria was withdrawn. Accordingly, Syria stands not as a historical consequence of Egyptian ambition, but as the critical determinant through which that ambition was ultimately evaluated and concluded.

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Chapter 18

The Impact of Turkish Non-Governmental Organizations on Relations with the Arab World: A Middle Eastern Perspective ⊖

Mehmet Rıza Derindağ[1]

Abstract

This study investigates the strategic role of Turkish non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in shaping Türkiye's multifaceted relations with the Arab world. Within the framework of Türkiye's soft power strategy, NGOs have emerged as influential actors, particularly through humanitarian aid, education, religious services, and development initiatives. The article analyzes this influence through a structured examination of historical background, operational fields, country-specific examples, and future projections. Overall, the findings suggest that Turkish NGOs have significantly contributed to the construction of a positive image of Türkiye in Arab societies and have strengthened people-to-people ties across the region.

1. Introduction

Relations between Türkiye and the Arab world are rooted in a shared historical and cultural heritage; yet, in the modern era, they have been shaped by shifting geopolitical dynamics. In recent years, the Syrian civil war, the Yemen conflict, and the ongoing Palestinian question have revealed the expanded roles played by Turkish NGOs, forming an influential sphere that extends well beyond traditional state-driven diplomacy. In this context, the growing presence of Turkish civil society organizations across the Arab region has become a central component of Türkiye's soft power projection (Davutoğlu, 2009).

Since the early twenty-first century, political, economic, and cultural ties between Türkiye and Arab states have intensified. This deepening

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1   Asst. Prof. Dr. Mehmet Riza DERINDAG, Department of Business Administration, Senior Faculty Member, mehmet.derindag@istu.edu.pl

engagement is not solely the product of intergovernmental diplomacy; it also reflects the growing agency of civil actors—particularly NGOs—whose activities have reshaped Türkiye's image and influence at the societal level. As complementary agents of public diplomacy, Turkish NGOs contribute to the construction of favorable perceptions of Türkiye through their humanitarian, educational, developmental, and religious–spiritual initiatives (Nye, 2004; Kardaş, 2012).

The post–2010 period, marked by the transformations triggered by the Arab Spring, further amplified the prominence of Türkiye-based NGOs. Their humanitarian interventions increasingly served as a "bridge of hearts," providing critical assistance where conventional diplomatic mechanisms proved insufficient. During this period, semi-public institutions such as TİKA, AFAD, and the Turkish Red Crescent, as well as independent NGOs—among them the Hudayi Foundation, Care Association (Çare Derneği), IHH, Deniz Feneri, and Doctors Worldwide (Yeryüzü Doktorları)—developed extensive humanitarian networks across crisis zones including Syria, Palestine, Yemen, and Sudan. These efforts positioned NGOs as visible representatives of Türkiye's soft power in the Arab world (Özkan, 2014; Aras & Akpınar, 2011).

Importantly, these civil diplomacy activities extended far beyond the delivery of aid. They have contributed to building long-term, trust-based relationships with local communities, thereby supporting a more sustainable and socially grounded foreign policy posture. NGOs occupy a unique position in this ecosystem: as non-state actors capable of direct engagement with local populations, they foster interpersonal connections, underscore shared religious and cultural bonds, and cultivate mutual understanding. For instance, Care Association's mobile health clinics during the cholera outbreak in Yemen, its cataract and general surgery missions across East Africa, and its humanitarian programs in Palestine exemplify the dual humanitarian and diplomatic functions of Turkish NGOs (Care Association, 2023).

Given the shared historical legacy, religious affinities, and cultural interactions shaped throughout the post-Ottoman period, Türkiye's civil society engagements in the Arab world merit interpretation not only through the lens of traditional foreign policy but also as elements of a broader "civilizational diplomacy." Within this paradigm, NGOs represent key pillars of Türkiye's humanitarian foreign policy and its conceptualization of the "geography of the heart" (Davutoğlu, 2010).

2. Theoretical Background: Soft Power and Civil Diplomacy

2.1 Soft Power Theory

According to Joseph Nye, soft power refers to an actor's capacity to attract and influence others in accordance with its own preferences (Nye, 1990). Over the past two decades, civil society has become one of Türkiye's most significant instruments in cultivating this capacity.

Nye's conceptualization of soft power emphasizes a state's ability to shape the preferences of others through persuasion, attraction, and cultural appeal rather than coercion or material incentives (Nye, 2004). This form of power operates through values, culture, foreign policy behavior, and—importantly—the effectiveness of civil society. Although Türkiye has implemented this approach extensively in Africa, similar strategies have been applied in the Arab world due to shared religious sensitivities and geopolitical proximity. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) serve as the primary vehicles of this strategy.

While NGOs often appear in the foreground through humanitarian initiatives, their faith-based identities introduce a unique paradigm in Turkish–Arab relations by drawing upon the sociological continuity of ummah consciousness.

2.2 The Relationship Between Soft Power and Civil Society

NGOs are carriers of soft power because they operate outside the state yet are capable of acting in alignment with national foreign policy objectives. Especially in contexts of crisis, conflict, and poverty, the aid and services provided by NGOs serve not only humanitarian purposes but also strategic ones. As such, NGO activities are often analyzed within the domains of cultural diplomacy, public diplomacy, and religious diplomacy (Keohane & Nye, 1998; Melissen, 2005).

Within the framework of religious diplomacy, humanitarian aid diplomacy and shared civilizational legacies provide a compelling sociological lens for interpreting Turkish–Arab relations. The difficulty of drawing boundaries between geographical proximity and spiritual–cultural unity has shaped both societies as communities that readily come to each other's aid in times of hardship.

2.3 The Role of NGOs in Türkiye's Soft Power Strategy

2.3.1 Institutional Infrastructure

The primary Turkish NGOs and semi-public institutions contributing to Türkiye's soft power include:

• Türkiye Diyanet Foundation (TDV):

Prominent for religious services, mosque construction, scholarships, and publishing activities. TDV distributes Qur'an and Hadith translations in dozens of languages and supports students brought to Türkiye on Diyanet scholarships.

• Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TİKA):

Known for educational, health, and infrastructure projects, particularly in the Balkans and Turkic Republics. TİKA has restored hundreds of Ottoman and Seljuk-era historical structures worldwide—from Thailand to Tanzania, and from the Turkistan steppes to the fields of Rumelia.

• IHH Humanitarian Relief Foundation:

In addition to emergency aid and development programs, IHH is a member of the UN Economic and Social Council and played a significant role in the Moro peace process in the Philippines.

• Care Association (Çare Derneği):

Active in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and other parts of Asia; in Bangladesh, Cambodia, and the Philippines in Southeast Asia; and in Yemen, Gaza, and African regions through health, food, and education projects.

2.3.2 Regional Examples of Soft Power Implementation

• Palestine (Gaza):

Organizations such as the Hudayi Foundation, Beşir Association, IHH, Care Association, and Şefkat Yolu conduct food distribution, cataract operations, and orphan sponsorship programs. These initiatives strengthen gratitude toward Türkiye and serve as tools of trust-building in diplomatic relations, while reflecting the Turkish society's deep empathy and generosity.

• Yemen:

TDV's mobile health missions during the civil war positioned Türkiye as an active, friendly, and compassionate actor—contrasting sharply with the distant posture of Western powers.

- Syria (Idlib and al-Bab):

Türkiye-based NGOs provided healthcare and shelter services to war victims, simultaneously enhancing Türkiye's humanitarian diplomacy capacity.

- Lebanon:

TİKA's educational and infrastructure support helped Türkiye maintain a balanced and inclusive position amidst sectarian dynamics between Sunnis and Shi'a communities.

NGOs Strengthening Türkiye's Soft Power on Three Levels

1. Normative Influence:

Aid activities convey Islamic principles of solidarity and brotherhood, providing cultural depth beyond material assistance.

2. Perception Management:

Media visibility of humanitarian operations across Arab platforms enhances Türkiye's positive image.

3. Diplomatic Leverage:

In times of interstate tension, NGO-mediated interactions lay the groundwork for formal diplomacy (Kirişci, 2013).

Through cultural and humanitarian diplomacy carried out by NGOs, Türkiye's soft power strategy in the Arab world has gained significant momentum. NGOs function not merely as service-delivery mechanisms but also as institutions that carry and transmit strategic intent.

2.4 Public Diplomacy and the Role of NGOs

NGOs function as complementary agents of public diplomacy—non-state actors that operate in harmony with state objectives (Usul, 2010). In Türkiye, institutions such as TİKA, IHH, the Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities (YTB), the Türkiye Diyanet Foundation, and the Maarif Foundation play key roles in this sphere.

3. The Institutional Rise and International Expansion of Turkish NGOs

Since the 1990s, Turkish non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have increasingly expanded into the international arena. The number of registered associations in Türkiye rose from approximately 64,000 in 2000 to 130,000 by 2024 (Directorate of Associations, 2024). Around 4% of

these organizations have some form of overseas representation or activity. Among them, several NGOs have become prominent carriers of Türkiye's soft power, particularly in the Arab world.

3.1 IHH Humanitarian Relief Foundation

Active in 123 countries, the IHH Humanitarian Relief Foundation is one of the most visible examples of an NGO that concretizes Türkiye's soft power on the ground. Originating from voluntary relief activities carried out during the Bosnian War in 1992, the organization was formally established in 1995. IHH holds consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), has observer status at the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), and maintains operational representation in over 100 countries.

IHH is particularly active in conflict and crisis zones such as Palestine–Gaza, Syria, Yemen, Somalia, Rakhine (Arakan), and Afghanistan. Its operations include:

- Emergency relief operations in war and disaster zones

- Water-well projects and orphanages

- Health centers and vocational training projects (especially in Africa)

- Development and education programs

- Religious and cultural activities, including sacrificial (Qurban) campaigns, Ramadan iftar projects, and Qur'an distribution

Through these activities, IHH not only addresses pressing humanitarian needs but also strengthens Islamic solidarity and contributes to Türkiye's image as a compassionate and responsible regional actor.

3.2 Turkish Red Crescent (Türk Kızılayı)

With offices in 51 countries, the Turkish Red Crescent (TRC) is not only a humanitarian organization but also a key soft power actor in Türkiye's foreign policy. Its operations in the Arab world visibly reflect Türkiye's compassion-based foreign policy discourse.

The Turkish Red Crescent's longest and most intensive operation has been in Syria since 2011. In this context, TRC has organized cross-border aid, food and health support, shelter projects, and orphanage initiatives. These efforts exemplify Türkiye's humanitarian diplomacy capacity.

In Palestine (especially Gaza), TRC has provided:

- Medicines and medical equipment

- Mobile hospitals and blood donation campaigns

- Blood centers and psychosocial support programs in Gaza

- Orphan support projects in Jerusalem

These initiatives have strengthened local trust in Türkiye.

In Yemen, TRC has been one of the rare organizations active even in the most vulnerable regions, implementing projects related to:

- Emergency aid

- Maternal and child health

- Clean water access

- Nutrition centers in response to hunger and cholera crises

In Iraq (Sinjar, Tal Afar, Mosul), TRC has delivered post-conflict rehabilitation, shelter assistance, and psychosocial support. In Lebanon and Jordan, it has implemented education, food, health, and shelter programs in refugee camps for Syrian refugees and has undertaken joint projects and capacity-building programs with the Lebanese Red Cross. (Turkish Red Crescent, 2023).

From a soft power perspective, the Turkish Red Crescent is one of the most visible institutions embodying the idea of Türkiye as a "state of mercy" (merhamet devleti). Particularly in the Arab world, it helps revive emotional ties linked to the Ottoman past through humanitarian assistance. As a non-state diplomatic actor with rapid response capacity during crises, TRC enhances Türkiye's diplomatic prestige, keeps the channel of humanitarian diplomacy open where formal diplomacy is blocked, and supports Türkiye's broader international outreach.

Through special campaigns during Ramadan, Eid al-Adha, and the month of Muharram—such as the "Let Us Share Together" initiatives—it addresses the value universe of Arab societies and promotes ummah consciousness and Islamic solidarity. Its active role within the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) has strengthened cooperation with Arab Red Crescent societies and facilitated joint projects with humanitarian organizations in Qatar, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia. In this sense, the Turkish Red Crescent is not merely an aid carrier but a representative of Türkiye's cultural, religious, and humanitarian values in the field.

3.3 Türkiye Diyanet Foundation (TDV)

Founded in 1975, the Türkiye Diyanet Foundation, in cooperation with the Presidency of Religious Affairs (Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı), operates in religious services, education, publishing, charitable work, and international religious diplomacy. In the Arab world, TDV is an influential soft power actor grounded in Islamic solidarity, religious education, humanitarian aid, and cultural interaction.

Key areas of activity include:

• Religious publications and Qur'an translations:

TDV translates and distributes authentic religious texts, particularly into Arabic and other languages, with the aim of promoting sound religious understanding and intellectually countering radicalization. TDV publications are used as reference works in various Arab countries. For example, the "Qur'an and Its Explanatory Translation" has been translated into Arabic and widely distributed.

• Scholarships and religious education:

TDV provides scholarships for students from Arab countries to study in Theology Faculties and Imam Hatip schools in Türkiye. Hundreds of students from Egypt, Palestine, Lebanon, Jordan, Yemen, and Iraq have benefited from TDV scholarship programs and receive their education in Türkiye. Upon returning to their home countries, they often act as cultural ambassadors of Türkiye's values.

• Humanitarian and religious aid:

TDV organizes sacrificial (Qurban), Ramadan, zakat, and emergency aid campaigns, particularly in Gaza, Yemen, Syria, Iraq, and Lebanon, providing food, health, housing, and educational support. Special projects in Yemen and Palestine, including Qur'an schools and orphanages, strengthen Türkiye's humanitarian diplomacy and consolidate its influence in its "geography of the heart."

• Mosque construction and restoration:

TDV engages in mosque construction, restoration, and equipment provision in Arab countries. In post-war Syria, it has participated in rebuilding destroyed mosques; in African Arab states such as Sudan and Djibouti, mosque projects continue (TDV, 2023).

Together with the Presidency of Religious Affairs, TDV also sends qualified religious personnel to various Islamic countries, working with

local NGOs especially in North Africa, the Levant, and the Gulf region to transmit sound religious knowledge.

From a soft power perspective, TDV aims to promote the Hanafi–Maturidi tradition and Türkiye-centered religious thought as an alternative to Salafism, extremism, and exclusionary currents. Its scholarship programs and schools support Türkiye's position as a center of Islamic scholarship. Graduates build relations of trust and affinity with Türkiye and form a religious elite sympathetic to Türkiye in their home countries (Gözaydın, 2015).

3.4 Türkiye Maarif Foundation (TMV)

Established in 2016 under Law No. 6721, the Türkiye Maarif Foundation (TMV) was founded to establish and operate educational institutions abroad and to expand Türkiye's soft power in the field of education. A core strategic objective is to replace schools previously run by the FETÖ network with Türkiye-based institutions aligned with national values.

Key activities in the Arab world include:

• School openings and takeovers:

Maarif schools are active in several Arab countries such as Somalia, Sudan, Lebanon, Algeria, Iraq, Tunisia, Morocco, Yemen, Qatar, and parts of Syria. In these countries, more than 25 educational institutions, from kindergarten to high school, are operated. In states such as Sudan, Somalia, and Yemen, former FETÖ schools have been taken over and integrated under Maarif.

• Curriculum and educational programs:

Maarif schools provide an internationally oriented curriculum, often in Arabic and English/Turkish, and incorporate Islamic and cultural courses that respect local religious and cultural sensitivities while reflecting Turkish civilizational values. Technology and STEM education are aligned with Türkiye's pedagogical approaches.

• Scholarships and exchanges:

Successful students from Arab countries are directed to universities in Türkiye, receiving scholarships, accommodation, and academic support. These students may later occupy elite positions in their home countries while maintaining ties with Türkiye.

• Education diplomacy and intergovernmental cooperation:

TMV has signed cooperation protocols with several Arab states, including Jordan, Somalia, Sudan, and Lebanon. In some countries, TMV is officially recognized as the sole authorized Turkish educational institution.

From a soft power perspective, Maarif schools:

1. Exercise ideological influence through education:

Present Türkiye as a civilizational and educational model that offers an alternative to both Western-centric and radical interpretations of education and religion.

2. Foster cultural and linguistic proximity:

Increase interest in Turkish language, culture, and Türkiye among younger generations in the Arab region.

3. Serve as an alternative platform in the struggle against FETÖ abroad:

Function simultaneously as a security and soft power instrument.

4. Contribute to Türkiye's international image:

Strengthen Türkiye's legitimacy as a reliable educational actor, perceived as a brand that balances religiosity and secular education in the eyes of both parents and states.

3.5 TİKA

With offices in 61 countries, the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TİKA) reinforces Türkiye's image as a "generous and solidarity-oriented" state. In the Arab world, its educational projects, capacity-building programs, and development initiatives exemplify investment in human capital.

TİKA's rapid and effective interventions during crises help position Türkiye as a trusted partner in the Arab region. Through school construction, vocational training, restoration of historical sites, and technical cooperation projects, TİKA contributes both to development on the ground and to strengthening Türkiye's soft power.

3.6 Aziz Mahmud Hüdayi Foundation

Founded in 1985, the Aziz Mahmud Hüdayi Foundation operates in education, humanitarian relief, and social services in line with Islamic values. In the Arab world, particularly in crisis zones, the foundation contributes to Türkiye's soft power strategy.

Key activities include:

- Education services:

In Syria, schools, madrasas, mosques, Qur'an courses, and youth centers have been established in regions such as Aleppo, Hama, Homs, Damascus, and Latakia, serving more than 10,000 Syrian students.

- Humanitarian aid:

In Gaza (Palestine), the foundation provides food, clothing, hygiene materials, and cash aid to thousands of needy families. In Lebanon and Sudan, it supports war-affected families and teachers, and responds to food insecurity.

- Social and cultural activities:

Ramadan iftar programs and Eid al-Adha Qurban campaigns are organized across the Arab geography.

Through these activities, the Hüdayi Foundation reinforces Türkiye's image as a compassionate and supportive country, deepens cultural and religious ties, and invests in human capital through education and social projects.

3.7 Beşir Association

Beşir Association is another significant NGO contributing to Türkiye's soft power strategy through humanitarian operations in the Arab world, especially in crisis regions.

Main areas of activity include:

- Food and basic needs support:

In Gaza, Beşir Association distributes food, hygiene kits, and other basic necessities to families living under severe hardship.

- Qurban and Ramadan activities:

Through iftar programs and Qurban meat distribution, the association reinforces solidarity and sharing, particularly in war-torn and impoverished regions.

- Water-well projects:

In Arab countries facing water scarcity, Beşir implements water-well projects to improve access to clean drinking water, especially in rural and infrastructure-poor areas.

- Education and health support:

Provision of school materials, scholarships, and health services contributes to local development.

These activities reflect Türkiye's humanitarian diplomacy on the ground, strengthen cultural and religious ties, and enhance Türkiye's image as a caring and supportive country.

3.8 Hayrat Humanitarian Aid Association

Hayrat Humanitarian Aid Association also plays an important role in Türkiye's soft power strategy through humanitarian and development projects in the Arab world.

Key activities:

- Syria:

In Azez and Tel Abyad, the association has established higher education dormitories and orphan education centers, enabling war-affected youth to continue their studies. Projects such as the Kafartaharim Orphan Project School in Idlib provide education and shelter for orphans.

- Yemen:

Due to the civil war and humanitarian crisis, Hayrat delivers drinking water, food parcels, and winter clothing to affected populations.

- Sudan:

Food distribution is organized for families facing conflict and economic hardship.

- Palestine (Gaza):

Emergency aid, food, health, and shelter projects are implemented, along with specific programs for orphans.

Through such initiatives, Hayrat reinforces Türkiye's humanitarian diplomacy and soft power by supporting vulnerable populations, consolidating cultural and religious bonds, and investing in human development.

3.9 Care Association (Çare Derneği)

Care Association contributes significantly to Türkiye's humanitarian diplomacy and soft power in the Arab world and beyond.

Key areas of activity:

- Palestine (Gaza):

Emergency relief and food distribution, including basic food items, hygiene products, and other daily necessities.

- Yemen:

Provision of drinking water, food parcels, and winter clothing in response to the protracted humanitarian crisis.

- Syria:

Education and shelter projects that enable war-affected children to continue their education.

- Water-well projects:

In Arab countries facing water scarcity, Care Association implements water-well projects to improve access to clean drinking water and support public health in rural and underdeveloped areas.

These programs reinforce Türkiye's image as a compassionate, reliable, and supportive actor and further deepen cultural and religious ties across the region.

3.10 Deniz Feneri Association

Deniz Feneri Association is another key NGO whose activities in the Arab world contribute to Türkiye's soft power and humanitarian diplomacy.

Main activities:

- Syria:

A soup kitchen in central Aleppo provides hot meals to around 3,000 people daily. In addition, bread, hot meals, food, and clothing are distributed in various parts of Syria.

- Gaza (Palestine):

Deniz Feneri delivers food, flour, hot meals, hygiene kits, tents, blankets, and cash assistance. Logistics are often managed through a base in Cairo (Egypt), with supplies transported via the Rafah border crossing.

- Yemen:

Food aid is provided in response to the ongoing civil war and humanitarian crisis.

These projects visibly reflect Türkiye's humanitarian diplomacy and soft power strategies on the ground. Deniz Feneri reinforces Türkiye's image as a caring and generous state, strengthens cultural and religious ties, and supports human capital through education and social assistance.

4. Regional Activities and Illustrative Cases

4.1 Palestine – Humanitarian Aid and Political Positioning

In Palestine, particularly in Gaza, Turkish NGOs have assumed a dual role, providing humanitarian assistance while also shaping Türkiye's political and moral stance in the region.

Since 2009, IHH's operations in Gaza have included support for approximately 10,000 orphans and the delivery of 40 million USD in financial assistance (IHH, 2023). In 2022, the Türkiye Diyanet Foundation (TDV), through its "Jerusalem is Ours" (Kudüs Bizimdir) campaign, distributed food parcels to 35,000 families, contributing both to humanitarian relief and the symbolic reaffirmation of Türkiye's commitment to the Palestinian cause.

These efforts consolidate Türkiye's image as a country that not only offers aid, but also maintains a principled political position on issues of justice, occupation, and the rights of oppressed communities.

4.2 Syria – Crisis Management and Refugee Support

In Syria, Türkiye has become one of the principal actors in crisis management and refugee assistance. Under the leadership of AFAD and the Turkish Red Crescent, around 3.6 million Syrians have received support in the form of shelter, health services, and food assistance. It is estimated that 65% of cross-border humanitarian aid to Syria has been organized by Turkish NGOs (AFAD, 2022).

These activities have expanded Türkiye's humanitarian diplomacy capacity, positioning the country as a frontline provider of protection and relief in one of the most protracted crises of the 21st century.

4.3 Yemen – Health and Food Security

In Yemen, Turkish NGOs have played a crucial role in addressing health and food insecurity amidst civil war and systemic collapse. Since 2015, IHH has provided food and medical assistance to approximately 800,000 people, reaching 12,000 beneficiaries through health campaigns in 2023 alone (IHH, 2023).

These interventions, often implemented in hard-to-reach regions, enhance Türkiye's reputation as a reliable partner that remains present even when other international actors are largely absent or constrained.

4.4 Sudan and Somalia – Development-Oriented Projects

In Sudan, TİKA conducted 85 development projects between 2020 and 2023, focusing on agriculture, irrigation, and vocational training. These initiatives emphasize long-term capacity building rather than short-term relief.

In Somalia, the Türkiye Maarif Foundation operates four schools and one girls' dormitory, providing structured, quality education and contributing to the reconstruction of the country's human capital. These projects also strengthen Türkiye's educational diplomacy and long-term societal presence.

4.5 Libya and Tunisia – Education and Cultural Influence

In Libya and Tunisia, the Türkiye Maarif Foundation runs 11 schools serving around 5,000 students (Maarif Foundation, 2024). These schools function not only as educational institutions but also as centers of Türkiye's education diplomacy. They promote Turkish language and culture, foster person-to-person ties, and present Türkiye as an alternative educational and civilizational model in the region.

4.6 Care Association – The Cases of Palestine and Yemen

Care Association (Çare Derneği) is particularly active in health and food security within crisis-affected regions of the Arab world.

In Palestine, between 2021 and 2024, Care Association delivered emergency food and hygiene packages to more than 100,000 individuals in the Gaza Strip. During Ramadan and Eid al-Adha campaigns in 2023, the association provided hot meals to approximately 20,000 people. In the same period, around 500 orphans in Gaza received regular monthly cash assistance.

In Yemen, between 2022 and 2024, Care Association organized 15 health camps in Taiz, Marib, and Sanaʿa, offering free medical screening and medicine to 25,000 people. More than 3,000 individuals benefitted from cataract surgery and minor surgical operations. These activities combine immediate relief with the training of local health personnel, reflecting a strategy geared toward long-term capacity building.

5. Perceptions and Socio-Cultural Impact Among Arab Societies

Over the past decade, Türkiye has followed a strategic course in which NGOs are positioned as active actors in its outreach to the Arab world. Humanitarian assistance, health services, and educational investments have become primary tools for enhancing Türkiye's soft power (Nye, 2004; Kardaş, 2017). In this context, Turkish NGOs operate not only as aid providers but also as multidimensional diplomatic actors that promote cultural proximity and shape perceptions.

Empirical data reflect this impact:

• Among Arab youth, 71% hold a positive view of Türkiye (Arab Barometer, 2022).

• The labels "Made in Türkiye" and "Turkish aid" are increasingly associated with trust and reliability.

• Ramadan and Qurban campaigns function not merely as seasonal charity, but as mechanisms for forging lasting emotional bonds.

Within Joseph Nye's framework, soft power denotes a country's ability to obtain desired outcomes through attraction and persuasion rather than coercion (Nye, 2004). NGOs, as non-state but often state-supported actors, fill a strategic gap in foreign policy (Tepe, 2014). Türkiye's NGO activities in the Arab region can be analyzed precisely within this theoretical context.

The activities of Turkish NGOs have contributed to the perception of Türkiye not only as an aid-dispensing state, but also as a "moral center" assuming a historical leadership responsibility within the Islamic world. Field surveys indicate that among individuals who have directly benefitted from Turkish-origin humanitarian activities, positive views of Türkiye exceed 85% (Yavuz & Duran, 2021). Among younger generations, this impact manifests as cultural affinity, growing interest in Turkish television series, and a desire to pursue higher education in Türkiye.

Through NGOs, Türkiye has succeeded in establishing a deep cultural and emotional connection with Arab societies while addressing urgent humanitarian needs. This bond, in turn, strengthens popular support for Türkiye and has positive repercussions at the diplomatic level. The influence of NGOs should therefore be regarded as a critical element in the sustainability of public diplomacy and soft power.

6. Challenges Faced by Turkish NGOs in the Arab World

Turkish NGOs encounter a variety of challenges in the Arab world that can be grouped into political, legal, cultural, financial, and operational dimensions.

6.1 Political and Diplomatic Obstacles

- Instability and internal conflict:

In countries such as Syria, Yemen, and Libya, security risks and armed conflict restrict field access and threaten staff safety.

- Bureaucratic constraints:

Some Arab governments impose restrictive regulations or lengthy procedures on foreign NGOs, complicating project implementation.

- Geopolitical competition:

Türkiye's growing presence is sometimes perceived as a threat by other regional actors, resulting in indirect pressure on Turkish NGOs.

6.2 Legal and Regulatory Challenges

- Registration and licensing issues:

Changing NGO laws, prolonged approval processes, and non-transparent procedures delay project implementation and create uncertainty.

- Financial regulations:

Restrictions related to money transfers, taxation, and local banking systems can cause disruptions in the delivery of aid.

6.3 Cultural and Socio-Psychological Barriers

- Perceptions of external affiliation:

Some local communities initially perceive Turkish NGOs as external actors, requiring time and effort to build trust.

- Language and communication barriers:

Limited Arabic proficiency among field staff or lack of qualified interpreters can hinder effective engagement with local populations.

6.4 Resource and Capacity Constraints

- Sustainable funding shortages:

Many Turkish NGOs rely heavily on donations and struggle to secure sufficient budgets for long-term projects.

- Human resource limitations:

It is not always easy to recruit qualified, Arabic-speaking staff capable of adapting to challenging field conditions.

6.5 Image and Credibility Tests

- Post-FETÖ trust issues:

In some Arab countries, trust in Turkish institutions has been affected by concerns over confusion with FETÖ-linked organizations, making reputation management all the more critical.

- Perceived competition with local NGOs:

When cooperation with local organizations is weak, a perception of competition may arise, potentially generating social tension on the ground.

6.6 Logistical and Operational Difficulties

- Transport and infrastructure problems:

Operating in remote, rural, or conflict-affected areas creates serious challenges in transportation, storage, and supply chain management.

- Weak rapid-response mechanisms:

In some NGOs, structural and coordination deficiencies limit the ability to respond swiftly in emergencies.

In summary, the main challenges Turkish NGOs face in their relations and planned activities in the Arab world can be grouped under the themes of security and bureaucratic obstacles, ideological perceptions (e.g., accusations of "neo-Ottomanism"), political volatility, and shortcomings in transparency and professionalism.

7. Strategic Recommendations for the Future

To enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of Turkish NGOs' activities in the Arab world, several strategic recommendations can be formulated.

7.1 Legal Frameworks and Strategic Partnerships

Turkish NGOs should strengthen their legal foundations in host countries by developing partnerships with local NGOs, municipalities, religious authorities, and public institutions. Such cooperation facilitates

local acceptance, shortens bureaucratic processes, and enhances legitimacy. Establishing country-specific legal advisory mechanisms is also recommended to navigate diverse regulatory environments.

7.2 Diplomatic Coordination and Public Diplomacy Integration

NGOs should operate in closer coordination with Turkish embassies, TİKA, and the Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities (YTB). These institutions can support the diplomatic legitimacy of NGO activities. Furthermore, NGOs ought to be systematically integrated into Türkiye's broader public diplomacy strategy and supported accordingly (Kardaş, 2017).

7.3 Sustainable Financing and Institutional Capacity Building

Rather than relying exclusively on donations, Turkish NGOs should develop hybrid financial models to ensure sustainability. Social enterprise initiatives, foundation-owned enterprises, and social impact funds can enable NGOs to act more independently in the field and implement long-term projects.

Strategic investment is also needed in institutional capacity building, including the digitalization of monitoring and evaluation systems and the adoption of international reporting standards.

7.4 Communication, Language, and Cultural Mediation

Arabic language proficiency, cultural diplomacy skills, and sensitivity to local norms among NGO staff must be improved. Mandatory cultural orientation programs, employment of local consultants, and the formation of regional expert teams for impact analysis should precede field deployment.

7.5 Local Ownership and Participatory Approaches

Projects should move away from top-down models towards participatory approaches in which local communities are actively involved. Initiatives designed based on needs identified in the field, and which include local stakeholders in implementation mechanisms, tend to be more effective and sustainable.

7.6 Digitalization and Impact Monitoring

The implementation of data-driven planning and digital impact monitoring systems will strengthen transparency, measurability, and accountability. Tools such as blockchain-based donation tracking, mobile

reporting applications, and real-time dashboards should be integrated into NGO operations (UNDP, 2022).

7.7 Joint Platforms and Sectoral Consolidation

Turkish NGOs working in similar fields should establish thematic consortia, joint platforms, and country-based cooperation mechanisms to pool resources and avoid fragmentation. Such consolidation will enhance both field efficiency and external visibility.

Overall, the challenges faced by Turkish NGOs in the Arab world are not merely institutional, but also diplomatic, cultural, and structural. Addressing them requires multi-layered strategies and a more coordinated framework among the state, NGOs, and local stakeholders. In order to strengthen Türkiye's soft power in the long term, a strategic transformation of NGOs is indispensable.

These strategic recommendations can be summarized under four overarching headings:

- Working closely with local partners

- Establishing NGO forums and platforms

- Focusing on education and social innovation projects

- Institutionalizing state–NGO coordination

8. Conclusion

Turkish NGOs have assumed not only a humanitarian but also a strategic role in Türkiye's relations with the Arab world. Through effective aid delivery, localization, and sustained cultural interaction, they contribute significantly to both improving local welfare and enhancing Türkiye's image.

The sustainability of this impact depends on transparency, local cooperation, and coordinated action. If these conditions are met, Turkish NGOs will continue to function as indispensable actors in Türkiye's soft power architecture and as key facilitators of deeper, trust-based relations with Arab societies.

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Conclusion

This volume has approached the Treaty of Kütahya of 1833 not as a marginal diplomatic episode confined to the immediate context of an Ottoman–Egyptian confrontation, but as a formative historical rupture whose consequences have extended across centuries and geographies. The collective analyses presented in this book demonstrate that Kütahya constituted a decisive threshold in the transformation of political authority, the reconfiguration of Turkish–Arab relations, and the gradual integration of the Ottoman–Arab geography into a global system structured by asymmetrical power relations. Far from being a temporary settlement designed to suspend military hostilities, the Treaty of Kütahya reshaped the logic of sovereignty, governance, and intervention in ways that continue to inform the political realities of the region today.

One of the most fundamental conclusions of this volume is that the Treaty of Kütahya crystallised a structural crisis already unfolding within the Ottoman imperial order. By the early nineteenth century, the empire was facing profound challenges arising from military decline, fiscal strain, administrative fragmentation, and shifting international norms. The confrontation with Mehmed Ali Pasha and his modernised army did not create these vulnerabilities; rather, it exposed them with unprecedented clarity. The treaty formalised a situation in which the central authority, unable to assert effective control through its own means, was compelled to recognise a de facto redistribution of power within the imperial system. This moment marked a departure from earlier patterns of centre–periphery negotiation, transforming decentralisation from a managed imperial practice into a destabilising structural condition.

The contradiction embedded in the Treaty of Kütahya—between the preservation of nominal sovereignty and the acceptance of practical fragmentation—emerges as a recurring theme throughout the book. By maintaining the symbolic unity of the empire while conceding extensive territorial and administrative autonomy to a provincial ruler, the treaty undermined the coherence of imperial governance. Sovereignty became increasingly performative, detached from effective authority on the ground. This disjunction weakened the normative foundations of the state and created a political environment in which legitimacy was contested not only

internally, but also externally. Several chapters demonstrate that this erosion of central authority did not merely weaken the Ottoman state; it altered the expectations and strategies of both internal actors and foreign powers.

A particularly significant conclusion concerns the role of external intervention in shaping the outcomes of the Kütahya crisis. The involvement of major European powers—most notably Russia, Britain, and France—marked a decisive transformation in the nature of Ottoman politics. Internal conflicts were no longer treated as matters to be resolved within the imperial framework; they became objects of international negotiation and strategic calculation. The Treaty of Kütahya thus represents an early instance of what may be described as conditional sovereignty: a political condition in which the survival and territorial integrity of a state depended increasingly on the consent, mediation, or rivalry of external powers. This dynamic would later be institutionalised through a series of treaties, interventions, and mandates, forming the core of the Eastern Question and shaping the modern Middle Eastern state system.

The volume further demonstrates that the internationalisation of Ottoman internal affairs following Kütahya had far-reaching consequences for the region's political imagination. Once imperial authority was shown to be negotiable under external pressure, the boundaries between domestic governance and international politics became increasingly blurred. This transformation altered not only state behaviour, but also the expectations of political actors within the empire. Provincial elites, reformers, and oppositional movements began to operate within a political environment in which external alignment could serve as a source of leverage against the centre. The Treaty of Kütahya thus contributed to a reconfiguration of political agency, encouraging strategies that prioritised external support over internal consensus.

One of the central contributions of this book lies in its nuanced analysis of Turkish–Arab relations within this historical framework. The chapters collectively reject interpretations that attribute the later distancing between Turkish and Arab societies to cultural incompatibility or civilisational rupture. Instead, they demonstrate that this distancing was the outcome of structural disintegration following the collapse of a shared political order. The Treaty of Kütahya weakened the institutional and symbolic foundations of Ottoman unity, accelerating a process in which different regions experienced modernity under radically divergent conditions. While Anatolia underwent a process of state consolidation and reform, much of the Arab world was

subjected to direct colonial rule or indirect domination through mandates and protectorates.

This divergence in historical experience produced distinct political trajectories and collective memories. The book shows that the emergence of nationalist narratives in both Turkish and Arab contexts was shaped by the absence of a shared political framework rather than by inherent antagonism. The Treaty of Kütahya, by destabilising the imperial centre and legitimising fragmentation, indirectly contributed to the erosion of a common political language. This insight challenges simplistic readings of Turkish–Arab relations and invites a reassessment of the historical conditions under which solidarity fractured and mistrust emerged.

The post-Ottoman period is presented in this volume not as a moment of clear rupture, but as a prolonged and uneven transition characterised by instability, externally imposed borders, and contested sovereignties. The structural weaknesses exposed at Kütahya persisted throughout the nineteenth century and were later reproduced under new forms during the mandate and post-colonial periods. Newly established states often inherited truncated sovereignty, fragile institutions, and economies structured around external dependency. The volume convincingly argues that these conditions cannot be understood without reference to the earlier breakdown of imperial cohesion and the precedents set by agreements such as Kütahya.

A key analytical achievement of the book is its treatment of geopolitics as a historically embedded process rather than a purely contemporary competition for power. Several chapters demonstrate that recurring patterns of intervention, dependency, and political violence are not anomalies of the modern era, but the continuation of dynamics set in motion during the late Ottoman period. The Treaty of Kütahya appears in this context as an early signal of systemic vulnerability: a moment when the internal capacity to manage conflict eroded to the point that external arbitration became normalised. This normalisation would later manifest itself in the form of mandates, alliances, security dependencies, and interventionist doctrines.

The sections devoted to the Palestinian issue provide one of the most compelling illustrations of this historical continuity. Rather than treating Palestine as an isolated or exceptional case, the book situates it within the broader collapse of Ottoman authority and the subsequent reordering of the region under colonial rule. The weakening of imperial sovereignty and the opening of the region to external intervention created the structural conditions under which demographic engineering, territorial partition, and long-term occupation became possible. The Treaty of Kütahya, by

accelerating the disintegration of imperial governance and legitimising external involvement, forms part of the deeper historical background against which the Palestinian tragedy unfolded.

The volume further highlights the interaction between internal fragmentation and external exploitation. The conflict between the Ottoman centre and Mehmed Ali Pasha exemplifies a recurring pattern in regional history: internal divisions create opportunities for external actors to intervene, while external intervention deepens internal fragmentation. This mutually reinforcing dynamic is traced across multiple historical contexts, from nineteenth-century imperial politics to contemporary regional conflicts. The book thus underscores that sustainable political stability requires addressing both internal governance failures and external power asymmetries, rather than privileging one at the expense of the other.

Methodologically, the interdisciplinary approach adopted throughout the volume constitutes one of its most significant contributions. By integrating historical scholarship with political theory, legal analysis, and contemporary case studies, the book avoids reductionist explanations and offers a multi-layered understanding of continuity and change. The Treaty of Kütahya is examined simultaneously as a diplomatic agreement, a political rupture, and a symbol of deeper structural transformations. This approach not only enriches Ottoman historiography, but also contributes to broader debates in international relations, particularly regarding sovereignty, intervention, and state formation in non-Western contexts.

Another major conclusion concerns the role of historical memory and narrative in shaping political identities and policy choices. The book demonstrates that interpretations of the Ottoman past, the Treaty of Kütahya, and the subsequent fragmentation of the region continue to influence contemporary political discourse. Selective readings of history—whether nostalgic, accusatory, or instrumental—have shaped nationalist ideologies and foreign policy orientations across the Turkish and Arab worlds. By revisiting these narratives with scholarly rigour, the volume seeks to move beyond politicised historiography and to encourage a more critical engagement with the past.

The book also raises important normative questions regarding responsibility and agency. While external powers played a decisive role in shaping the region's modern trajectory, the volume does not present local actors as passive victims of global forces. Instead, it highlights the complex interplay between internal choices and external constraints. The Treaty of Kütahya stands as a reminder that decisions taken under pressure can have

enduring consequences, particularly when they institutionalise asymmetry and dependency. This insight carries significant implications for contemporary policymakers operating within a global system still characterised by unequal power relations.

In its broader assessment, the volume argues that the Treaty of Kütahya should be read as both a historical lesson and a cautionary example. It illustrates how short-term political compromises, designed to manage immediate crises, can generate long-term structural vulnerabilities when they fail to address underlying issues of governance, legitimacy, and cohesion. The treaty resolved a military confrontation, but it did so at the cost of weakening the imperial centre and normalising external involvement. This pattern would be repeated throughout the region's modern history, with similarly destabilising effects.

At the same time, the book emphasises the importance of historical awareness in confronting contemporary challenges. Understanding the roots of regional instability requires a willingness to engage critically with the past, including its uncomfortable dimensions. The Treaty of Kütahya reveals that fragmentation, dependency, and intervention are not recent phenomena, but deeply embedded features of the region's political experience. Recognising this continuity is a necessary step toward developing more sustainable and autonomous political frameworks in the present.

Ultimately, this volume seeks to contribute to a more informed and reflective discourse on the past, present, and future of the Turkish–Arab world. By situating the Treaty of Kütahya within a broad temporal and spatial perspective, it challenges dominant narratives that isolate contemporary problems from their historical foundations. The book does not offer definitive solutions to the region's enduring crises; rather, it provides analytical tools that enable a deeper understanding of how these crises emerged and why they persist. It is hoped that this work will inspire further scholarly inquiry, encourage dialogue across disciplinary and regional boundaries, and contribute to a more nuanced appreciation of the historical forces that continue to shape the politics of the Middle East and the wider Islamic world.

THE TURKIC WORLD AND THE ARAB GEOGRAPHY FROM THE TREATY OF KUTAHYA TO THE PRESENT

Edited By
Prof. Dr. Süleyman Kızıltoprak
Prof. Dr. Hüsamettin İnaç

The 1833 Treaty of Kütahya is one of the fundamental texts that reveal the political and military ruptures of the Ottoman Empire in the 19th century. The developments during the Mehmed Ali Pasha uprising and the weakening of central authority made this treaty a decisive threshold in the empire's transformation process. Prepared in the context of the Symposium on the Turkish World and Arab Geography from the Kütahya Treaty to the Present Day, hosted by Kütahya Dumlupınar University, this book examines the treaty within its historical context and the framework of the Ottoman political and diplomatic structure.

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