

TURKISH FOREIGN AID POLICY IN AKP PERIOD: HISTORICAL
INSTITUTIONALISM REVISITED

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INSTITUTIONALISM REVISITED

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*Sonsuz sevgi, inanç ve rehberlikleri için,
Annem, Babam, Ağabeyime.*

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ABSTRACT

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Since the Justice and Development Party came to power, Turkey has turned into an active and dynamic donor country in the foreign aid arena from being only a receiver country. Recent developments of Turkish foreign aid policy and the rise of activities of Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA) becomes evident as the most prominent success stories of Turkish foreign policy in the last decade. Understanding the underlying mechanism that led to such a remarkable change constitutes the main motivation of this study. To that end, the dialectical relationship among the main institution of Turkish foreign policy (i.e., Westernization), Turkish foreign aid agent (i.e., TIKA) and contextual factors (i.e., domestic developments in the AKP era) is scrutinized in the light of theoretical assumptions of flexible version of Historical Institutionalism (HI). By focusing on dialectical relationship, this study gives equal weight to evolution of the concept of Westernization, domestic developments in the AKP era, and transformation of TIKA as explanatory determinants in explaining the policy change in Turkish foreign aid policy. In this regard, the study puts forward that the concurrent occurrence of these determinants in the AKP era have played a major role for emergence of the change in Turkish foreign aid policy.

ÖZET

AKP DÖNEMİ TÜRK DIŞ YARDIM POLİTİKASI: TARİHSEL KURUMSALCILIĞI YENİDEN DÜŞÜNMEK

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Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi hükümeti döneminde, Türk dış yardım politikası büyük bir değişime uğramıştır. Bu süreçte Türkiye sadece dış yardım alan bir ülkeden dış yardım veren bir ülkeye dönüşmüştür. Bu alanda yaşanan gelişmelerle birlikte Türk İşbirliği ve Koordinasyon Ajansı'nın (TİKA) faaliyetlerindeki artış son 10 yılda Türk dış politikasının başarı öyküsü olmuştur. Söz konusu değişime sebep olan faktörleri anlamak ve açıklamak amacıyla yola çıkan bu çalışma, tarihsel kurumsalcılığın varsayımları doğrultusunda, Türk dış politikasının temel kurumu olan Batıcılık, Türk dış yardım politikasını uygulamakla görevli olan kurum TİKA ve AKP dönemindeki bağlamsal faktörler arasındaki diyalektik ilişkiyi analiz etmektedir. Bu doğrultuda, bu çalışma Türk dış yardım politikasındaki yaşanan değişimin bahsi geçen tüm faktörlerin aynı anda ortaya çıkması sonucunda gerçekleştiğini savunmaktadır.

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INTRODUCTION

One of the prominent developments of the world politics in the last decade has been the transformation of the most of the emerging economies into significant foreign aid donors. Across the Global South, Brazil, Russia, India and China (BRICs) have facilitated debt cancellation, provided loans and grants, and engaged in development projects and humanitarian assistance in Less Developed Countries (LDCs). Unlike the main foreign aid donors such as the United States, United Kingdom and Germany, these countries are not members of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) – the main regulatory institution of overseas development assistance (ODA) flows from advanced industrialized countries to LDCs. Among one of the notable emerging powers, Turkey has also been following this trend in the recent years. Latest developments of Turkish foreign aid policy and the rise of activities of Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA), which is responsible in conducting foreign aid policy, are the most prominent success stories of Turkish foreign policy in the last decade. As of today, Turkey has transformed itself into an active and dynamic donor country in the foreign aid arena from being only a receiver, which eventually has been offered a seat in DAC by the leading countries of foreign aid. Such a remarkable change in Turkey's role in international arena with regard to foreign aid constitutes the motivation of this study for understanding the underlying mechanism.

Although Turkey attempted to develop its foreign aid policy for the first time in 1990s, there was hardly any progress in this policy arena. As a first step, Turkish authorities established TIKA in 1992 to promote Turkish foreign policy goals by helping the development of newly independent states of Central Asia, Caucasus and the Balkans with regard to economy, infrastructure, commerce, culture, and education. This aid flow continued until the end of the 1990s with ups and downs related to domestic politics in Turkey. Yet, domestic problems that Turkey had been encountering such as fragile coalition governments, their conflicting foreign policy visions, and economic crisis in 1994 prevented Turkey to develop an effective and influential foreign aid policy in terms of scope and the number of activities until the beginning of 2000s.

Since 2002, when the Justice and Development Party (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi* – AKP) came to power, Turkish foreign aid policy has entered a process of transformation. Over the years, foreign aid has become the invisible hand of Turkish foreign policy to increase Turkey’s capability of influencing different countries across the Middle East, sub-Saharan Africa and Central Asia that were not among the major geographical scope of previous governments’ foreign policies. In other words, through the transformation of Turkish foreign aid program in the AKP era, Turkey has extended its global outreach. During this period, Turkey’s aid donations have increased in a more stable fashion and the areas subject to receiving aid have been diversified in comparison to 1990s.

Turkey has also succeeded to become more integrated to international politics through its newly established foreign aid policy. When the recent developments in the foreign aid arena are examined, it is seen that Turkey has not only increased its social, political and economic level of cooperation with the Middle Eastern or African countries but it has also become an important player in several multilateral organizations, such as the OECD, United Nations Development Program, United Nations Industrial Development Organization, Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations. With the aim of realizing the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) of the United Nations inside and the outside of the country, Turkey has established several policies in foreign aid arena through following international trends on development with the aim of strengthening its stance in the global arena.

Along with the changes in Turkish foreign aid program, TİKA has been immediately transformed and it has adopted a new terrain in foreign aid activities. The number of TİKA offices increased to 33 in 2013 which was only 12 in 2002. Moreover, TİKA has become an agency that conducted activities over 100 countries from the Pacific to Central Asia, from the Middle East to Africa, from the Balkans to Caucasia and to Latin America. Turkey also donated tens of millions in disaster relief to Indonesia in 2005 and Haiti in 2010 in the wake of natural calamities. Yet, it was in Somalia where Turkey’s importance was recognized for the first time by the international community for being the main player in development arena. Besides 200 projects conducted in Somalia, the then Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan became the first non-African leader who visited Somalia in nearly two decades and called the

international community to join Turkey in contributing to development process of Somalia.

TIKA activities tripled between 2002 and 2010 in comparison to its first decade of establishment and the total amount allocated to development aid reached to \$1.5 billion in 2012. When this increase is taken into account, it becomes evident that the scope of Turkish foreign aid policy has substantially changed in the last decade. After many years of being a recipient of development aid, Turkey has turned into an important donor country, assisting more than 100 other countries in 2000s. In fact, Turkey has succeeded to become the fourth largest donor in proportion to its Gross Domestic Product (GDP), according to the Global Humanitarian Assistance Report of 2013. In the light of these developments, this study asks that what is the underlying mechanism that led to such a change in foreign aid policy of Turkey in the AKP era?

In this regard, the present study aims to answer this question and to analyze the main determinants behind this change. To understand Turkey's foreign aid journey from being a receiver to becoming an important donor country, this study analyzes domestic developments in the AKP era which constituted the sufficient conditions of this change in foreign aid policy. In an attempt to provide an answer to this question, flexible version of Historical Institutionalism (HI) is determined as the theoretical background of the study. In the light of theoretical assumptions of HI, this study hypothesizes that *the dialectical relationship among the main institution of Turkish foreign policy, Turkish foreign aid agents, and contextual factors which are attributed to domestic developments in the AKP era constitutes the main determinants of the change in Turkish foreign policy in 2000s.*

The history of Turkish foreign policy shows that Turkey followed cautious policies towards its neighborhood before AKP. The main motivation behind those cautious policies stemmed from previous governments' commitment to 'Westernization' mission and not to be perceived as deviating from it. However, in the light of changing contextual factors since 2002, Turkish foreign policy makers have opted for a multi-dimensional approach through application of new instruments with the new interpretation of Westernization which is the embedded institution of Turkish foreign policy. In addition, political stability and democratization process, growth in Turkish economy and the novel ideational structuring in Turkish foreign policy are determined as contextual factors while TIKa is identified as the main government

agency in conducting foreign aid policy. Therefore, Westernization maintains its role in drawing the lines of foreign policy formulation, its interaction with contextual factors and the agent has stimulated the change in the foreign aid arena in the AKP period.

In line with the aim of this study, examining contextual factors with regard to considering sequence and timing of the change underpins the general outline of the present study. At that point, the analysis of development of TIKA as the engine of foreign aid policy constitutes the case of this study. Focusing on TIKA's transformation process provides a valuable ground for analyzing the impact of contextual factors on the occurrence of the change in foreign aid policy by isolating the effect of Westernization in Turkish foreign policy and the agent since they were both present before the change took place.

From a methodological perspective, qualitative research method is used in this study. First, descriptive research method is used through examining of secondary sources in order to elucidate theoretical basis of this study along with contextual factors pointed above. Furthermore, the change in Turkish foreign aid policy and transformation of TIKA are elaborated by analyzing its organizational structure, its projects and the scope of activities. In this regard, the primary sources such as annual reports and other published documents of TIKA as well as scholarly articles are examined. Finally, several in-depth interviews are conducted at TIKA office in Ankara to deepen the understanding of TIKA's transformation, its functioning, and its mission within the Turkish foreign policy. In addition to the interviews with TIKA experts, several meetings are conducted with academics and high-level bureaucrats about Turkish foreign policy in the AKP era and the Westernization genesis of Turkish foreign policy. Yet, TIKA experts who generously shared their experiences through interviews for the purposes of this study wish to remain anonymous. For this reason, any information related to their personal information is excluded from the study.

This study is structured as four main parts discussing different aspects of the question of interest. The objective of the first part is to discuss the theoretical foundation of the study which sets out the arguments of HI. Besides explaining the evolution of HI over time, the second strand of HI, which is also referred as the flexible version of HI is clearly elucidated and the main theoretical determinants are identified under the framework that is drawn by this approach. The second part begins with the

discussion about Westernization genesis of Turkish foreign policy and its evolution. In this part, a specific focus was given to Turkey's alignment with the West specifically with regard to relations with the US and the EU both in the period previous to AKP government and during AKP era. Through presenting the historical overview, the roots of the commitment to the West become clear while the change in the perception of the West in foreign policy formulation during AKP period is becoming evident.

The third part of the study focuses on domestic developments in Turkey under AKP rule. In this part, political stability and democratization movement in Turkey are explained with respect to AKP's success in consecutive elections and democratic reform packages. Then, the section continues with the economic growth that started with the IMF stabilization programs in the beginning of 2000s. Finally, the third part concludes with the novel ideational structuring of Turkish foreign policy with specific references to theoretical foundations, new instruments and tools, and the resurfacing the idea of West in the following years after the 9/11 events, EU membership process and the Arab Spring. The last part of the study focuses on the Turkish foreign aid policy from its establishment to date. In this regard, political environment in Turkey during TIKA's establishment, TIKA's main policies towards its neighborhoods and its organizational transformation are examined in detail. In the analysis part following these arguments, the way concurrent and dialectic occurrence of contextual determinants play a significant role in developing an active foreign aid policy in AKP are revisited in the light of theoretical and empirical evidences at hand. In this section, all pieces of this study are tried to be combined in a comprehensive manner with the aim of generating a sound argument.

PART I: HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONALISM REVISITED

This study aims to present a clear analysis of the change in Turkish foreign aid policy in AKP era which led to transformation of Turkey from a foreign aid receiver country to a donor country. Since the main aim is to explain this policy change, dialectical relationship among the agent, institutions, and the context come to the fore as the major part of analysis. In the case of examining Turkish foreign aid policy, each of those determinants deserves specific focus in understanding the underlying mechanism of such change. Regarding the Turkish foreign aid policy, it is evident that foreign aid policy has changed dramatically in the last 15 years. More remarkably, this change has been realized while the main government agent and main institution of Turkish foreign policy – TIKA and Westernization – remained their existence on foreign policy activities. In this regard, contextual factors seem to appear as the most determinant factors behind this change. Yet, disregarding the evolution and transformation of institution and the agent together with contextual changes would be misleading. Moreover, a thorough examination would reveal significance of the dialectical relationship among the institution, agent, and the contextual factors as the main determinants of the change in Turkish foreign aid policy. Thus, dialectical and concurrent existence of those determinants in the AKP era provides sufficient conditions for the change in Turkish foreign aid policy.

This perspective in analyzing Turkish foreign aid policy shares similar research agenda with the so-called new institutionalism in political analysis. The significance of institutions in political science is emanated from the way it influences political outcomes through shaping the behavior or policy preferences of actors. Yet, this perspective provides a limited outlook on explanation of political outcomes because there are number of sources besides institutions, such as contextual or broader structural factors, that influence preferences of actors. Therefore, political analysis urges us to distinguish institutional factors from wider contextual factors. In this regard, flexible version of HI provides a valuable research agenda that helps to differentiate factors related to institutions, context, or political agents and thus unearthing the dialectical relationship among those factors will be realized. Besides, according to Sanders (2006), HI is more helpful in studying “human political interactions; in the context of rule structures that are themselves human creations; and sequentially, as life is lived, rather

than to take a snapshot of those interactions at only one point in time, and in isolation from the rule institutions in which they occur.” (p. 39) Examining the change in Turkish foreign aid policy requires having such a thorough and comprehensive perspective. As rule structures, domestic developments related to foreign aid policy in the AKP era, and as a rule institution, the role of Westernization and its impact on foreign policy outcomes have concurrently played a significant role in the evolution and functioning of TIKA as the main agent of Turkish foreign aid policy. Therefore, as an outcome of the dialectical relationship of those factors during the AKP era, the change in Turkish foreign aid policy becomes evident. In this regard, flexible version of HI with its focus on dialectical interactions and multi-faceted perspectives leverages the explanatory power of this study.

Historical Institutionalism

How do historical institutionalists define institutions? While some scholars underline formal rules and organizations (Streeck & Thelen, 2005), others try to incorporate both formal and informal rules in the definition of institutions (Marcussen, 2000, Steinmo, 2008). One of the most common definitions of institutions given by Hall & Taylor (1999) is “formal or informal procedures, routines, norms and conventions embedded in the organizational structure of the policy or political economy.” (p. 938) They are combinations of rules and assets transferred from the past (Clemens & Cook, 1999, p. 445) and “embedded in concrete temporal processes” (Thelen, 1999, p. 371), as well as they are the results of “enduring legacies of political struggles.” (p. 388) In the light of these definitions, HI approaches institutions as formal organizations and informal rules and procedures at the same time. Norms and values are emanated from material institutions and they have crucial roles in establishing formal structures. In this regard, institutions are the ones that characterize political outcomes through structuring political circumstances (Thelen & Steinmo, 1998, p. 2; Taylor & Hall, 1996, p. 938). Thus, an analysis based on history is placed at the center of HI to unearth the reasons why actors pursue specific goals and strategies over the others (Thelen & Steinmo, p. 9). While this institutional approach acknowledges free existence of political arena, it also takes formerly identified policies into consideration. Thus, the examination of institutions in HI reveals the impact of institutions on the outcome of contextual

processes by emphasizing the way institutions determine the constraints and shape political strategies and goals (p. 7).

With regard to this study, examining Westernization in analyzing the change of Turkish foreign aid policy in the AKP era is crucially important since institutions along with the actors who are operating within them are able to mobilize institutional resources in political struggles and governance relationship. Levi (1990) argues that institutions contain and create power (p. 407), while Hall (1986) argues that “the organization of policy making affects the degree of power that any one set of actors has over policy outcomes” (p. 19). For instance, the impact of government agencies significantly varies from one another in terms of their interaction with different levels of government bureaucracy and institutional settings. In fact, this variation is obviously seen when the history of TIKA is considered. In 1990s, at the time when it was established, TIKA was not active in Turkey’s surrounding regions since Westernization had been interpreted as being strictly aligned with Western countries. Any alternative policies developed towards the Balkans or the Middle East was refrained in order not to be seen as deviating from the Westernization ideal. Yet, with the conceptual evolution of Westernization, TIKA has turned into one of the most important agents of Turkish foreign policy who has been operating in wide range of continents simultaneously. This change in TIKA’s behavior also proves that institutions play an important role in shaping political behavior and decision making process by having an influence on the perceptions and powers of political actors through different ways. In this regard, taking institutions as a process that shape political outcomes through a dialectical relationship rather than referring them as a ‘thing’ appears as a thorough way to start institutional analysis. In this way, examining the evolution of institution in history becomes both likely and useful in analysis.

HI, in general, examines the way institutions influence individual behavior and policy outcomes (Steinmo, 2008, p. 150). The research agenda of historical institutionalists are most likely to be puzzle driven and context sensitive (Thelen, 1999; Steinmo, 2008). As Kulawik (2009) states “the significance of specific phenomena is not only due to what they are but also to when they took place and their situatedness in relation to other factors and processes over time (p. 264). In addition, HI makes a point of contextuality, temporality, causality and path-dependency (Kulawik, 2009, pp. 262-263). Contextuality refers “analyzing macro context and hypothesizes about the

combined effects of institutions and processes rather than examining just one institution or process at a time.” (Pierson & Skocpol, 2002, p. 696) While focusing on contextuality, temporality enters into the picture of HI analysis. Historical institutionalists “take time seriously, specifying sequences and tracing transformations and processes of varying scale and temporality” (Pierson & Skocpol, pp. 695-696). Hence, HI offers useful tools in analyzing why change occurs in some cases while inertia continues in other political circumstances.

Contextualizing causal mechanism is also of significance to HI since it offers to explain a hypothesized cause in a given context and to underline the temporal aspects of the context (Falletti & Lynch, 2009, p. 1145). This emphasis on the sequencing of the input, the contextual change, and the output points out the interaction which Falletti and Lynch (2009) explain as follows: “The causal mechanisms by themselves do not cause outcomes to occur; rather, the interaction between causal mechanisms and context does.” (p. 1161) Finally, HI acknowledges the importance of the logic of path-dependency. It suggests that “what happened at an earlier point of time will affect the possible outcomes of a sequence of events occurring at a later point in time.” (Pierson, 2004, p. 20) Hence, dealing with the contextual factors and using a historical process tracing methodology increase HI scholars’ ability to explain changing political outcomes as well as the overarching macro-patterns (Pierson & Skocpol, 2002).

Flexible Version of HI

HI has recently undergone a theoretical improvement through gaining conceptual clarity and distinctiveness as a result of its collaboration with ideational approach and constructivism. This newly emerging strand of HI is called as the flexible version of HI. It has appeared against the orthodox approach that deals with highly constrained forms of agency and path-dependent structures and takes deterministic view of institutional and policy dynamics (Bell, 2011). The question of institution-agent and institutional change are main issues that flexible version of HI aims to create new points of views.

First, on the institution-agent question, HI is criticized by constructivists on the grounds that its approach is over-dependent on institutions. Constructivist institutionalism stands against the orthodox view of institutions which are taking the role of agency as highly constrained by their institutional arrangements. Constructivist

institutionalism offers to concentrate upon the subjective ideational and inter-subjective discursive realm due to the way this ‘flexible’ environment let agents to construct their realities and actions (Bell, 2011, p. 886). While Bell (2011) acknowledges the constructivist argument which asserts that the impact of institutions on agents are formed by agents themselves through ideational mechanisms, he argues that they fall short in grasping the dialectical relationship between institutions and agents.

According to Bell, the constructivists could only grasp one dimension of the two-way dialectical interplay between agents and institutions (p. 891). It is agreed that institutions are prior to the agents. They are equipped with the power that enabled to shape and even impose agents’ behavior. In fact, this causal mechanism is the reason of conducting institutional analysis. Yet, constructivist institutionalists have concentrated upon the agency while the role of institutions has been receding. In contrast, flexible version of HI does not prioritize agents, institutions, structures, or ideas; rather it takes each as mutually constitutive in a dialectical manner (Marsh, 2009). In this regard, Bell states that “institutions are more than just real-time ideational artifacts but are more like inherited sets of rules and duties that need to be navigated and negotiated.” (p. 891). Further, the point that is missing from the recent constructivist approach is that “ideas do not come about in a vacuum – they are embedded in a historical context and need institutional support to be effective.” (Guzzini, 2000, p. 148) Rather, agents and institutions dialectically shape each other. This dialectical relationship among agents and institutions constitute the main point of interest of flexible version of HI. Flexible version of HI refuses the type of institutional analysis which places too much explanatory weight on agency. Adopting hybrid approach on the relationship between institutions and agents ensures the development of this kind of dialectical framework as well. Thelen and Steinmo (1992) state that:

“Institutional analysis (...) allows us to examine the relationship between political actors as objects and as agents of history. The institutions that are at the center of historical institutionalist analysis (...) can shape and constrain political strategies in important ways, but they are themselves also the outcomes (conscious or unintended) of deliberate political strategies of political conflict and of choice.” (p. 10).

By following the argument of Thelen and Steinmo, Bell points out that researchers should unearth the institutional black box and concentrate on the actions of strategic actors operating within shifting contexts (p. 892).

Second, the issue of explaining the institutional change is another point that historical institutionalists are mostly criticized for. Peters et al (2005) argue that although the main purpose of HI is to explain change, historical institutionalists have not fully developed a theory of change (pp. 954-955). Historical institutionalists attribute the sources of change only to the exogenous factors; hereby they “fall outside of the existing scientific theory (Mahoney, 2005, p. 514). As Steinmo et al (1992) state:

“... institutions explain everything until they explain nothing. Institutions are an independent variable and explain political outcomes in periods of stability, but when they break down, they become the dependent variable, whose shape is determined by the political conflicts that such breakdown unleashes. (...) The logic of the argument is reversed from ‘institutions shape politics’ to ‘politics shape institutions’” (p. 15).

In the light of these critics in mind, flexible version of HI developed a more dynamic study of policy change (Bell, 2011). By taking agency into consideration and expanding contextual instruments through focusing on incremental changes rather than focusing only to exogenous factors, they go beyond present patterns. This new approach in HI puts forward that incremental changes can be as significant as dramatic punctuations in understanding the process of change. On the issue of incrementalism, the most acknowledged claim is that institutional change occurs through the negotiation of a new status quo among actors each of whom have different agendas and perceive different policy options and incentives for the changes they propose. Therefore, contextual factors as the main determinants of status quo constitute major parts of policy analysis. Yet, it is important to clarify the scope of contextual factors at that point. In general, crises, external shocks, such as wars or revolutions are pointed as contextual factors. Yet, many studies reveal that the scope of these kinds of definitions are subject to change or expand.

As argued by Jessop (1990) and Hay (1996), contextual factors can contain wider political, economic or social phenomena which may create advantages or disadvantages for agents in favoring one choice or outcome to another. In contrast to the deterministic approach, political, economic or social structures, such as the age distribution in a population, the structure of the economy, or the distribution of power in government, ideational agendas have the ability to empower agents (Bell, 2011, p. 898). By the same token, Pontussen (2005) argues that “the centralization of state power might be considered a structural feature that underlies various political institutions” (p. 126).

Bell and Feng's (2014) study also unfold how economic transition and altering power dynamics in the Chinese Party State bring institutional change which has enabled the rise of the authority of the People's Bank of China. Similarly, by examining the dynamic relationship between the institution of Westernization and the changing context of European Union (EU) – Turkey relations, Bölükbaşı and Özçürümez (2011) analyze Turkey's changing foreign policy preferences regarding the European Neighborhood Policy and the Union for the Mediterranean. These studies reveal that dealing with 'situated agency' or 'agent in context' is crucial for having an approach which is able to unearth the way they interact with each other in ascertaining the change of political outcomes. In this study, Turkish foreign aid policy is analyzed through examining relationship between Westernization and changing contextual factors, namely domestic and international developments in the AKP era.

Main Assumptions of the Study

Having grasped the dialectical view to the relationship between the agent, institutions, and context, the approach applied to this study holds four main assumptions.

1. Agents, institutions, and contextual factors are all analytically distinct from each other.

In fact, this analytical distinction gives the opportunity to study institutions and wider context in a dialectical manner. In addition, holding analytical distinction in the research design helps to trace causal links between institutions and wider context.

2. Institutions and structural context are pre-given, so they are not merely reducible to the agents that constitute them.

The temporality feature of HI is critical at that point. Adler (1997) points out that social analysis should consider "antecedent conditions" (p. 330), while McAnulla (2006) emphasizes that "current activity and reflexivity always take place in a pre-structured context" (p. 121). It should be also noted that although institutions and structures are not reducible to the agents, as Archer (1995) puts "people are not puppets of structures because they have their own emergent properties which mean that they either reproduce or transform social structures rather than creating them" (p. 1), which brings us to the third assumption.

3. Agents, institutions, and structures are relating with one another in a dialectical manner.

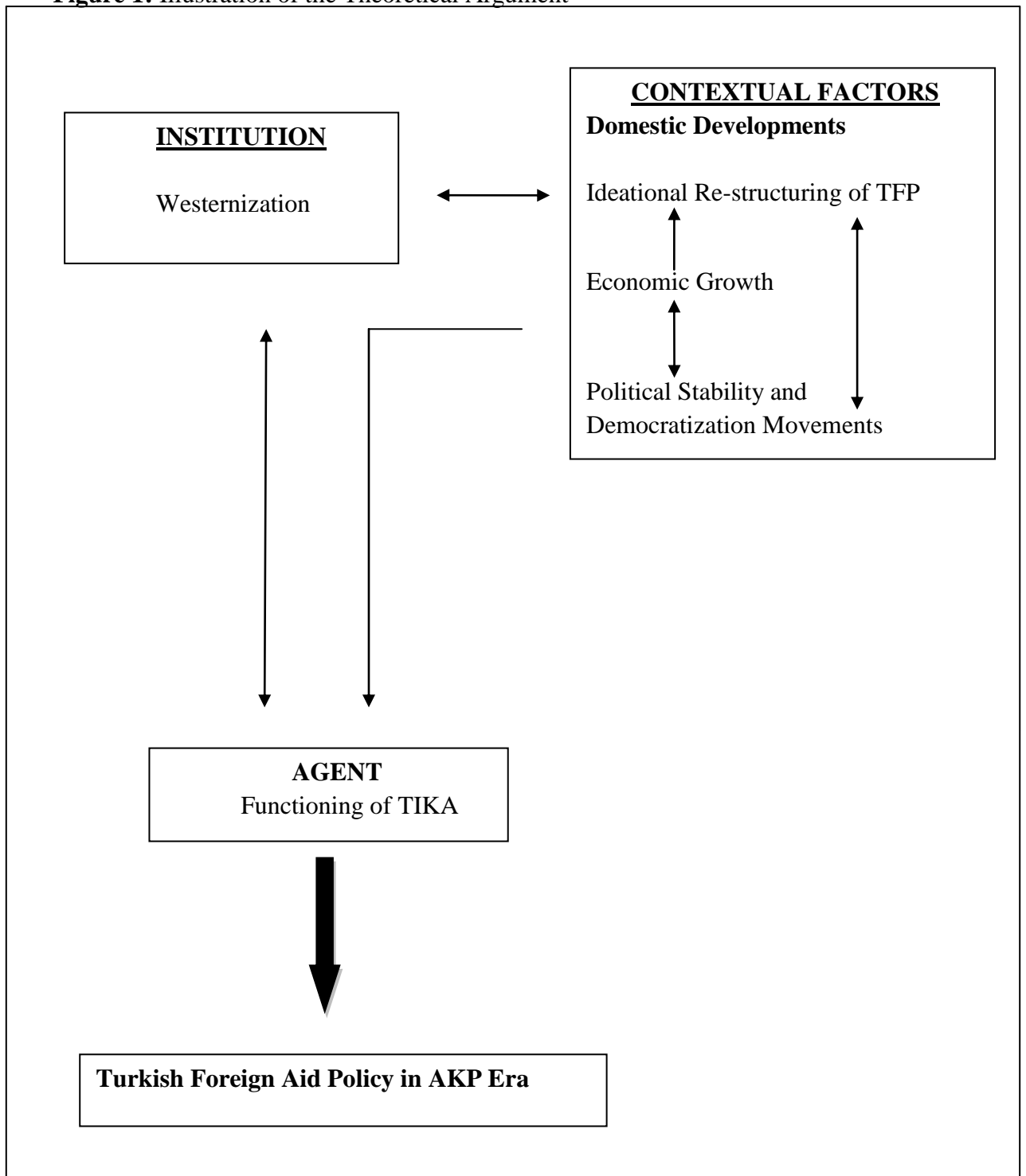
Agents do not act in an environment which is detached from the environment they operate within (Bell, 2011, p. 906). Archer's "morphogenetic" description of this dialectics deal with agents, institutions, and structures as mutually constitutive over time by means of recurring patterns of interaction.

4. Agents are the ones that mediate institutional and structural influences.

As ideational analysis holds the idea that "ideas do not come about in vacuum", similar approach can be raised for the relationship between agents and institutions. As Archer (2000) states "structures only exert an effect when mediated through the activities of people." Structures are only ever relational emergent and never reified entities existing without social interaction (p. 465). This suggests that the influence of institutions and structures over political outcomes is realized by agents.

Main structure of this study is arranged in the light of these theoretical assumptions. As the hypothesis of the study suggests, the change in Turkish foreign aid policy in the AKP era is explained by reference to dialectical relationship among institutions, context, and agent. In other words, the concept of Westernization as the main foreign policy institution has been re-shaped due to its interaction with new contextual factors in the AKP era. In this study contextual factors are identified as ideational structuring in foreign policy, Turkish economic growth, political stability and democratization process in the AKP era. New activism in Turkish foreign aid policy is appeared through a concurrent occurrence of each determinant. While, on the one hand, interaction among domestic developments has played a mutually shaping role, on the other hand, they enhanced Turkey's policy making capacity at the global stage. At that point, TIKA, as the main government agency of Turkish foreign aid policy, comes into play in the establishment and implementation of foreign aid activities. In this regard, it can be argued that TIKA's organizational transformation enabled it to play a mediating role between institution and context. Hereby, shift in the meaning of Westernization and emergence of new contextual factors has reflected themselves through TIKA's policies in foreign aid arena.

Figure 1: Illustration of the Theoretical Argument



As explained above, this study hypothesizes that *the dialectical relationship of domestic developments with the embedded institution of Turkish foreign policy constitutes the basis of the change in Turkish foreign aid policy*. Although Westernization maintains its role in drawing the lines of foreign policy formulation, its interaction with contextual factors and the agent has endangered the respective foreign policy change.

This study examines the historical development of TIKA by categorizing into two periods: from 1992 (the establishment of TIKA) to 2002, and from 2002 until present time. Through this categorization, the aim is to show the ways how change in TIKA activities has occurred by taking 2002 as the breaking point. The comparison between two periods reveals that although the existing institution (Westernization) and the government agency (TIKA) have remained to be present, there is a significant change in activities of TIKA in line with the newly emerging foreign aid policy. Emergence of this change points out changing contextual factors under AKP rule and their interaction with the existing institution and the agent itself. At this point, taking dialectical relationship among those three determinants into account becomes crucial in explaining foreign policy change. Therefore, impact of this interacting mechanism reflects itself in transformation of TIKA which is one of the most leading government agencies in implementing foreign aid policy of Turkey.

Explaining the case of TIKA through the lenses of this approach provides leverage in determining the impacts of contextual factors and agents by isolating the effect of Westernization in Turkish foreign policy. This study accounts for changing domestic developments: i) ideational structuring of AKP foreign policy elites ii) relative growth of Turkish economy iii) political stability and democratization process. Combination of all these factors has enabled Turkish policy makers to re-interpret the institution of Westernization which facilitate the development of new policy strategies actualized by the situated government agency, TIKA. In the following parts of this study each determinants and the role they play in conducting foreign aid policy in the AKP era are clearly elucidated.

The dialectical view of institutional analysis along with the underlying assumptions of interpretation, discretion, constraining and empowerment also strengthen explanatory power of this study. First of all, it leverages conceptual clarity

and analytical distinctiveness to the HI. Through re-considering major conceptual debates, like contextuality, temporality, institutional change, institution-agent, with a different point of view, this approach enables us to move beyond many problems unanswered by the sticky version of HI. Not being stuck in determinist view of path-dependency, but highlighting historical mechanisms with regard to contextual factors gives us opportunity to reveal the way institutions do matter in determining political outcomes. Taking the effect of an ongoing institutional setting as controlled brings out the causal impact of the changing context alone. This combination of temporality and contextuality also forms the basis of the dialectical relationship between agents, institutions, and structures which overcome the dualism of structure-agency problem in HI. Finally, having considered incremental changes allows us to embrace endogenous dynamics in an analysis in which exogenous features can be connected to endogenous ones.

PART II: WESTERNIZATION AS THE GENESIS OF TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY

Western oriented foreign policy formulation has constituted the genesis of Turkish foreign policy through identifying “the established order within the existing borders and balances.” (Oran, 2011, pp. 46-49) This genesis has ingrainedly manifested itself in different shapes in Turkish foreign policy formulation. Turkish foreign policy makers has approached to the West as a “state of soul” and as a route for the development instead of just a geographical location. With regard to this perception, Turkey was placed near the civilized, developed, and superior modern West against its Eastern antithesis (Yeşiltaş, 2013, p. 665). The only route for Turkey’s modernization was determined as being part of Europe in political, economic, and civilizational terms (Kubicek, 2004, pp. 45-47).

Similar to other less developed countries, Westernization was used as a substitute of modernization in Turkey in the early republic era. Through nation-building process, mental map of Turkish society was shaped by the idea that being Westernized is a *sine qua non* for modernization (Oran, p. 51). Naturally, the external relations with the West were determined as a product of this principle. Yeşiltaş (2013) points Turkey’s this connection with the “West” as the regeneration of “universality of Western civilization within the foreign policy discourse.” (p. 665) In this regard, analyzing the “deliberate and continuous” effect of Westernization in Turkish foreign policy has become crucial to elucidate the way Turkey perceives its surrounding environment and develop its foreign policy strategy (Aydın, 1999, p. 160).

Within the scope of this study, Westernization genesis of Turkish foreign policy is explained in the light of specific foreign issues at a specific time. The role of “geopolitical imagination” in the foundation and transformation of the concept of Westernization is examined as well. To do this, I aim to unearth the changes and circumstances emanated from the interaction of Westernization principle with contextual factors (domestic and international developments) appeared in the AKP era, since the dialectical relationship of the Westernization and contextual factors is considered as the main determinant of Turkey’s foreign aid policy in the AKP era, as the hypothesis of the study suggests.

There are two important developments in the international arena that represents critical turning points with regard to Turkey's alignment with the West in the AKP era: the period after 9/11 attacks and Arab uprisings. Yet, while the West, as the genesis, constitutes the most influential part of foreign policy, it has evolved into a more instrumental existence from a conceptual one that is seen as a condition for modernization. In order to reveal the change in the concept of 'Westernization' in foreign policy, it is crucial to present a historical overview where the concept itself has its roots.

Westernization: Ottoman Legacy?

Relations with the West has always been present in Turkish history though with different characterizations: first, as in foe and friend relationship, then as an integral part, later as an imitator, and in the end as a follower and ally (Aydın, 1999, p. 160). Ottoman Empire controlled one-third of Europe for four hundred years by alone. Thus, ignoring the Western effects on the Empire would be a great mistake. In this regard, embracing a somewhat secular system in foreign affairs could be considered as a reflection of this interaction between Western powers and the Ottoman Empire. Modernization process of the Ottoman Empire was also under heavy influence of the Western powers. In this respect, it can be argued that having a western-oriented and secular state approach of newly established Republic of Turkey was not in conflict with the former experience of the Turkish people (Aydın, 2005, pp. 12-13). Both Ottoman and Turkish modernizers believed that "there is no second civilization; civilization means European civilization, and it must be imported with both its roses and thorns", as Abdullah Cevdet states (cited in Aydın, 2004, p. 161). Most of the reforms introduced by the late Ottoman intellectuals were then implemented under Atatürk's leadership in the period between 1920 and 1930s. His success rooted in his eagerness to acknowledge European civilization with "both its roses and thorns", argues Aydın, whereas the Ottoman reforms could only succeeded to imitate them with limited success (p. 161).

Early Republican Era

Foreign policy approach in the early Republican era differed from the past in certain aspects. First of all, elimination of the religious sentiments from the public sphere was the main element in the foundation of the new Republic. Instead of religious sentiments, nationhood became the cement of statehood as with other secular Western principles (Bozdağlıoğlu, 2008, pp. 60-61), and republicanism, secularism and nationalism were embraced as the main political principles in the early Republican Era (Aydın, 2004, p. 171) As it is argued above, Westernization is identified as a route for modernization in this period. Atatürk points that “there are many nations, but there is only one civilization. For the advancement of a nation, it must be a part of this one civilization ... We wish to modernize our country. All of our efforts are directed toward the establishment of a modern, therefore Western, government.” (Aydın, 2004, p. 175) Intellectuals of the period, who were mostly educated in Western countries, constituted the engine of Turkish modernization process. They were aiming to re-structure the country in line with the Western system. When they encountered domestic challenges in this re-structuring process, they preferred to follow a top-down reform process through using the state power and changing the law (Oran, 2011, p. 52).

In line with the aim of guaranteeing Western principles at home and completing the modernization process, Turkey followed a Western-oriented foreign policy while refusing to approach the East. Atatürk believed that in order to develop a peaceful foreign policy, there was a need to accomplish in-depth domestic reforms. It was also obvious in his statement that “what particularly interests foreign policy and upon which it is founded is the internal organization of the state. It is necessary that foreign policy should agree with the internal organization.” Therefore, domestic reform agenda and foreign policy goals were coordinated in this era. The most well-known motto of him “peace at home, peace in the world” is another reflection of this perspective. This approach does not only define foreign policy as an expansion of domestic politics, but also it determines the edges of foreign policy making. In this regard, any sort of foreign policy strategies that may endanger the principles of the Republican foundations; republicanism, secularism and nationalism were abandoned.

From the security perspective, it can be argued that Turkey’s first goal was to follow an independent domestic politics via thwarting the foreign intervention. Oğuzlu

and Kibaroglu (2009) enlighten the motivation behind this security approach in Turkish foreign policy formulation by referring the concept of “logic of fear”. According to them, making western oriented reforms and cooperating with western security organization were seen as the only way to prevent any possible threats and interference to domestic politics by the Western powers (p. 579). From the point of this formulation, Turkey seems to be place itself near by the foe, Western states, rather than separating itself. To that end, becoming a member of the League of Nations was seen as strategically important since the way this alliance kept Turkey away from conflicts. Fuller (2008) also calls the Kemalist ideology’s view to this fear as “paranoia” and states that:

“While the republic did face genuine external enemies, Kemalist ideology tended to incorporate a fear of external powers and conspiracies as a key element in its world outlook. This paranoia toward the outside world helped both to preserve Turkey’s domestic power and to justify an authoritarian approach to guarding the nation against external threats.” (p. 29)

With the aim of empowering internal structure in the face of an ‘external threat’, Turkish people were educated and socialized via the indoctrination process which is in line with the western ideals (Jenkins, 2001, pp. 16-18).

When İsmet İnönü took over the presidency after the death of Atatürk, he followed the Kemalist ideology in foreign policy (Aydın, 2004, p. 29). In the period of WWII, neutrality as the main foreign policy formulation was consolidated. Millman (1995) identifies Turkey’s main aims for the war period as;

“keeping the alliance and cooperation with Russia in order to have secure borders in the East and the Black Sea, to ensure common action of Balkans in case of any external threat, as in the example of the Balkan Entente, and lastly the rapprochement with the West with the aim of providing security against the Italian and German threats, and to guarantee security in his South borders with Iraq and Syria” (pp. 487-490).

Overall, Turkey followed a realist foreign policy approach which totally aligned with the Western system. To this end, Turkey harmonized its domestic and sociopolitical structure with the Western civilization. Accordingly, foreign policy of the new Republic appeared with the aim of preserving status quo with a high level of commitment to the Western orientation.

Cold-War Period

After the end of the WWII, the US and the Soviet Russia got on the stage as the main powers of the international system, yet with different ideological structures. The international structure turned into a bipolar system from balance of power. In this environment, Turkey again took its position with the Western Block. Being a member to the OECD (1948), the Council of Europe (1949), NATO (1952), and an associate membership of EEC (1963) were all regarded as a sign of Turkey's Western oriented foreign policy. In this period, the relationship between the US and Turkey was underpinned by the US' interests in the Middle East against the Soviet threat over the region. The US needed an ally in the Middle East and Turkey came to the fore along with Israel to fulfill this role (Taşpınar, 2003, p. 11). In 1980s, bilateral relations between the US and Turkey were strengthened through many agreements and partnerships such as the Bilateral Defense and Economic Cooperation Agreement or Enhanced Partnership (Isyar, 2005, pp. 31-33). With regard to the Cold War years, Mufti (1998) argues that this period was the years that signed "Westernization of Turkey's international relations." (p. 41)

Along with the close relations with the US, Turkey's membership process to the EU is noteworthy for analyzing the Westernization of Turkish foreign policy. Turkey's alignment with Europe in its foreign policy has become an inseparable part of the modernization process that aims to put Turkey into the European state system (Tağma, 2010, pp. 376-377). Turkey began its journey to be a member of EEC through signing of the Ankara Association Agreement in 1963. During the Özal government, in 1987, Turkey applied for full membership to European Community (EC). Yet, this application was refused by the EC with a reason that Turkey was not ready to fulfill obligations of membership (Tocci, 2011, p. 49). In the last 50 years, this prospect for Turkey has turned into a concrete target of this journey and Turkey has decisively stuck to this target.

Under the conditions of the Cold War international structure, realist foreign policy choice became inevitable for Turkey, which pointed to the "politics of balancing the near threat by means of collaborating with the rising axis" (Davutoğlu, 2001, p. 71). Taking advantage from the dispute among the European powers was no more option for Turkey. In addition, in terms of economic, military, and technological capacity, Turkey

was not powerful enough to maintain its neutrality. And, the Soviet threat to territorial and security interests was of top priority for Turkey (Hale, 2000, pp. 109-110).

While the Cold War period reinforced the position of Turkey in the Western Bloc, it also caused the deterioration of relations with the Middle East. Most of the Arab states established alliances among themselves with the idea of balance of power in the absence of any guarantee for their security. Under these circumstances, Turkey was seen as in the opposite bloc, which followed Western rules and served their interests, though the highest proportion of its population is Muslim (Fuller, p. 39).

When all these contextual factors of the Cold War are considered, it can be argued that Turkey could only follow a pre-determined strategy for its survival instead of conducting an independent strategy corresponded to its geo-strategic position. For Davutoğlu, “policy makers received this preference as a static paradigm” which prevented Turkey to develop alternative paradigms and to use its “natural spheres of influence” and alternative power centers (p. 71). The traditional foreign policy was not transformed into new strategies and the major goals remained the same at that period.

The post-Cold War Era

Dissolving of the bipolar power structure was the major source for this change in foreign policy. With the emancipation of international politics from black and white way of thinking of the Cold War, new alternatives emerged for Turkey through historical and cultural ties with other states in its surrounding region. Altunışık (2009) explains this necessity of creating new alternatives as follows:

“The end of the Cold War with its new sources of uncertainties and also opportunities challenged the traditional paradigm of Turkish foreign policy and led to the surfacing of strong alternative viewpoints. The emergence of new possible areas of influence around Turkey also led to the re-emergence of a historical/cultural dimension in Turkish foreign policy and freed the country from the shackles of the Cold War. Thus, the changes in the international system provided a context for rethinking foreign policy.” (pp. 172-176).

For instance, this view of new alternatives reflects itself in Turkey’s foreign policy towards Turkic states during Özal government. In this period, several trade agreements were signed and high level visits were conducted in an increasing trend in contrast to previous periods. Yet, these efforts were only able to play a limited role due

to political and economic weaknesses. In addition to domestic context, being at the center of one of the most vulnerable regions of the world put a burden in developing new alternatives in Turkish foreign policy. Thus, Turkey kept its alignment with the West in the post-Cold War era. NATO remained as the major organization that connects Turkey with the Western security system (Hale, 2000, p. 192). Similar to the Cold War years, Turkey and the US came to an agreement on wide range of issues in the post-Cold War period. Turkey fully supported the UN resolutions against the Saddam regime in the First Gulf War. Besides, Turkey and the US agreed on liberation of Kuwait, lowering Russian impact on the Caucasus, Turkey's membership to the EU, Turkey's assigned role as a corridor for the Caspian and Central Asian energy resources, taking a cautious stance towards regional policies of Iran and Syria, the Balkans and IMF assistance to Turkey, and finally cooperation with Israel (Park, 2004, p. 495).

In this period, the progress has been made in Turkey's relations with the EU as well. The Customs Union was completed between Turkey and the EU in 1995. However, the European Council refused to give candidate status to Turkey for the next enlargement due to some domestic and international problems that Turkey encountered. Prior to this decision, conflict between the Turkish military and the PKK had escalated. In addition, the conflict between Turkey and Greece over Kardak Islands in the Aegean Sea had appeared in 1996 and problems on Cyprus issue were not resolved (European Commission, 1998). Conflict over Cyprus between Turkey and Greece has played an important role in the relations between Turkey and the EU. On the one hand, Turkey's EU membership process has been halted many times due to Cyprus issue; on the other hand, the EU played an important role in ameliorating Turkey's relations with Greece (European Council, 1996). In this respect, it can be argued that the EU as a third party came into play through drawing a route for the solution of problems between Turkey and Greece by taking a positive interventionist stance.

At the Helsinki Summit of 1999, European Council gave candidate status to Turkey. With this declaration, Turkey has started to fulfill pre-accession criteria in order to be ready for the EU membership. These criteria which are known as the Copenhagen criteria comprise guaranteeing stability of the institutions, consolidating democracy, ensuring freedom of expression, respect for human rights, and having efficiently functioning market economy. Copenhagen criteria also includes freedom of expression on the use of one's mother language, elimination of human rights violations such as

torturing and having developed peaceful solutions with the aim of overcoming problems with neighbors (Sakallioğlu, 2003, p. 223). Therefore, in the light of these developments the agenda of Turkey in the end of 1990s and early 2000s was occupied with the reforms efforts to become a part of the West that had been Turkey's utmost priority for the last 50 years.

As is seen in the historical background of Turkish foreign policy, West has a prominent role in Turkey's definition of itself in the international arena during the late Ottoman period and early Republican era as being a reference for modernization. Yet, through the major changes in international structure such as WWII, the Cold War and its aftermath, the reference point of West has also evolved. In the present time, while the relations with the US and the EU are still determinants in Turkey's foreign policy formation, the West no longer constitutes a reference point for modernization. In the AKP era, with the changes and developments in domestic politics as well as the international developments such as 9/11 and the Arab Spring Turkey emerged as an important actor that have a say in the events occurred at the global arena rather than only being a 'follower'. Specifically, the years following the 9/11 events and Arab Uprisings come to the forefront as critical circumstances that reveal the genesis of West in Turkish foreign policy. In this sense, the evolution of the West has also been shaping through the domestic developments in the AKP era, namely political stability and democratization process; economic growth; and ideational structuring in foreign policy vision. As the hypothesis of this study suggests that those contextual factors have dialectical impact on each other so that understanding the domestic dynamics becomes inevitable for this study. To that end, next section presents major domestic developments in Turkey during the AKP era.

PART III: TURKEY UNDER THE AKP ERA

Political Stability and Democratization Process in the AKP era

Turkish political life has dramatically changed with the general election in 2002 on which AKP came to power. A single-party government with a parliamentary majority has brought relative political stability after the turbulent and chaotic years of 1990s. Due to this development, AKP government has managed to break the deadlock of previous coalition governments to some extent. In every field of Turkish politics, from public policy to foreign policy, this change has come up with its results. Through the strong support enjoyed by the AKP at the domestic level, government could transform its own priorities on the foreign policy arena into concrete policies. Along with the political stability, democratization process in the AKP era has turned into a supplementary element of government's regional policies. While political stability and single majority government has turned Turkey into a more consistent actor with regard of its foreign policy implications, improvement in Turkey's democratization has raised Turkey's international reputation and contributed its mission as being one of the most democratic and stable country within its surrounding region.

Since 2002 elections, AKP has won successive elections, both in local and national level. Hereby, AKP government has stamped its own vision to both domestic and foreign policy of Turkey in last twelve years, so far. Although priorities or attitudes of AKP government have varied across different time periods between elections, it has succeeded to maintain its domination on Turkish politics. With the victory of national elections in 2011, AKP became the first party in Turkish political history which increased its share of total votes for three consecutive elections (Baç & Keyman, 2012, p. 85). Yet, March 2014 local elections were held in a very turbulent atmosphere. There were corruption allegations related to the AKP, many demonstrations and civil unrest against the AKP regime, which is called as the Gezi Protests and excessive use of force by the police against the protestors.

Instead of quelling the continuance of the uprisings, AKP government took a tougher line that escalated the tension among society. Due to this mismanagement and undemocratic attitude of the government, political stability in Turkey has been deeply shaken. Following these events, AKP government started to get many critics from

different parts of the society. One of the most important reasons behind the AKP success and its ability to maintain stability has been its wide-ranging popular support. And it seemed that it would lose this support and reputation in the eyes of the people. Yet, those critics did not prevent the victory of AKP government in local elections of 2014 which the party obtained 45.6% of total votes. Although the main opposition party increased its vote-share, candidates for mayor of AKP were re-elected in most of the cities in Turkey. However, Turkish politics has entered a very fragile and volatile period, which of consequences for Turkish politics will be clearly observed in the following years.

In this environment, Turkish Presidential Election of 2014 appeared as a test for AKP government since President of Turkish Republic was elected through national election for the first time in history. Thanks to this election, ex-chairman of the AKP and previous Prime Minister of Turkey since 2003, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, became the President of Turkish Republic. This electoral success, once again, showed that in the eyes of majority of Turkish constituents, AKP government and its prominent leader still is the best viable alternative for ruling the country. Although there are many critics with regard to authoritarian measurements of AKP government, the political stability obtained through AKP's electoral success from 2002 is likely to remain in the near future.

Along with the electoral success and political stability, the AKP era has also been referred with the democratization process in Turkish political history. Since 2002, AKP government has put into practice many political reforms on democracy. Turkish government has started accession negotiations with the EU, implemented a number of political reform packages, re-figured civil military relations, conducted 'democratic opening' process to Kurdish minority, and tried to improve dialogue between Turkey and Armenia.

According to Öniş (2013), the AKP government, specifically in its early phase, has taken important steps that consolidated Turkish democracy. The EU and the following Europeanization process have constituted a main motivation of democratization process. In the light of these developments, new image of Turkey appeared and altered the "old Turkey" which is based on the Kemalist Establishment (p. 105). In this regard, the most prominent change is the decline of military power in

Turkish politics since the military tutelage was seen as the main impediment towards democratic consolidation (Sakallıoğlu, 2007, pp. 151-166). In this period, civilian politicians have become more powerful than military elites in Turkish politics. Hereby, military has receded from the center of Turkish politics to the periphery. This progressive development was also welcome by foreign politicians and scholars. Along with the improvement of civil-military relations, the dominance of the traditional Kemalist bureaucracy, specifically in the judiciary and foreign affairs has been declined (Öniş, 2013, p. 105).

In terms of its ability of encompassing different religious groups and ethnic identities, the AKP is seen as more democratic from previous governments. In this era, many reforms have been performed with the aim of recognizing minority rights to some extent. Especially, in terms of cultural and language rights of the Kurdish citizens, important steps have been taken. Yet, there is still remaining problem in turning those rights to the actual practices (Öniş, pp. 105-106). In a similar vein, conservative and religious parts of Turkish society have gained greater recognition with the AKP government. This recognition has also reflected in the economic area. The rise of conservative Anatolian business elites has decreased the dominance of secular business elites. Overall, more pluralistic atmosphere in politics and economy preponderated in Turkey. Hereby, the main problems, which are seen as democratic deficits, of previous governments have been trying to be overcome in the AKP era (p. 106).

The Constitutional referendum in September 2012 was another significant step that aimed to put an end the authoritarian legacies of the 1980 constitution which was made by the military elites. This new process of constitution making, thus, has been seen as a *sine qua non* of further democratization of Turkish politics. Although there were huge critics pointing that the AKP government was trying to consolidate its own power instead of democracy, the referendum was approved. Major issues of the constitutional agenda has been developing a new approach to the concept of citizenship, improving political equality among Turkish citizens, guaranteeing the freedom of speech, and strengthening the system of checks and balances. Management of this process is also valued because of its way of setting a good example for the Middle Eastern states. In this process, civic engagement in political life has also been strengthened. Many civil society groups have been included to constitution making process. The AKP government is aware of the necessity to develop a wider consensus

among diverse groups on constitutional change (Baç & Keyman, 2012, pp. 85-86). These changes have all contributed to the democratization process in Turkey.

Unfortunately, these developments were interrupted and then, constitutional making process has been totally halted in a similar way of other democratization reforms. The AKP government failed to successfully finalize this process. Moreover, instead of taking further steps towards democratization, the AKP government has preferred to take more authoritarian measures that restrain freedom of Turkish citizens in recent years. Rather than maintaining more inclusive and encompassing political atmosphere, the ruling party discourse have evolved to a more exclusionist way. In a nutshell, the AKP government has not succeeded to accompany its electoral accomplishments with democratic political accomplishments so far (Baç & Keyman, 2012). Yet, it should not be underestimated that the political stability that the AKP government brought to Turkish politics, especially until 2009, has underpinned the general structure of today's Turkey.

Political stability and democratic development in Turkish politics have also constituted main determinants of Turkish foreign policy change in the AKP era. First of all, Turkey's reputation in international arena has increased with regard to these developments. With respect to Turkey's political, cultural, and religious affinities with neighboring countries, Turkey's democratization process with a high level of political stability has been served as a model for those countries. Turkish government has been aware of the necessity that Turkey cannot become a regional power unless it becomes a true liberal democracy. For instance, in order to uphold the "Turkish model" in the Middle East, Turkey should ensure democratic rights at home first, including freedom of speech and press, minority rights etc. In this regard, Turkey needs to maintain its relationship with the EU which is one of the anchors of liberal democracy. Without ensuring equal rights to all its citizens, Turkey cannot promulgate itself as a model in the Middle East with full support from Western allies (Çağatay, 2014) In this regard, Turkey's strengthened stance in global politics has constituted the basis of one of the main Turkish foreign policy goals: being a central country. Through becoming more powerful in its domestic politics, Turkey has improved its regional policies while promoting its reputation and reinforcing its role in international arena. Yet, it would be misleading to ignore the effect of economic growth to Turkish foreign policy goals in the AKP era. Without having a strong economy, the goal of being a central country

would not be realized. Thus, it should also be noted that all domestic developments, argued above, and economic growth have mutually reinforcing power on themselves. Therefore, the next section explains the way Turkish economy grows with regard to those developments.

Turkish Economic Growth in the AKP era

Along with the political stability, Turkish economy has progressed under the AKP government. While many countries has shaken with the Eurozone financial crisis and Arab uprisings, Turkey has turned into a country which is more attractive for Western and other financial investors thanks to its relative political stability. Moreover, Turkey has also been more appealing through diversifying its trade partners, approaching new markets, and raising its Islamic capital (Çağatay, 2014).

At the end of the 1990s, Turkey had been struggling with Turkish lira depreciation, the lack of confidence in foreign exchange deposits, balance deficit, and the lack of transparency in the asset and liability balance of banks (Transition to Strong Economy Program, 2001). To overcome those problems, the Disinflation Program was entered into force under supervision of the IMF in 2000, as a first step. Yet, these measures fell short of preventing the eruption of 2001 crisis. Being deadly affected by the crisis, Turkish government realized that unless fiscal and monetary policy programs put into force, macroeconomic stability is far from likely to be achieved at that moment (Yendi et al, 2012, p. 51).

On call of coalition government in rule at that time, the Transition to the Strong Economy Program of IMF was put into force after the 2001 crisis. The main objective of the program was to fight with high inflation, to re-arrange the public financing balance, and to re-figure the financial sector. Most of these measures lied behind the relatively stable structure of Turkish economy after 2001 crisis (**Transition to Strong Economy Program, 2001**).

AKP's emergence as a winner of the 2002 election came out of that environment in which public opinion was questioning the quality and sustainability of economic policies of previous governments. Economic policy of the AKP was essentially aligned with the IMF stabilization program, specifically in the first period of its ruling. In line with the program, the AKP government took several steps on fiscal discipline, central

bank independence, implicit inflation targeting, and extensive structural reforms (Uğur, 2008, p. 6). After successful implementation of the Program, Turkey faced a process of rapid economic growth. The period between 2002 and 2007, the economic growth was reached 6.8% while its average was 3% in between 1992 and 2001. Similar change was observed in the inflation rate. It dropped to a 17.6% from 70% annual rate in between 2002 and 2007 (IMF, 2014). The fiscal discipline of the Program was the main factor behind this economic change. Yet, the increase in the level of unemployment could not be effectively controlled due to the privatization programs, the fiscal adjustment and the tight monetary policy where it reached above 10% in this period (Yendi, p. 52).

Another important issue in economy was the increase in the current account deficits at that period. As a result of tighter monetary policy and higher inflation rate relative to other developed countries, trade deficit was occurred in relation with the Lira depreciation. Those challenges before the export capacity of Turkey signaled the need of structural reforms for strengthening the competitiveness of domestic industries in Turkey. However, it would not be wrong to argue that the general outlook of economy was in a good shape in the first period of the AKP rule. This was also confirmed at a time of the 2007 global crisis. Turkey was one of the countries that slightly affected by the crisis. Thanks to the reforms made in the banking sector and financial markets after the 2001 crisis, Turkey could rapidly overcome bad effects of 2007 crisis. GDP rate was stabilized around 9% while the level of export was brought into normal levels after the years of recession. Thanks to these developments, two rating agencies upgraded Turkey's debt to investment grade in 2012 and 2013 (CIA Factbook). According to Rodrik (2009), Turkish case appeared as an important lesson for other countries during the crisis period. Although it is generally believed that economic policies of governments would become useless in the lack of development of financial markets, reforms of the monetary and fiscal policies could protect Turkey's economy from both domestic and external shocks.

It is important to note that there are two indicators that signed structural vulnerabilities of economic systems. These are increasing current account deficits and declining saving rates. While the ratio of current account deficit to GNP increased from less than 1% in 2002 to 7.3% in 2007, the national saving rate as a proportion of GDP dropped to 16.0 in 2006 from 21% in 2002. Both of these indicators pointed out the

reliance of Turkey on external finance. Thus, they showed that Turkey is extremely vulnerable to changes in external financial market (IMF, 2007).

Decline of the current account and saving rates are also linked to structural features of Turkish economy such as high level of import of Turkish manufacturing, high level of income inequality, and level of GDP per capita. Yet, government policies have had an effect too. Since the inflation rate had been declined at the cost of high real interest rates, Turkish Lira has been over-valued and the current account has been deteriorated. However, at a time when the AKP government has started to follow its own economic policy by slightly differing from IMF program, Turkey has faced high real interest rates which have been accompanied by an increasing in the inflation rates. As a result, the costs of investment and disinflation have increased (Uğur, p. 6).

However, despite these limitations of Turkish economy, it should be noted that AKP government had two main contributions. First, AKP government followed the stabilization program and structural reform agenda of the IMF and the World Bank. By doing so, the AKP could manage stabilization and reform process. In the lack of AKP leadership, these processes may have been failed to achieve. Second contribution of the AKP government was its commitment to the EU membership process. In this regard, numerous democratization reforms have been realized. From a period between 2002 and 2004, Turkey succeeded to fulfill requirements for the beginning of EU accession negotiations in 2005. Since balance between the economic growth and political stability was seen as the most significant factor of Turkey's EU membership, AKP government's commitment to the EU membership played an important role as a basis of credibility for the economic policy structure (Uğur, pp. 6-7).

When all these accomplishments are considered, it can be argued that Turkish economy under the AKP rule has become one of the success stories of economic development in the last decade when the world seems to suffer from decreased economic activity. When the G-20 was organized in 2003, Turkey found itself among key international players as the largest 15th economy in the world; and Turkish policy makers aim to make Turkey as one of the largest 10 economies in the world by 2023. In addition to the challenge, some experts argue that Turkey may encounter the 'middle income trap' and difficulty on this determined route with the similar momentum as it has been going through the past decade. Yet, despite of those

challenges, Turkey seems nearer its long-lasting dream than ever before. It has already managed to join the “trillion dollar – plus” economies of Europe, including France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, and Spain (Çağatay, 2013, 800). This exceptional growth in Turkish economic has strengthened its increasing international profile as well. Just a decade before, average income of Turkish citizens had one-fifth of Europeans. Now, Turkey has become a country in which citizens are only 30% less wealthy than Europeans. Moreover, Turks’ purchasing power has increased much more than some EU member states, such as Bulgaria, Romania, and Latvia (p. 801).

These major reforms and developments in economic realm have significantly affected Turkish foreign policy strategy. In order to strengthen its soft-power and increasing its pro-active foreign policy activities, high level of economic capacity seems inevitable end to Turkey (Kutlay & Öniş, 2013, p. 19). Under these economic circumstances, Turkey seems that it could make real its 400-year old dream of becoming Western by catching up with the West. Turkey’s combining its ongoing links with European economies to other states of Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) can be also seen as the main motivation of its emergence as an economic power in global economic order. To put in a different way, Turkey has managed to remain open to European market and investors while aiming to be attached with emerging markets, specifically with Muslim-majority countries. This combination in economy has generated remarkable results for Turkish economy. While, in 2007, Turkey’s trade with Europe was 56%, this figure has dropped to 42% in 2013. Yet, this gap in trade volume has filled with the rise of trade with the Middle Eastern and North African countries. While trade with those countries was 13% in 2002, now it has increased to 26%. In a similar vein, Turkey’s trade with sub-Saharan Africa has reached to \$17 billion in 2013 (Çağatay, p. 801).

This diversification in Turkish economy in the AKP era reveals that Turkish economic activities have been aligned with the Turkish foreign policy transformation. Emphasis on being a global country and multi-faceted foreign approach as the determinants of Turkish foreign policy reflect itself Turkey’s economic relations in international arena. Turkey could take advantage of its proximity to Europe and its affinity with Muslim countries. Turkey succeeded to engage in trade and economic agreements with Iran, Iraq, Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG), and Syria. In 2010, the trade volume between Turkey and Iran reached its peak with \$10.6 billion. Also,

Iran became Turkey's second largest energy supplier after Russia (MFA). Along with Iran, economic relations with Syria and Northern Iraq rapidly increased. As a result of border trade in southeast Turkey, local economy of this area has been positively influenced. Through bilateral agreements between Syria and Turkey, such as free trade agreement, mutual abolishment of the visas, trade relations were strengthened. As a result, the trade volume of these two country reached 2.2 billion \$ in 2010, which is three times of the number in 2002 (MFA).

Along with the alignment in foreign policy and Turkish economy, a decade of stability and democratization process under the AKP rule have contributed to Turkish economic growth. Thanks to the democratic reforms, as argued in the previous section, Turkey has been drawing attention of international and regional players. More importantly, Turkey has succeeded to improve its international image in the eyes of both Western and Eastern countries. In fact, this appearance of AKP government in international politics is not only limited to its political and economic developments of Turkey but also its newly established foreign policy vision and policies in its nearer and wider environment. To analyze this change in foreign policy, it is significant to scrutinize the theoretical foundations of the foreign policy formulation in the AKP era with regard to new tools and instruments initiated which are under the leadership of the then Minister for Foreign Affairs Davutoğlu. To that end, the next section presents an overview of the way perception of the West has evolved and new ideational structure is established.

Turkish Foreign Policy in the AKP era

Resurfacing the Idea of West: Geographic Imagination

The concept of geopolitics plays an important role in understanding and analyzing Turkish foreign policy from past to today. Having considered geopolitical vision provides significant clues for elucidating the transformation of the concept of West in Turkish foreign policy under the AKP era. In order to analyze the impact of geopolitics, it is important to elucidate the concept of geographic imagination which identifies the conceptual map of political elites. By building this cognitive process, geographical imagination underlies the culture of geopolitics by entitling regions, such as the Middle East or by establishing mental zones, such as the East and the West. In this regard, geographic imagination appears as one of the most effective factors in figuring the

discourses and practices of policymakers and in determining attributions and categorizations. Mainly, these categorizations are socially constructed and under influence of historical experiences and interplays.

Along with the categorizations, new geopolitical images of threat emerge as an important factor in shaping foreign policy preferences. Through this way, geographic imagination plays a significant role by redefining potential foes as potential friends or former conflict areas as potential zones of influence (Aras & Fidan, 2009, p. 196). Aras and Fidan's formulation of geographic imagination is the cognitive framework which identifies the way one perceives and describes his country's geopolitical conditions. It shows the underlying mechanism of how geopolitics is comprehended and interpreted. In this respect, Turkey seems to transform its international status by developing a new foreign policy approach. A main feature of this approach is to leave aside the negative connotations and biases belonged to Turkey's past.

From the beginning of the new republic, Turkish foreign policy has been going through a critical transformation which has totally reflected itself also in geopolitical discourse of political elites. By only sticking to the physical location of the country, this perceptual change in the minds of political elites might be disregarded. As Aras and Fidan (2009) put it well "although the distances remain the same, the perception of ... geographic regions has significantly changed through the lenses of a new geographic imagination." (p. 199) Thus, the geographic imagination of foreign policy elites has become an integral part of understanding the developments of Turkish foreign policy.

Turkey's geopolitical position in the world order has always been of significance for policy makers. Throughout the years, protectionism and exceptionalism have been two main concepts that constitute the traditional geopolitical vision of Turkish foreign policy. While the protectionism conduces to develop defensive foreign policy activities, the exceptionalism lays stress on territorial and geopolitical exceptionalism of Turkey which affects the emergence of political discourse that is shaped by "Turkey's territorial and civilizational anxiety in the regional and global geopolitical order." (Yeşiltaş, 2013, p. 661) Moreover, the emphasis on exceptionalism and this anxious way of thinking have forced Turkish policy makers to follow isolationism in foreign policy, instead of multi-dimensional approaches. As Aras and Fidan (2009) argue that Turkey was approaching its neighborhood "as a geography of chaos and a source of instability"

which “resulted in Turkey’s conscious alienation and limited involvement in the region” (p. 197).

The roots of defensive geopolitical imagination of Turkish foreign policy goes back to nation-building process at Early Republican Era and resulted from “domesticating the nation-state territories, which created a sense of well-defined homeland in strict territorial terms.” (Aras, Dağcı, Çaman, 2009, p. 29) In this regard, it can be argued that the nation-state notion has constituted one of the most important foundations of Turkey’s geopolitical culture. Yet, in the new geopolitical discourse of the AKP government, there is a change in the scope of this culture. Rather than “territorial and nationally defined location that is spatially fixed by its national boundaries”, wider cultural regions such as the Middle East, the Caucasus, the Balkans, and North Africa has underpinned the basis of geopolitical culture of Turkey (Yeşiltaş, pp. 661-662). Aras (2009) explains this change in geopolitical imagination as follows:

“Davutoğlu’s re-defining of Turkey’s role in both neighboring regions and international politics changed the concept of ‘strategic depth’ and expanded the cognitive map in policymaker’s minds beyond the borders of Turkey. The territorial limits to Turkish involvement in neighboring countries have disappeared in this new mindset. The relationship between ‘bordering and othering’ lost its meaning after removing the strains of domestic threat perceptions in regional policy.” (p. 129)

Through new geopolitical imagination, the edges of Turkish foreign policy are shaped through the non-territorial concepts such as order and civilization, unlike defensive geopolitics. Thus, the new geopolitical approach puts forward a different vision of Turkey’s stance in international arena and shows a break from the geopolitical discourse of previous governments with regard to Turkey’s place in international system and its attachment to Western political order (Yeşiltaş, p. 662).

With the influence of new geographic imagination, the “West” has lost its meaning in Turkish politics as the only way through modern Turkey. Westernization has been no more regarded as a condition for modernization. Rather, this genesis has evolved into the concept referring to an international system that Turkey has become part of it. As Kalın (2011) argues, new geographic imagination is “a new idea of time and place [that] makes it possible for Turkey to produce its own concepts and build a new vocabulary.” According to him, this change in the “profound mental transformation” puts an end to perceive the world from a non-Eurocentric perspective

(pp. 6–7). Through these developments, foreign policy activities of Turkey has extended the range from “contributing to peace and stability in the Middle East, to playing an active role in countering terrorism and extremism, to become a new energy hub to acting as one of the architects of the inter-civilization dialogue initiative aiming at producing a vision of the world, based on dialogue, tolerance and living together.” (Keyman, 2009, p. 7)

In this regard, Turkish foreign policy approach has shaped through more synthesis policies. In order to become a strong regional actor in its neighborhood regions, it is agreed that Turkey should follow its own interests and rights while determining its own powerful stance within the international system. As this new vision in foreign policy offers, instead of looking outside through the prisms of the West, Turkey should take advantage of its links with the West and follow a more instrumental approach in pursuing its interests. Thus, in this new era, Turkish foreign policy has come to the fore with its emphasis on more comprehensive and overarching stance in developing its foreign policy activities without rejecting the Europeanization project. In this vision, the EU or the West, in general, has no more put at the center of Turkey’s external relations. Rather, it becomes one of the integral and important parts of Turkish foreign policy.

This mental transformation in foreign policy has gradually manifested itself in Turkish foreign policy activities. Turkey has re-discovered that its neighborhood is not limited only with Europe. Rather than turning away from the West, Turkey has started to follow an active foreign policy towards several regions: the Middle East, the Balkans, the wider Black Sea regions, and the Central Asia. This new trend points out a break with previous foreign policy vision that Turkey as a country surrounded by enemies and strategically located in the West. Yet, this break does not indicate that the West has lost its importance in Turkish foreign policy. Rather, Turkey becomes aware of importance that having a more responsive foreign policy towards its surrounding regions would enhance its relations with the West while pursuing its own regional interests.

This approach reflected itself in the relations with the West, especially with the US the EU in the AKP era. In this period, while Turkey further engaged with the West, it also has turned into an important player in its neighboring regions in the aftermath of 9/11 events and more recently with the Arab Uprisings. In this regard, there has been a resurfacing of West in the AKP era in the light of 9/11 and Arab Uprisings yet as an

international system where Turkey is also a part of it rather being as the sole reference point for modernization. Therefore, before presenting the main characteristics of Turkish foreign policy in the AKP period, next section explains the concept of West in foreign policy through examining the relations with the US in the aftermath of 9/11 events as well as with the EU in the 2000s and after the Arab Uprisings.

Turkey and the US in the aftermath of 9/11 Events

On 9/11, 2001, United States was shocked by a series of coordinated terrorist attacks. Besides the tragic death of hundreds of people, 9/11 attacks made serious impacts on the face and the course of international politics. 9/11 events have also generated new challenges to the US foreign policy. Maintaining the post-Cold War structure was no more option for states in the period between the fall of the Berlin Wall and 9/11 attacks (Davutoğlu, 2010). The new challenge appeared after the 9/11 events was mainly the question of what the new route of international system would be. In this period, US foreign policy makers encountered the problem of how to deal with the balance between liberty and security which they had believed that their country is free from the politically instable and insecure territories of the world thanks to continental location of the country (Davutoğlu, 2009, pp. 11-12). Thus, they have embarked on a quest of new foreign policy strategies in fighting against the global terrorism (Beris & Gürkan, 2002, p. 44).

In the wake of the 9/11 attacks, Islamist terrorism was identified as the main enemy in global arena. The US hegemonic supremacy was challenged in the face of global terrorism. In this regard, the US split the world into two parts, friends who take sides with the US in fighting against terrorism and foes who do not (Keyman, 2009, p. 14). At that period, Turkey took a side with the US and provided total support the US in fighting against global terror. Initially, the US initiated the war against terrorism in Afghanistan. In Afghanistan case, Turkey aligned with the UN resolution and took a responsive role within International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). Turkey's alignment with the US, as a country that has both Western orientation and a Muslim population, enabled the US to argue that this war was not a crusade against Islam.

With regard to second Gulf War, PKK issue appeared as a challenging element for Turkish-US relations. In combating the PKK problem, Turkey and the US took a common position and they both proclaimed the PKK as a common enemy. The US

provided support to Turkey in intelligence in return for Turkish cooperation in operations conducted in the Northern Iraqi territories (Aydın, 2009, pp. 137-139). Yet, the relationship between Turkey and the US entered into a difficult period due to Turkey's Parliamentary refusal of 2003 to the US opening a northern front against Saddam regime in the Second Gulf War (Erickson, 2004, p. 16). The US was approaching the Iraq War as an important step for re-establishing of the post-9/11 global and regional order. Çağatay (2004) puts forward two reasons for this refusal which are the lack of international legitimacy for the US intervention and the rise of anti-war and anti-US public discourse in the wide range society from religious parts to the leftist ones (pp. 46-47). However, despite of the clashing interest in bilateral relations with Turkey and the US, the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA) acknowledged to open the Turkish airspace to the US military forces and assisted the US logistic to Iraq through Turkey (TGNA, 2003, Decision No: 763).

In order to ameliorate the deteriorated bilateral relations, Turkish Foreign Minister Abdullah Gül and the US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice declared the Document of Shared Vision and Structured Dialogue in July 2006. With this declaration, the US and Turkey aimed to promote the relations in economic, scientific and technological fields. To consolidate bilateral cooperation, this document provided a roadmap for two countries. After the 9/11 events, Turkey's strategic importance in the Cold War circumstances began to be reconsidered (Oğuzlu, 2007, pp. 48-49). Turkey was in search of developing new foreign policy strategies in this newly established international system. In this environment, Turkey was pointed out as a role model for the Middle Eastern countries in several official explanations of the US Administrators.

As a country which is the only democratic country had strong relations with the non-Muslim world, Turkey was assigned to fulfill this role. Besides Turkey's assigned role as a model country, inefficiency of the US in democratization process of the Middle Eastern countries reinforced Turkey's strategic position. On the contrary to the US strategies towards the Middle East, the post 9/11 era raised anti-Americanism while deteriorating the US legitimacy at the same time. The US led political instability and chaos provided an appropriate ground for Turkey in taking an active role in the region. In a similar vein, strategic environment occurred in the aftermath of the Iraq War of 2003 made neighboring countries getting closer to Turkey. In this regard, Larrabee

(2007) points the US invasion to Iraq as a “major catalyst” for Turkey’s Middle East policy and its rapprochement with Iran and Syria.

As is seen, while Turkey consolidated its alignment with the US in the region, it also increased its engagement with the neighboring countries. Therefore, for the first time in the history of Turkish foreign policy, Turkey’s approach towards the West and the East was not torn in conflicting policies; rather, they were mutually reinforcing. Overall, it can be argued that although some vision-based disagreements may occur time to time between Turkey and the US, a common position to sustain the alliance continues. In the international structure shaped through 9/11 events, the alliance between US and Turkey has become more valuable in fight against global terrorism with regard to interests of both countries.

Implications of EU Membership Process and the Arab Uprisings

At the European Council Summit of 2004, European Council decided to start accession negotiations with Turkey in 2005. Since then, Turkey’s reform agenda shaped through the EU accession process put its stamp on Turkey’s domestic vision which has also underpinned the regeneration of the Turkish foreign policy formulation. Since the modernization process of Turkey has been going hand in hand with the domestic reform agenda, a bid for membership in the EU has become one of the most important Turkish foreign policy goals.

In the AKP government, EU membership process has remained as one of the priorities in Turkish foreign policy as well. As Davutoğlu underlines that becoming a member of the EU is not an ordinary foreign policy goal for Turkey. Rather, it is a comprehensive domestic political, social, and economic reform packages and an effort for realigning with international conditions (MFA, 2009). In this regard, Turkish law has entered into transformation process through several adjustments packages and constitutional changes with the aim of improving and consolidating Turkish democracy in order to comply with Copenhagen criteria. To that end, many amendments in Turkish law has been made; such as changes in the Civil Code that enlarge gender equality and changes in Penal Code that eliminate the death penalty, torture and ill-treatment, amendments of the Anti-Terror Law that allow broadcasting in languages other than Turkish and regulation of crimes against the indivisible unity of the Turkish Republic,

several adjustments regarding the role of military in politics through the National Security Council, and abolishment of the State Security Courts (Baç, 2005, pp. 16-30).

Along with the end of the Cold War and 9/11 events, which are defined as “tectonic shifts in the international order” by Aras (2013, p. 3), the Arab Spring was another major shift that Turkey has accordingly re-arranged its foreign policy. Similar to the critical changes of the end of the Cold War and 9/11 events, the Western orientation again reflected itself in Turkish foreign policy activities (p. 3). The Arab Spring provided a great opportunity for Turkey and the EU in laying emphasis on the value of cooperation between Turkey and the EU over the Middle East. On the one hand, Turkey’s new geographic imagination presents strategic importance for the EU in enlarging its sphere of influence through Turkey’s connections with new political elites in the region. The EU, on the other hand, has a great capacity to provide political and social agenda for the transformation of the countries in the region and strong connections with civil society groups. When those factors come together, EU-Turkey cooperation becomes more important not only for the Arab Spring but also their sustainable and effective regional policies. In this respect, Turkey realized the difficulty of distancing itself from the West while the EU discovered the importance of Turkey’s support in the region (Aras, 2013, pp. 4-5).

According to Aras, the Arab Spring was an opportunity to retrieve Western values through elimination of repressive ruling of authoritarian regimes in the region (p. 4). Main motivation behind political uprisings were to establish a new balance in the region through replacing authoritarian regimes with the outward-looking ones which are in search for fundamental Western values such as liberty, freedom and good governance. In this regard, the Arab Spring has also appeared as a test for ethical dimension of emerging international system. As a response, the rising powers of the international system have preferred to follow isolationist or non-interventionist policies towards the Arab Spring (p. 3).

On the contrary to rising powers, such as China, Russia, India, and Brazil, Turkey followed an assertive policy and took part in the transformation in the region (Aras, p. 4). Since the intended regime transformation aimed to put democratic regimes into power instead of autocratic ones, Turkey’s regional policy put an emphasis on democratic principles and Western values through embracing democracy promotion

agenda of those countries (Kardaş, 2011, p. 1) Turkey's role in regional transformation mainly took two forms. First, Turkey tried to get in contact with groups that aim to take place in new political structures in the countries where regime change was trying to be realized in a peaceful way. Second, Turkey took side with the popular opposition and supported their demand for political reforms in the countries where the regime change was going through a violent phase. Although Turkey's reactions to the Arab Spring has come in for criticism due to its timing, Turkey's regional policy on the period of the Arab Spring showed its pro-democracy stance and its commitment to the normative principles of the international order. In this regard, the Arab Spring once again revealed that Turkey is entrenched in the Western order (p. 2). Moreover, as Kardaş (2012) argues that Turkish foreign policy towards the Arab Spring "underscored not only Turkey's similarity to Western values but also its dissimilarity from potential contenders to the global order." (p. 4) Overall, it can be argued that, on the issue of the Arab Spring, Western genesis of Turkish foreign policy has reflected itself as a Turkey's commitment to democratic and normative principles, and international norms.

When the critical points in relations with the West, such as 9/11 and Arab Spring, are taken into account, it is seen that the policy alignment with the West in the AKP era continues yet with a considerable difference: the West is no longer seen as an end as in the period prior to AKP governance, rather it has become a means in the process of becoming a strong international player. The most evident reflection of this change is seen in the new foreign policy tools and instruments of AKP government, specifically in foreign aid policy which are explained in the following parts of this section.

Ideational Structuring in the AKP Era

Turkey as a Central Country

Strategic Depth Doctrine constitutes the ideational basis of Turkish foreign policy, which is developed by Davutoğlu. He is the intellectual architect of the AKP foreign policy. Strategic Depth Doctrine is mainly based on Davutoğlu's geopolitical and historical analysis of Turkey in the international arena. In a general sense, it is considered as a re-exposition of Turkey's history and geography in the light of recently developed international circumstances (Davutoğlu, 2010, p. 43). As Kirişçi (2009)

argues, the importance of the Strategic Depth book proceeds from “its prescriptive nature and its introduction of the concept of Strategic Depth as a factor that should characterize Turkish foreign policy.” (p. 36)

Strategic Depth Doctrine points that the geography, the history and culture that Turkey has inherited does not necessarily make Turkey to follow a uni-dimensional foreign policy, as it is observed in Turkish history of Turkish foreign policy. On the contrary, geographical position and historical legacy of Turkey provides significant alternatives that put Turkey at the center of all geopolitical developments. This centrality of Turkey entails fulfilling responsibility of being at the center, rather than being directed by other power centers. In order to refrain from entering influence of different strategies of power centers, it is argued that Turkey should develop its own foreign policy approach (Oğuzlu, 2009, p. 44).

Davutoğlu puts forwards two main elements which provide Turkey a unique position in the international arena. First element is historical legacy of Turkey which Davutoğlu refers as historical depth. According to Davutoğlu (2001), there is quite high possibility of having new alternatives for Turkey to identify its international position in terms of its historical background (p. 65). In this respect, it is crucial the way historical legacy can be utilized to overcome existing problems that Turkey has been facing in international arena. Second element is geopolitical position of Turkey. Geopolitics, as argued above, is the combination of political factors and the physical condition of geography. Although it is stable condition, like history, geopolitics comes into play and subjects to reassessment in line with altered conditions of international arena when it is combined with political and conjunctural factors (Davutoğlu, 2001, pp. 115-116). Davutoğlu analyzes geographic location of Turkey in relation with history. He argues that:

“Geographical depth is a part of historical depth. For instance, Turkey is not just any old Mediterranean country. One important characteristic that distinguishes Turkey from, for instance, Romania or Greece is that Turkey is at the same time a Middle Eastern and a Caucasian country. Unlike Germany, Turkey is as much a European country as it is an Asian country. Indeed, Turkey is as much a Black Sea country as it is a Mediterranean one. This geographical depth places Turkey right at the centre of many geopolitical influences.” (Turkish Daily News, Interview with Davutoğlu, 2001)

Turkey's invaluable historical and geographic position necessitates developing a well-rounded geopolitical strategy that could overcome both mental and territorial borders. To do this, foreign policy of Turkey should penetrate the time and place dimensions at the same time. As Davutoğlu (2001) emphasizes "the analysis of an international relations sphere without penetrating its historical depth is similar to a psychological analysis ignoring the person's memory records." (p. 551) In the light of these arguments, Davutoğlu comes up with a concept of 'central country' that determines Turkey's position in the aftermath of 9/11 events.

Turkey's new position as a central country is based on its both ideational and geographical roots. Davutoğlu puts forward that thanks to the unique position of Turkey, it carries significant features of central country and thus it cannot follow defensive foreign policy approach. Therefore, Davutoğlu figures foreign policy of Turkey in a proactive manner that could develop policies for its neighborhood. As the baseline of this approach, Davutoğlu points that Turkey's security and prosperity is depended upon the generation of peaceful and stable order in its surrounding regions (Kardaş, 2012, p. 1). By following a proactive approach, Turkey could become a country that maneuver in various regions concurrently so that it gains the ability of control over those regions (Davutoğlu, 2008, p. 78).

Davutoğlu categorizes countries as continental, island, peripheral ones as well as the central country status which Turkey holds along with Germany, Russia, and Iran. However, Turkey's geography gives it a specific central country status, which differs from other central countries. Davutoğlu explains that all these three countries are central countries, yet each of them is very far from at least one continent. For instance, Germany is a central country in Central Europe, which is far from Asia and Africa. Russia is another central country in the lands of Europe and Asia, which is far from Africa. However, Turkey is located in both Asia and Europe and also is very close to Africa. From a geopolitical view, Turkey has control over many transition areas of land and sea power centers. Besides, Turkey is located at the intersection point of Caucasus, Balkans, Eurasia and Africa. In a similar vein, those regions are tied with the Middle East and the Caspian geo-economically thanks to Anatolian peninsula (Davutoğlu, 2001, p. 116). Thus, it would be a mistaken to approach Turkey as only bridge country that ties two different continents or as frontier country or as an ordinary country which only belongs to Muslim world or the West. In addition to geographical position,

historical and cultural heritage of Turkey are also important elements that strengthen its role in its surrounding regions (pp. 78-79).

In the light of these strategic assets of Turkey, Davutoğlu believes that Turkey should figure a new position that maintains security and stability not only for itself, but also for its surrounding regions. To do this, Davutoğlu emphasizes that Turkey should take a more constructive role as a provider of order, stability, and security in the world (p. 79). In this regard, Davutoğlu determines methodological and conceptual foreign policy principles of Turkey as a component of the way Turkey would turn into a central country.

Foreign Policy Principles in the AKP era

In line with the new policy orientation, Davutoğlu introduced three methodological and five conceptual foreign policy principles (Davutoğlu, 2009). As methodological foreign policy principles, Davutoğlu puts forward having a vision-based strategy, systematic framework, and utilizing soft power element in Turkish foreign policy. Through these principles, Davutoğlu aims to develop foreign policy which is more capable of taking necessary measures at a time of or previous to crises and having consistent framework in relations with different players of world politics. For him, a foreign policy formulation should be observed from the outside as a product of “one political brain, one approach behind.” (Davutoğlu, 2009) With an introduction of soft power concept in Turkish foreign policy, Davutoğlu emphasizes the importance of developing a foreign policy which is more constructive and consent-based rather than destructive and based on coercion. In line with the Strategic Depth Doctrine, Turkey’s effective use of its soft power in the regions where it has cultural and religious ties contributes their democratization efforts and Turkey’s third party role in the surrounding regions (Altunışık, 2008, p. 47).

Along with these methodological principles, Davutoğlu (2008) introduces main conceptual tools of Turkish foreign policy as follows: balance between freedom and security, zero problems with the neighbors, to develop relations with the neighboring regions and beyond, multi-dimensional foreign policy and rhythmic diplomacy.

Following the 9/11 events, harmony between security and democracy has been called great attention in international arena. Keyman highlights the significance of strong democracy in order to conduct efficient foreign policy. He (2010) argues:

“Turkey with a consolidated democracy and multi-cultural modernity will be able to maintain its status as soft power and pivotal state in the post-September/11 world. On the other hand, a Turkey focusing solely on geopolitics, security and unilateralism in its foreign policy behavior and domestic politics would be a more inward looking and nationalist Turkey” (p. 12).

In that environment, Turkey’s membership process to the EU, which is seen as an anchor for consolidating democracy, has always been critical for Turkish foreign policy. In the wake of the 9/11 events, Turkey has more concentrated on its regional engagements. Vacuum of leadership also strengthened Turkey’s stance towards surrounding regions. Zero-problems policy is put forward as a mechanism in order to reach this end. Through this policy, it is planned to eliminate old threat perceptions which are embedded in the past foreign policy activities. Normalization of relations with neighboring countries and developing more active policies are aimed to be integrated with surrounding regions. Hereby, Turkey’s alignment with the West would be strengthened by means of Turkey’s acknowledgement of its Eastern identity, instead of isolating itself from the East (Oğuzlu, 2006, pp. 290-292).

As a supplementary element of Turkey’s regional opening, rhythmic diplomacy is also offered to make Turkey more involved in potential crises through taking preemptive measures or playing a mediator role. In the light of this mechanism, Turkey has started to cooperate with the Arab League and Gulf Cooperation, took a more active role in Islamic Conference Organization, gained an observer status in the Organization of African Unity, and took a non-permanent seat in the United Nations Security Council which empowered Turkey’s reputation in the internal arena.

To make sense of all these tools in Turkish foreign policy, there is need for fundamental change in foreign policy approach. Multi-dimensional foreign policy has appeared to fulfill this necessity in Turkish foreign policy. Multi-dimensionality offers strategic diversification of foreign policy activities towards different regions on different issues related to economy, politics, or culture at the same time. While Turkey’s cultural and social engagements have been increasing with the Balkans, Caucasus, and Central Asian states, its trade volume has increased with the EU, US and the Middle

Eastern states. Multi-dimensional foreign policy objects to over-reliance on security and identity based, uni-dimensional foreign policy approaches. Rather, it underlines the combination of diversified assets of a country in foreign policy formulation.

Following the years, Turkey's role both in the region and in the world will be a function of the geo-political developments and Turkey's capacity to adapt to them, and also of the policies and choices Turkish governments make at home. In order to formulate a long-lasting strategic perspective, it is necessary to take into account "historical depth" which provides a sound assessment of the links between the past, present and the future, and a "geographical depth" penetrating into dynamics of the relations between domestic, regional and global factors. Yet, by now, it can be argued that Turkey's capability of being a global actor has improved substantially while Turkey's regional engagements have been increasing. Moreover, AKP government has managed to utilize the foreign politic as "a transformative instrument" to consolidate its domestic legitimacy and political power (Inat & Duran, 2006, p. 69).

New Instruments of Turkish Foreign Policy

This rapid transformation of Turkey's domestic and foreign dynamics in the AKP era has reflected itself in the way Turkish foreign policy is formulated and conducted. Turkey has turned into a country which is experiencing of becoming a regional and global player concurrently. To reach and sustain this aim, the main instruments of Turkish foreign policy have also changed in this period. New concepts and strategies have become evident for Turkish foreign policy makers.

Through adoption of a proactive, multifaceted and humanitarian foreign policy since AKP came to power, cultural and humanitarian diplomacy have become prominent foreign policy instruments while Turkey's global outreach has been increasing in several continents such as Asia, Africa and Latin America. Turkey's cultural and economic ties with its neighboring countries in the Balkans and the Middle East have also been strengthened. Visa requirement for Turkey with 61 countries including Syria, Iran, Kosovo, Morocco, Libya, Jordan, Tunisia, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, and Bosnia and Herzegovina have been lifted. Besides, Turkey's level of cooperation in many areas, from economy, energy to education has been increased through High Level Strategic Cooperation Council meetings held between Turkey and

its neighbors. Turkey's intense diplomatic efforts and mediation initiatives for Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia, Iraqi political groups, Israel and Palestine, Israel and Syria, Iranian nuclear file, Lebanese political groups, Georgia, Afghanistan and Pakistan have contributed to peace and stability in the region as well in the world (Ozoner, 2011).

In recent years, Turkey's cultural heritage has also become more prominent in building bridges between neighboring countries. Turkey's cultural products, more specifically television series has been started to be enjoyed all over the world. It can be argued that high level of interest in those series can be pointed as a sign of Turkey's increasing profile in the Arab World. On government side, the establishment of the Yunus Emre Foundation as a conductor of cultural diplomacy of Turkey can be regarded as the determination of Turkish foreign policy makers in improving cultural diplomacy tools. In 2007, Yunus Emre Foundation was established with the aim of "promoting Turkey and the Turkish language, history, culture and arts; presenting information across the world regarding Turkey; providing services to those wishing to receive education on Turkish language, culture and arts; developing Turkey's relations and cultural exchanges with other countries." (Yunus Emre Foundation, official website) The then President of the Foundation, Dr. Ali Fuat Bilkan states that "We are not a political but a cultural organization. However, we are taking Turkey's strategic priorities into consideration when opening centers abroad. Before us, there was no other organization promoting Turkish culture abroad." He indicates that the Yunus Emre Institute would become a Turkish version of the British Council, Germany's Goethe Institute and Spain's Cervantes Institute (Özerkan, 2010). As a result of rising diplomatic and cultural efforts of Turkey in the light of Strategic Depth Doctrine in foreign policy, Turkish Airlines has also broadened its flight network and the Turkish Radio and Television Corporation has expanded its broadcasts to reach Turks living outside Turkey.

Besides those cultural and diplomatic developments, humanitarian diplomacy has become a significant component of Turkish foreign policy in the AKP era. While humanitarian diplomacy efforts of Turkey reveals the aim of a country in managing crises within the surrounding regions, it also shows the intention that Turkey is feeling responsible for taking part in overcoming global problems. In this regard, it can be

argued that Turkey aims to overcome both regional crises and global challenges through its humanitarian diplomacy (Davutoğlu, 2013, p. 866). Davutoğlu argues that critical balance between conscience and power constitutes the basis humanitarian diplomacy of a country. In this sense, he states that “if a state has conscience but no power, it shows weakness. If it has power but no conscience, it becomes a tyranny. Our idea is for Turkey to be a compassionate and powerful state.” (p. 866) In line with this idea, Davutoğlu underlines Turkey’s assets such as the Turkish Airlines which have provided direct flights even to Mogadishu or TIKA, NGOs, Turkish Red Crescent, and other state apparatus which provide the ability to give a hand to the people in need. According to Davutoğlu, a strong stance in conducting humanitarian diplomacy will only be possible through a combination of passion and with those powerful tools. Otherwise, the result would be either cruelty or weakness, as Davutoğlu argues (p. 867).

When all these developments in both foreign policy and domestic policy in the AKP era are considered, Turkish foreign aid policy deserves a great attention since the way this policy has been formulated and conducted as the result of a combination and manifestation of those changes. In this regard, studying Turkish foreign aid policy with regard to main institutional body of its, TIKA, as a case study has increased the level of explanatory power of this study. While it provides an opportunity to study the impact of both domestic and foreign policy changes on a specific policy, it enables to analyzing the effect of new foreign aid policy to the process of establishment of new foreign policy vision. Turkish foreign aid policy has become one of the most prominent foreign policy activities in the AKP period. Combination of methodological and conceptual elements introduced by Davutoğlu has been reflected on TIKA’s activities. Thanks to those activities, Turkey has turned into a country which is able to develop policies regarding its historical and geographical depth. Having widened foreign policy approach with a prospering strategies, such as rhythmic diplomacy, mediator role, or normalization of relations with neighboring countries, and humanitarian diplomacy have all played important roles in the establishment of comprehensive and constructive foreign aid policy. In return, TIKA, as a main government agency, has entered into the process of structural transformation in order to fulfill the responsibility emanated from pro-active foreign policy approach.

As the hypothesis of this study suggests, while the change in foreign policy plays an important role in developing a more active and responsive foreign aid policy, political stability, democratization process, and economic growth in the AKP period have constituted main determinants of this change in foreign aid arena in a dialectical manner. A pre-determined and well programmed foreign policy can be seen as a derivative of the political stability and economic development of this era which enabled AKP government to overcome the limitations of short-termed coalition governments in establishing a long-termed strategic planning. By presenting decisive political will, the problems originated from lack of coordination between the bureaucratic staff and the political authorities have been no longer remained in Turkish politics. In a political environment, which is more stable than previous periods, AKP government has determined a more coherent foreign policy vision. In addition, evolution of the West in foreign policy formulation has played an important role in pursuing an active foreign aid policy. Since the West is no longer seen as an end, Turkey has become more able widen its foreign aid policy activities in its surrounding regions with the use of its geographical, historical and cultural assets and in a wider range of areas. In contrast to previous mindset claiming that multifaceted foreign policy would deteriorate the relations with the West, Turkey has strengthened its alignment with the West as well in this period.

With respect to all these developments in the AKP era through the lenses of new imagination of the West, the change in Turkish foreign aid policy becomes inevitable for Turkey in realizing its objectives in the international arena. As an outcome of the dialectical interaction among those factors, Turkey has taken several steps in order to have an influential foreign aid policy that makes it regional, yet more importantly, rising emerging power in the international system. In the lack of the alteration of the West imagination or economic growth, this change would not emerge. Combination of socio-economic developments with the newly established foreign policy vision provides the necessary conditions for Turkey in the process of being a donor country. While Turkey raises its international profile thanks to becoming more democratic, it could manage to have necessary economic growth that enable it to increase its development aid activities in 133 countries. The rise of non-traditional donors in the international development arena, on the other hand, has provided great opportunity for Turkey. Due to its new interpretation of the West as a system in which Turkey is part of it and its new foreign

policy formulation, Turkey has succeeded to conduct foreign aid policies outside of the West while intending to be a central power within this system.

Based on this argument, I will elucidate the transformation of TIKA and the foreign aid policy of Turkey in the next chapter. In order to reveal the change, I aim to explain the history of Turkish foreign aid from the beginning of it. More specifically, I will deal with the organizational transformation of TIKA in the AKP era under the influence of all defined factors above.

PART IV: TURKISH FOREIGN AID POLICY AND THE CASE OF TIKA

Development Assistance and Turkish Foreign Policy

The evolution of Turkey's experience in development assistance has been reflective of the broader transformations in Turkey's domestic and foreign policy orientation (Kardaş, 2013; Kulaklıkaya & Nurdan, 2010). In this regard, first, I will scrutinize the political history of Turkish aid with regard of foreign policy changes to explain the recent change in Turkish foreign aid policy. To begin with, some major questions should be answered in order to contextualize Turkey's foreign aid policy: What is the political history of Turkish aid? How can prominent features of Turkey's international development aid be clarified? How is the connection between international development policy and Turkish foreign policy transformation explained?

“Foreign Aid” and International Politics

Before going into detail of Turkish foreign aid policy, it should be better to operationalize the concept of foreign aid in order to prevent any confusion about the concept. Akçay (2012) defines foreign aid as the flow of materials and resources both in cash and in kind from developed countries to developing or less-developed ones (p. 7). Yet, there are divergent views about the definition of the foreign aid in international relations. To overcome this divergence, OECD DAC developed some criteria to differentiate ODA from other forms of aid in 1961. According to this definition, ODA is:

“flows to countries and territories on the DAC List of ODA Recipients and to multilateral development institutions which are provided by official

agencies, including state and local governments, or by their executive agencies; and each transaction of which is administered with the promotion of the economic development and welfare of developing countries as its main objective and is concessional in character and conveys a grant element of at least 25 per cent.” (OECD, 2008, p. 1)

As this definition also suggests, ODA contains three kinds of aid as “official development assistance, official aid and other official flows.” The first one contains both direct and indirect aid to the least or middle developed nations with the aim of contributing economic development and welfare. The official aid is given to multilateral development institutions and developing nations. The other official flows include indirect aids which aim to contribute development or transfer a grant element of less than 25%. For this area, all kinds of activities such as “projects and programs, cash transfers, deliveries of goods, training courses, research projects, debt relief operations and contributions to non-governmental organizations” are seen as eligible for ODA criteria (OECD, 2008).

Besides strong emphasis on contribution of economic development and welfare, there is a high level of correlation between foreign policy agenda and foreign aid policy of a state. According to Haşimi (2014), “realistically and carefully crafted national interests” shape main policies, strategies, and priorities of foreign aid policy (p. 131). In contrast to the negative connotation of this relationship raised by some academics or politicians, this relationship is also seen as a main expression of humanity or global responsibility. However, there is a consensus about the necessity of aid in international politics (p. 131). In this regard, increasing scope of Turkish foreign aid can be interpreted as a reflection of new priorities of Turkish foreign policy as being ‘central country’ which has a word in global context. With this aim, Turkish foreign policy makers in recent years have re-designed the link between Turkish foreign policy and international aid activities in line with new international order. Thanks to domestic developments in Turkey during AKP governance as argued in previous parts, Turkey has managed to develop highly efficient foreign aid policy. In order to explain one of the most prominent changes in Turkish foreign policy, I will scrutinize the history of TİKA. While explaining the history of TİKA, I will also try to elucidate main policies related to Turkish foreign aid policy and main issues in Turkish foreign policy. By doing so, I aim to display the way Turkish foreign policy transformation reflects itself in presence of TİKA and Turkish foreign aid policy. By emphasizing domestic and foreign

changes, I will also try to stress on the impact of dialectic relationship of those changes on the development of Turkish foreign aid policy.

Turkey's Experience with Foreign Aid

A quick glance at the Turkey's foreign aid activities both as a recipient and a donor country shows a direct link between Turkish political and economic stability and its self-defined role of Turkey in global politics (Haşimi, 2014, p. 131). By taking this link into consideration, it should be useful to apply Akçay's (2012) division of Turkish political history in terms of foreign aid. He determines three periods between 1923-1992, 1992-1999, and 1999 to the present time (p. 63). For the first period, Turkey only appears as a receiver country in the international arena. The second period begins with the establishment of TİKA. In this period, to overcome major problems of organizing aid activities under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was seen as main objective of TİKA. In spite of those objectives, Turkish foreign aid stayed limited to Turkic countries of the Central Asia and Caucasia and TİKA could not make much progress at that period (pp. 73-76). The third period is the one that Turkish foreign aid policy has been developing and turning into an effective foreign policy tool which was started in 2002 when the AKP came to power. Besides the effect of economic and political capabilities, each period reveals the complexity of Turkey's foreign policy alternatives.

Turkey as an ODA Recipient Country

The foreign aid activities of Turkey in the first period were mostly implemented by personal efforts of diplomats or bureaucrats whom were working at relative communities. Therefore, these activities could not be implemented with a well-planned foreign policy strategy (Akçay, 2012, p. 64). Besides those efforts, Turkey has been regarded as an aid recipient country since the late 1940s. Initially, Turkey met with ODA with the Marshall Plan which was put into practice by the U.S. to increase the number of pro-Western regimes formed in Europe after the Second World War. In this context, Turkey received \$150 million of aid, which consequently brought along an efficient drive to the Turkish economic development in the 1950s (Kulaklıkaya & Nurdun, 2010, p. 132).

Along with the US, Japan and Germany are two other donors of Turkish economic development. Besides those countries, multilateral international institutions,

specifically Asian Development Fund (ADF), the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), and the International Bank of Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), have also played an important role in Turkish development through delivering foreign aid (Kulaklıkaya & Nurdun, 2010, pp. 132-133). Until the mid-1980s, Turkey continued to be only recipient country. Yet, from then on, Turkey, as first, started to give aids and to plan aid activities under the supervision of the State Planning Organization (SPO) until the establishment of TIKA in 1992. However, aid activities of that period are seen as very limited and insufficient. Therefore, these efforts cannot be regarded as Turkey's emergence of a donor country in 1980s or 1990s.

From A Recipient to an Emerging Donor Country

Although Turkey is still listed as an aid recipient country by the OECD DAC, it has entered into a new stage of development cooperation as a rising donor country since 2004. However, in order to understand this remarkable change in Turkish development aid, it should be useful to go back the years of 1980s on which Turkey implemented a comprehensive package for the first time. In 1985, SPO delivered \$10 million to Gambia, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Mauritania, Senegal, Somali, and Sudan (Birttek, 1996, p. 37). The main motivation behind this new orientation can be argued as a reflection of altered foreign policy priorities of Özal government of the 1980s. This new set of framework gave precedence to increase Turkey's positive image in an international environment, to integrate Turkish economy to the global economy, and to improve Turkey's trade relations with developing countries by using foreign aid as a significant foreign policy tools. Besides those changes in the foreign policy vision, Turkey's economic growth in the period in between 1984-1989 which was actualized through the export-oriented growth strategy fostered the government in launching aid programs. This initiative in foreign policy played a crucial role in increasing Turkey's visibility in the international arena and its trade volume through the exploration of new markets to exports its goods (Kulaklıkaya & Nurdun, 2010, p. 134). However, it should be also added that TIKA experts associate Turkish government's aid activities with the state tradition of previous empires, including Turks living in the Central Asia, Great Seljuk Empire, and Ottoman Empire. According to them, history of those empires show that whenever they immigrate, conquer, or settle to a new place, they put their efforts on developing better conditions. In this regard, one of TIKA experts points out high number of fountains in Ottoman territories and argues that today TIKA's water projects

in several continents are conducted with this motivation in mind (Personal Communication, July 15, 2014).

Turkish Foreign Aid Policy toward Central Asia

After the collapse of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s, new political options became available for Turkey in the Central Asia and the Caucasus. This unexpected collapse of the Soviet Union generated great opportunity for Turkey to renew its relationship with the long-forgotten Turkic states in Central Asia (Winrow, 1998, p. 96). With this newly emerged euphoria, the then President of Turkey Turgut Özal said “the twenty-first century will be the century of the Turks.” (Karpat, 2003, p. 316)

At that time, there is a huge debate about whether Turkey was going to be a “model country” for Central Asia and the Caucasus or not. The Turkish model underlines three main features of Turkey which are secularism, liberal democracy, and a market economy. As having seen as Muslim country which has these features, it is expected that Turkey serve as a model for other Muslim majority countries that Turkey has both religious and ethnic ties (Winrow, 2000, p. 117). One of the main motivations of Western countries which were highly supportive of this model is to curb remaining Soviet weight and Iranian influence on the Central Asian countries (Demirtepe & Özkan, 2012, p. 648). Turkey approached these new international developments as a valuable opportunity to develop its relationships with regional countries and help them in forming their relationship with the international community. To do so, Turkey believed that it could get rid of the pressure of isolation which was instigated by the Western countries that attribute Turkey to strategic value as a barrier to Soviet expansion (Çelik, 1999, p. 23). Many in Turkey believed that this new activism of Turkey in post-Soviet countries would enhance Turkey’s international image and prospects of Turkey’s admission to the EU, which was rejected in 1989 (Winrow, 1998, p. 91).

With these aims in mind, Turkey started to cooperate with the Turkic states through setting up telecommunications and air links, granting scholarship for Turkic students to study at Turkish universities, and organizing training courses for Turkic diplomats and businessmen (Winrow, 1998, p. 117). In addition, several high level visits were realized and nearly 500 bilateral and multilateral agreements were signed between Turkey and the Central Asian countries since 1992. Following these

developments, the then Turkish Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel proclaimed a “gigantic Turkish world” was forming from the Adriatic to the Great Wall of China (Karasar & Kuşkumbayev, 2009, p. 26).

To summarize, three main motivations can be listed for Turkish foreign policy toward the Central Asia in 1990s. First is to improve Turkey’s standing in international relations as a bridge between East and the West. Second is to guarantee its security by securing allies with countries which Turkey shared political, economic and cultural links. Third is to increase economic growth through having cooperated with the resource-rich countries (Çelik, 1999, p. 122). However, Turkey had faced both domestic and international constraints that prevented successfully implementation of active foreign policy in the Central Asia. These constraints will be examined following section in this chapter.

Establishment of TIKA: Institutionalization of Turkey’s ODA policy

With this international environment and Turkey’s foreign policy objectives as such, TIKA was formed under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1992. Naturally, it turned into one of the important soft power tools of Turkish government. TIKA became responsible for enhancing social, cultural, economic, and political cooperation between Turkey and the Central Asian countries. Indeed, the international environment which was encouraging for Turkish model played a significant role in the establishment of TIKA as well (Demirtepe & Özkan, 2012, p. 648).

As set forth by Law No. 4688, the objectives and the main roles of TIKA were determined as follows: 1) developing economic, commercial, technical, social, cultural, and educational relationships between Turkey and developing countries; 2) organizing projects and programs that may help to the development of developing countries; 3) giving technical assistance for personnel and students of these countries through providing training and internship opportunities; 4) performing educational and cultural cooperation programs in the foreign countries; 5) ensuring the necessary cooperation and coordination with regard to the main services and duties (TIKA, 2008, p. 7).

During the 1990s, TIKA was conducting many projects on providing technical assistance with the aim of strengthening institution building and capacity development in the area of agriculture and service sectors. Yet, these projects were not limited only to

technical assistance but also to projects about commercial banking and central banking, tax training, improvement of the private sector, tourism, customs, diplomacy, public governance, insurance, statistics, agriculture, development of small- and medium-sized enterprises, as well as social cooperation in the. With these projects, Turkey became the first country in cooperating with Eurasian countries (Fidan & Nurdun, 2008, pp. 103-04). Turkey's total amount of development aid reached to \$3.75 billion in the period between 1992 and 2003. In 1992, over a billion dollars of this aid was delivered to the Turkic states of Uzbekistan (\$755 million), Kazakhstan (\$216 million), Turkmenistan (\$94.5 million), Azerbaijan (\$37 million) and Kyrgyzstan (\$26 million) (Parlak, 2007, p. 74). However, Turkey was not very successful in sustaining delivering similar amount of aid in the following years of 1990s. As SPO report of 1998 states that Turkey's aid budget to the Turkic states stayed around \$80 million in 1992, which was very modest in comparison to the beginning of 1990s (pp. 11-12).

In terms of the countries that TIKA was delivering the development aid from 1997 to 2003, there was not much change. Specifically, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan were the main receivers of TIKA's projects (Parlak, 2007, p. 133). Thanks to the high amount of Turkish bilateral aid in 1992, the ratio of Turkish foreign aid to the Gross National Income was about 0.74 %. However, with the decrease in the amount of aid that Turkey delivered, this percentage also dropped gradually over the years (DIE, 2002, p. 2).

Before 2005 on which TIKA became responsible for making calculations of Turkey's foreign aid according to OECD DAC criteria, there were serious problems about cooperation between Turkish official bodies and the OECD (DPT, 1998, p. 21). In addition, measurement of Turkey's foreign aid statistics was not standardized in this period. SPO only included bilateral aid into its calculations. Therefore, Turkey's contribution to the international organization or other type of humanitarian assistance was not counted in the calculations. Similarly, SPO and DIE did not count in statistics Turkey's contributions to Ahmet Yesevi and Manas Universities, in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan in 1993 and 1997, respectively, and the full extent of Turkish Eximbank credits (p. 160). As a result of this lack of coordination, the total amount of Turkey's foreign aid could not be calculated properly at that period.

In spite of all these efforts of TIKA, it could not be very successful as a new actor in the community of development assistance due to the number of domestic and international constraints that Turkey faced during the 1990s. In the next section of this chapter, I will try to explain those constraints.

Domestic and International Impediments for Turkey in the 1990s

The constraints that TIKA encountered can be summarized into two dimensions, domestic and international, as follows: (1) Turkish economy was not enough strong to be major supplier of foreign aid; (2) Turkish democracy was also not consolidated enough to be model for the post-Soviet countries; (3) Turkey had to overcome its PKK problem. In terms of international factors, (1) as a result of end of the Cold War, several ethnic and national conflicts emerged which led to the instability and insecurity to the region; (2) Turkey overrated its capability to play a political, cultural, and economic role in development of the newly independent republics; and (3) Central Asian states were still under influence of the Russian Federation (Mutlu, 2012, p. 133).

Due to these constraints, TIKA could not be very successful in carrying out its objective in the region during 1990s. It could not turn into a well-organized agency that was able to perform effective projects in terms of the amount and geographical scope. Between 1992 and 2002, TIKA could only open 12 Program Coordination Offices and implement activities in 28 countries (TIKA, 2013, p. 4). As TIKA expert puts forward political and economic instability in Turkey along with the international developments were the main reasons of this failure of TIKA in 1990s. He argues that fragile coalition governments and military intervention into politics hampered the consolidation of political and economic stability in Turkey (Personal Communication, June 6, 2014). In this environment, TIKA turned into a domestic political instrument of political parties, so that failed to concentrate on its major objectives. Particularly, administrative uncertainty with regard to who would or should be in charge of TIKA politically in coalition governments obstructed it from re-organizing its organizational structure. Besides those domestic constraints, the loss of attractiveness of Turkish model in the eyes of Western countries and the rise of Russia's power over the former Soviet territories had also played an important role in weakening TIKA effectiveness in the region (Demirtepe & Özkan, 2012, p. 648).

Another important reason that Turkey failed to be effective in delivering development aid to the Turkic states is the lack of financial capability, organizational ability and commitments of those respective countries. Furthermore, the management of Turkish aid was given to individuals who did not have expertise on international relations and aid programs (Yılmaz, 2002, pp. 189-192). The atmosphere of the aid agreements was also not realistic and mostly based on emotions and mutual trust between the two sides. With respect to these reasons, TİKA's role in the Turkish development aid activities was limited to a small budget and lack of professionalism. The institutional relationship among TİKA coordination offices abroad and Turkish embassies was not without problems as well (Parlak, 2007, p. 165). Therefore, the domestic, international and economic problems Turkey faced in the 1990s were of important causes obstructing the success of TİKA as a newly formed Turkish development aid agency and Turkey as a new actor as a donor country.

Transformation of TİKA and Turkish ODA Policy in 2000s

As I have argued above, Akçay emphasizes that the beginning of the third period in the history of Turkish foreign aid began when the TİKA became under the authority of the Prime Ministry in 1999. With this change in administrative status of TİKA, it transformed into the main Turkish official development agency, operating in several states, such as Albania, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Macedonia, Moldova, Mongolia, Palestinian Authority, Sudan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Kosovo, Ethiopia and Afghanistan. In some other countries that TİKA does not have a field office; Turkish embassies come into play in conducting projects (Personal Communication, July 15, 2014). Hereby, TİKA managed to enlarge the variety and geographical scope of its activities. Yet, the decline in the amount of Turkish foreign aid continued until 2003.

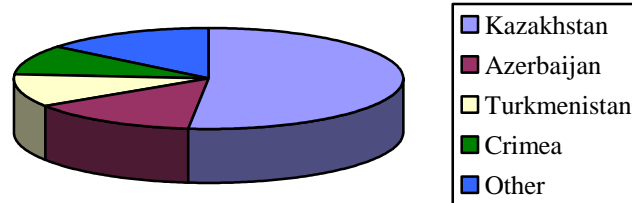
The systematic and structural change in Turkish foreign aid policy coincided with the time when the AKP came into power in November 2002. This governmental transition came into existence with a specific reference to the increasing role of Turkey in global politics. In the following years, this specific reference evolved into a central country model in the studies and speeches of Foreign Minister of Davutoğlu. Along with the transformation in Turkish foreign policy, economic and political stability in

Turkey have played an important role in the transformation of TIKA and Turkish foreign aid policy (Personal Communication, July 15, 2014). A newly emerging international setting that encourage emerging economies to become donor countries of foreign aid also influenced the re-orientation in Turkish ODA policy. In such an environment where domestic dynamics enter into scene, TIKA had the chance of re-arranging its vision, mission, and its administrative structure. In this regard, TIKA has adopted new internationally accepted criteria in foreign aid and has aligned itself with international development policies. Consequently, TIKA could overcome some organizational problems by cooperating with other international development agencies. Thanks to all these developments, Turkey has placed itself as an emerging donor country in the international aid arena.

Re-birth of TIKA since 2002

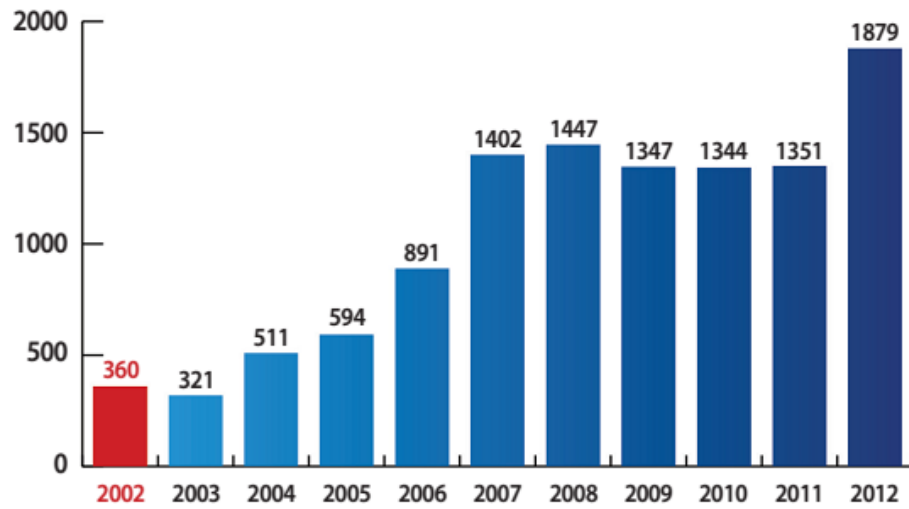
According to the reports published in 2003 by the Turkish Statistical Institute (TURKSTAT) and SPO, official development aid flows given by Turkey has reached to \$3.8 billion of which \$98 million of technical assistance belonged to TIKA. TIKA's share of foreign aid went to Kazakhstan (47 percent), Azerbaijan (13 percent), Turkmenistan (9.4 percent), Crimea (8.6 percent) and finally to other countries (13 percent) (Fidan & Nurdun, 2008, p. 100). The amount of official development aid has reached to \$339 million in 2004 which helped Turkey to place itself among the 'emerging donor' countries (TIKA, 2004). The understanding of direct monetary aid started to change within the scope of the development in 2003 with the increasing amount of project based assistance instead of direct monetary donations. This led to the enhancement of Turkey's visibility and reliability in the region. According to TIKA expert who operated in the field several times, Turkey's specific development model has been appreciated by the receiver countries and gives TIKA priority among other development agencies in those countries (Personal Communication, July 15, 2014).

Figure 2: Distribution of TIKA Foreign Aid According to Recipient Countries



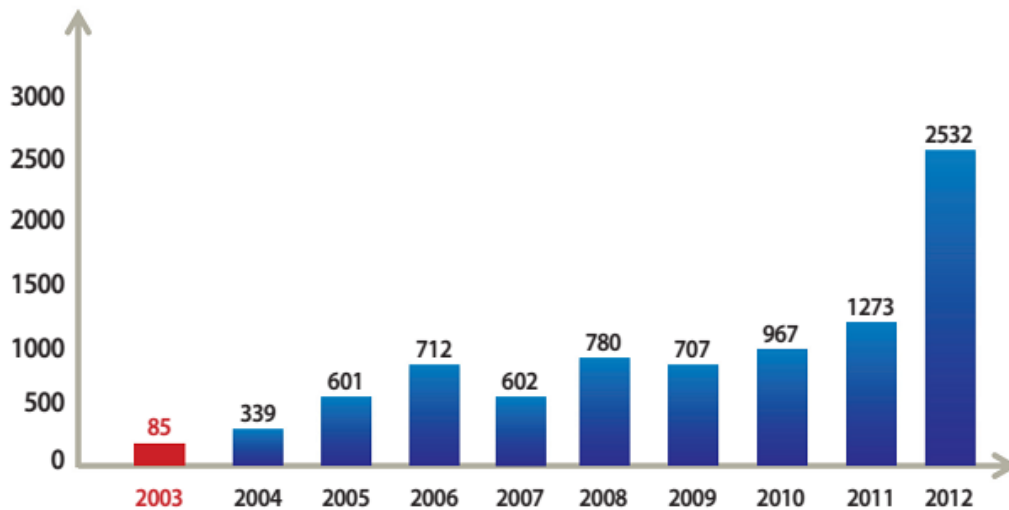
The increasing amount of aid started in 2003 followed the same trend during the AKP period despite fluctuations at some periods. Finally, as of 2013 TIKA has transformed itself into an agency which has 35 offices in 32 countries and operated in 110 countries from all continents. The countries TIKA involved in projects ranges from Asia to Africa, Europe to Latin America and Middle East which shows the geographical depth of aid activities of Turkey (TIKA, 2012). The number of aid projects implemented between 2002 and 2013 has reached to 13000 compared to only 2241 projects between 1992 and 2002. In addition, TIKA's budget has been raised to 840.289 million TL in between 2002-2013 while it has only one third of this amount in the period from 1992 to 2003. The report refers that this huge increase of TIKA budget is the reflection of success in economy and foreign policy arena of Turkish government (TIKA, 2014).

Figure 3: The Number of Projects Implemented by TIKA (2002-2012)



Thanks to increasing trend of ODA in this period, Turkey has gained worldwide recognition. This prominent rising in ODA was crowned when Turkey's ODA ratio to country GDP was ranked first in the world in 2011 and 2012. Besides, Turkey became the 4th largest donor country in proportion to its GDP in humanitarian aid which is \$2.53 billion.

Figure 4: Turkey's Official International Aid Between 2003 and 2012 (million USD)



Yet, Turkey's international assistance is not only limited to ODA. Direct investments, urgent humanitarian aid, and NGOs also have significant roles in Turkey's

international aid program. The table below presents a comparison of development aid and ODA since 2009 (TIKA, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012).

Table 1: Total Development Aid and ODA

Year	Total Development Aid	Total ODA	NGOs
2012	3324,83	2533,30	111,65
2011	2363,45	1273,01	119,52
2010	1718,18	967,42	105,68
2009	1519,65	707,17	109,00

Turkey has been identified with a systematic focus on increasing development assistance and humanitarian aid in the last decade. Turkey’s policy towards the LDCs and ‘open door policy’ towards Syrians in recent years have been the two significant instances of this process. From 2011, Turkey’s aid to LDCs has exceeded \$250 billion for the first time (TIKA, 2014).

Turkey became the first non-Western country that hosted the 4th UN Conference on LDCs in May 2011. The number of participants was 10000 with the participation of NGOs, 36 heads of state and government, 96 ministers and 66 presidents of international organizations. The Conference marked one of the crucial events by addressing the needs of 48 countries with 900 million population which are of the lowest indicators of Human Development Index (HDI) and GDP per capita (Conference Official website, n.d). At the end of the Conference, the declaration named ‘Istanbul Program of Action’ which outlines the main pathways of development for the LDCs in the next decade was signed. Along with the Istanbul Program of Action, the then Prime Minister Erdoğan declared economic and technical cooperation package for LDCs. In addition, Turkey has committed to provide \$200 million for every year to LDCs for the implementation technical cooperation project (Haşimi, pp. 137-138). As one of the most prominent emerging donor countries, Turkey has proved its role as being leading actor of the international community through raising its assistance to the LDCs.

Functioning of TIKA

TIKA's organizational transformation takes the shape of more autonomous power when it is designated as a main coordinating and monitoring agency for Turkey's foreign aid policy in 2005 by the Prime Ministry through law number 4668 (two circulars issued: 2005/11; 2007/12701). With this change, TIKA became responsible for coordinating public aid projects, finding different funding sources, and collecting and analyzing data. Main motivation of centralizing Turkish aid coordination under TIKA was to prevent overlaps in project-based ODA and aid ineffectiveness. Likewise, TIKA established the Department of Coordination and Cooperation with Non-Governmental Organizations to comply with overseas aid projects of NGOs with official programs (TIKA, 2009).

TIKA projects are organized through the Prime Minister's office cooperation with foreign affairs, development, defense, education, and health ministries. The directives are passed to TIKA through the senior government bureaucracy. Inversely, a demand can also come from a recipient country by the way of a TIKA office operating in that country. In accordance with the project, TIKA convey the demand to the suitable ministry in Turkey. This ministry or high level government agency determines the amount of aid and number of the officer for deployment in reply to the project demand. Four main funds constitute the funding sources of TIKA: a main budget; project budget that delivered by the Prime Ministry; funds that are delivered by other governmental agencies; funds received by international organizations (Murphy & Sazak, 2012, pp. 12-13).

Since TIKA fulfills its missions through governmental channels, the types of protocols that arrange strategic planning or decision making procedure may diversify. Yet, aid proposals are seen as the most common way. As an initial step, aid recipient country puts forward a proposal. If the proposal is confirmed by TIKA, administrators step in the process and coordinate the project (Personal Communication, July 15, 2014). Sazak and Murphy (2012) elaborate this process with an example: if the Ministry of Justice in Sudan submits a proposal for judicial branch/legislative training and the project is accepted, TIKA personnel in Sudan work through TIKA/Ankara who subsequently out-sources training from the Ministry of Justice in Ankara. Such projects are demand driven and bilaterally operated. Similarly, the Ministry of Justice in Sudan may also directly contact the Ministry of Justice in Turkey. In this scenario, TIKA

would come into play by providing assistance to both ministries. As a second type of protocol for projects, TIKA, the government, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Prime Ministry, or the President may directly pass directives (pp. 13-14).

In terms of the types of protocols, it can be argued that TIKA mostly prefer to make bilateral development assistance arrangements. Almost 90% of aid assistance is operated directly between TIKA and the aid recipient country since bilateral projects are seen as more effective and easier to conduct. Because, as Turkish law suggests, whenever Turkey cooperates with an intergovernmental organization, the Turkish Parliament should ratify the agreement (p. 14). For implementing projects, TIKA has always initiated a tender in the donor country. This way of functioning, as argued by the TIKA expert, is one of the main differences of Turkish development model in comparison to other development agencies and increases the effectiveness of projects by reducing the costs. Besides the effectiveness, initiating a tender provides a great opportunity for Turkish companies in increasing their commercial activities at receiver countries if they are able to win the respective tender (Personal Communication, July 15, 2014).

In line with the aim of coordinating TIKA's activities, a particular Deputy Prime Minister is also assigned to monitor the conducting of each major aid campaign with associated institutions, and representatives of relevant ministries, such as AFAD, Turkish Red Crescent, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education and so on (Haşimi, 2014, p. 139). In all the foreign aid activities of Turkey, historical, cultural, and political values are stressed as a prominent reference to the Turkish identity. Humanitarian assistance is seen as an indispensable part of Turkish identity which is also believed that lead to the foundation of a new global order by way of revitalizing the long-forgotten legacy of Turkish identity (pp. 139-140). As argued in the previous section, maintaining the 'state tradition' constitutes the philosophical basis of those humanitarian activities.

TIKA Activities

In the AKP era, the scope of TIKA's projects has varied in a wide range from cultural projects, to capacity/institution buildings ones or to a region specific projects. All these projects show a great deal of alignment with foreign policy objectives of Turkey. The Turcology Project is the prominent one among cultural projects implemented by TIKA.

Within the scope of this project, TIKA supports Turkish language teaching and education in the neighboring countries. In 2005 and 2006, 16 countries were in the scope of this project. In addition, 25 Turkish scholars, 14 local scholars, and a number of support staff are deployed. Through the Turcology Project, libraries and Turkish Language and Culture Centers were formed. Fidan and Nurdun (2008) also highlight the economic benefits of this project by arguing that many people who participated to this educational program gain opportunity to find well-paid jobs. They also gain the chance to work in Turkish companies operating in those regions in which high level of unemployment is a severe problem (p. 105). Thanks to tremendous impression and success of the project, it was institutionalized and TIKA assigned its role of implementing the project to Yunus Emre Institute which was established in 2012 (TIKA, 2014). According to the TIKA expert, this project is a sign that reveals high level of quality and sustainability of TIKA projects (Personal Communication, July 15, 2014).

TIKA's capacity-building activities implemented on a regional basis in the AKP era have also been very successful. The most significant one is OECD-TIKA Istanbul Private Sector Development Centre. The major mission of the centre is to train government personnel of countries from Eastern Europe, Central Asia, and Trans-Caucasia. The scope of training program has covered many areas, such as the privatization and restructuring of state-owned enterprises, the role and structure of public sector enterprises, competition policy and de-monopolization, foreign investment, banking and insurance, accounting, development of SMEs, and legal reforms (OECD – Istanbul Centre Report). TIKA's total contribution has reached to \$3,366,000 for this project. Throughout the years, this centre has turned into a regional OECD centre which constitutes a forum for policy dialogue and regional cooperation on main issues that are seen problematic for those transition economies. In line with this aim, the centre has also provided a great opportunity for less developed transition economies through bringing together representatives from OECD member countries and more advanced Eastern European countries to share and exchange their activities (Fidan & Nurdun, 2008, p. 104).

In terms of the region and specific countries that TIKA delivers aid, Turkic states have remained as the main focus in the AKP era. A total of 803 of TIKA's 1309 projects and activities in Asia went to the development of socio-economic

infrastructure, improvement of productions and communication sectors, cultural cooperation and contributions to social peace and humanitarian aid in Central Asia and Caucasus between 2004 and 2006 (TIKA Annual Report, 2008). Problems in education and health sector in the Turkic states have constituted main concerns for TIKA. In this regard, most of the development aid projects have been implemented on the areas of social infrastructure and services (TIKA Annual Report, 2006).

As a specific country that TIKA has been delivering a high amount of aid, Afghanistan takes the lead. Especially, after the collapse of Taliban regime, Afghanistan became one of the most important countries for Turkey's foreign policy priorities. In accordance Turkish foreign principle of AKP government, balance between security and freedom, Turkey has made a significant effort for reconstruction of Afghanistan through providing basic services, establishing new system of freedoms and rights, and consolidating domestic stability. In addition, TIKA has also concentrated on projects in the fields of education, health, and water supply (Kulaklıkaya & Nurdun, 2010, p. 136). Turkey's foreign policy toward Afghanistan has also constituted a keystone of the joint Turkey-Transatlantic security agenda. Yet, although Turkey has aligned itself with Western countries policies towards Afghanistan and deployed troops to the ISAF, it has also clearly emphasized that it has not been in favor of military solution to the conflict. In this regard, Turkey has laid stress on its civilian approach to the peace-building in Afghanistan (Kardaş, 2013, pp. 2-3).

In recent years, an important aim of Turkish foreign policy has been to extend the scope of Turkey's active involvement in its immediate neighborhood and also to address other global issues. Once Turkish foreign policy framework is shaped through a globalist language, Turkey has established new relations with different continents while developing its ties with international organizations. In this regard, Turkish leaders have frequently made a visit to African, Asian, or Latin American capitals to create strategic partnerships with new actors (Kardaş, 2013, p.3). In this regard, Turkish government started to implement development cooperation activities in Africa in 2004 in line with the framework of 'Opening Up to Africa' policy. Turkey declared the following year as 'the Year of Africa in Turkey' and TIKA founded its first office in African continent at Ethiopia. TIKA has also established more offices in Sudan and Senegal in order to cope with the challenges faced by African countries. Along with their roles in these

respective countries, offices have also served as liaison offices for the countries in the neighboring regions.

In 2006, Turkey's total official development has reached to \$51.73 million which is five times greater than the amount in 2005. Yet, Turkey was committed to increase this amount which led to a further \$5 million assistance allocation by Turkey for the LDCs. Turkey has also focused on capacity building projects in African countries. In line with this aim, Turkey has organized vocational training courses which take place in Turkey or in partner countries in specific sectors. Besides these activities, TIKA has implemented many projects in building physical infrastructures for the provision of social services such as schools and hospitals (Kulaklıkaya & Nurdun, 2010, p. 137). Furthermore, many of Turkey's non-governmental humanitarian aid organizations have run several projects in Africa. Turkey's desire for a non-permanent UN Security Council seat for 2010-2011 has enhanced Turkish aid activities in Africa. Today, increasing number of Turkish embassies in Africa are in line with the new TIKA offices in the continent (Personal Communication, July 15, 2014).

In line with its African policy, Turkey has also attempted to implement development projects in the Middle Eastern countries, such as Lebanon, Palestine, Syria, Yemen, and Iraq. In this region, Turkey has played an important role as a regional peace broker and mediator in the region. Subsequent to the Arab Spring, Turkey has intensified its involvements to those countries which have been passing through social, economic, and political transformation (Kardaş, 2013, p. 3). For example, Turkey delivered \$11.73 million aid to Iraq of which Turkey's total emergency aid reached to \$31.08 million in 2008. In addition, ten trucks including fundamental needs and 15 ambulances were donated to the Palestinians. Likewise, aid packages containing foods, cleaning materials, medicine, and vaccines, and tents were delivered to Georgia after its conflict with Russia in 2008 (Kulaklıkaya & Nurdun, p. 137).

In line with the 'zero problem with the neighbors' principle in Turkish foreign policy, Turkey has put an emphasis on developing maximum cooperation and economic integration with its neighbors. In this regard, Turkey made numerous high level strategic council meetings with Syria and Iraq. In order to give acceleration to the zero problem policy, Turkish government opened a regional TIKA program coordination

office in Syria. Through this office, the government also aimed to strengthen its relations with the Middle Eastern countries. It should also be noted that Turkey has promoted its ties with the several international organizations as well with the aim of increasing its influence in global politics. Hence, TIKA delivered a substantial amount of voluntary contributions to multilateral organizations, such as the OECD, UNDP, UNIDO, and FAO to develop aid programs for developing countries.

When all development assistance of TIKA is considered, it can be argued that while in some cases the main motivation is solely global humanitarian consideration, in other cases, cultural and historical heritage constitute the main motivation behind TIKA's projects. As Kardaş (2013) argues that the then Foreign Minister Davutoğlu's emphasis on "Turkey's historic responsibility towards civilizational kin" has reinforced directing aid to those specific regions (p. 3). In addition to the technical assistance projects that are aiming to improve economic and political development of countries places in the Ottoman-Turkish cultural zone, Turkey has also concentrated on the discovery or restoration of historic artifacts or monuments in a geography stretching from Mongolia to the Balkans. Likewise, Turkey has focused on promotion of the study of Turkish language and culture as well as granting scholarship by the way of intending to enhance its soft-power in its surrounding regions. Yet, Turkey has also been very careful about the image that Turkey's aid policy targets not only countries of which Turkey has historical and cultural ties. To that end, both public and non-governmental sources of Turkey have been transferred for humanitarian emergencies worldwide which stress the globalist highlighting of Turkish foreign policy (Personal Communication, June 6, 2014). Kardaş (2013) points out the UN LDCs summit arranged in Istanbul as sign of Turkey's alignment with the global discourse on development issues (p. 4).

Adjusting TIKA to the International Development Aid Community

Along with the improvement of functioning of TIKA, its level of cooperation with international development aid community has been increased and collection methods of ODA data have been complied with DAC guidelines. This change in the collection methods has also reflected itself in the rise of ODA from 2003 to 2004. Since there was a lack of coordination among Turkish government institutions and lack of awareness of

the international criteria before 2004, ODA figures could not be calculated properly (Personal Communication, July 15, 2014).

This change is realized after TIKA was assigned to be the only institution that is responsible for coordinating Turkish ODA and collecting and reporting ODA data in accordance with OECD DAC criteria in 2005. From then on, TIKA has managed to transform itself into a new and modern development aid agency by completing ODA standardization and enhancing the number and scope of development aid activities. To reach this end, a number of experts have been entrusted with a task of conducting relevant studies and examining each public sector that contribute ODA in detail. Moreover, an electronic data collection program and an Assistance-in-Kind Budget Guide were developed in order to calculate the total value of the Turkey's development assistance. TIKA's 2005 Annual Report, which was generated as a consequence of numerous advisory meetings with the relevant agencies and international organizations, revealed a more enhanced and functional data collection. Following years, these changes have applied all TIKA report as well. Thanks to this development of TIKA reporting, TIKA's Annual Report of 2011 has been awarded with gold medal in the "Vision Awards" Competition hosted by the League of American Communications Professionals who selected the best communication and design applications from the 5500 entries. Moreover, Turkish Development Assistance Report of 2012 has been awarded with silver medal among more than 6000 reports from 24 different countries. Besides, it was ranked as 40th in Top 100 Worldwide (Personal Communication, July 15, 2014).

As a consequence of these developments in Turkey's foreign aid policy, Turkey has also identified its main objectives as joining the OECD DAC in the medium term. To this end, TIKA has aimed to accomplish necessary criteria for membership which is determined as having the ODA/GDP ratio of 20% per year which was fulfilled before the scheduled time. In accordance with this aim, Turkey has maintained an active dialogue with non-DAC member of OECD countries about the ways of improving aid effectiveness. For instance, in 2006 in Istanbul, Turkey hold a meeting on "Structured Dialogue" with the participation of "Inreach Group countries" which are non-DAC but OECD member countries; DAC members and representatives from the IMF; World Bank and UNDP. The focal point of the meeting was to discuss how the Inreach Group

countries could more efficiently apply the Paris Declaration in their ODA and their possible DAC memberships (TIKA, 2006).

Turkey has also aligned with its foreign aid policy with the EU and MDGs which are determined by the UN in 2000. MDGs consist of 8 main international development goals: to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; to achieve universal primary education; to promote gender equality and empower women; to reduce child mortality; to improve maternal health; to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases; to ensure environmental sustainability; to develop a global partnership for development. In TIKA's Annual Report of 2006, Turkey's ODA policy is analyzed through considering its contribution to the achievement of the MDGs. In this regard, four new areas of development assistance activities were added to the report: private flows, peace building, expenses made for refugees, contribution to the MDGs (TIKA, 2006).

TIKA's cooperation with prominent international development aid agencies, such as the United States Agency of International Development, Department for International Development and *Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit* (GTZ), has also played an important role in the process of transformation of TIKA to modern development agency. Thanks to this cooperation, possible duplications while conducting projects has been prevented, and hereby invaluable time and sources have been saved for other individual or joint development assistance activities projects. As a consequence, TIKA could enlarge its dialogue and agreements with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, Food and Agriculture Organization, International Fund for Agricultural Development, Islamic Development Bank, International Trade Centre, Economic Cooperation Organization, Asian Development Bank and many others development aid cooperation and projects (TIKA, 2006).

The evolvement of TIKA to a modern development agency and its adjustments for aligning with the international aid community has underpinned the success of Turkish ODA policy. Having become a remarkable emerging donor has promoted Turkey's political power both in regional and international arena. Turkey has turned into a country which does not avoid taking a new international action for overcoming both regional problems and global issues. In this regard, while preventing global

poverty is becoming one of the most prominent concerns for Turkey, it has put much effort to solve ongoing problems in its surrounding regions as well.

An Analysis of Turkish Foreign Aid Policy in the AKP Era

As argued throughout this study, main aim of the study is to explain the change in Turkish foreign aid policy in the AKP era. Since TIKA's transformation has given a fresh impetus to this change, empirical part of this study is organized with respect to TIKA's organizational transformation as an outcome of the relationship among aforementioned contextual factors, the agent and main institution of Turkish foreign policy. In line with the main assumptions of HI argued in the first part of the study, dialectical relationship among the context, agent and the institution is tried to apply in explaining change in the Turkish foreign aid policy in the AKP era. By stressing to focus on dialectical relationship, this study gives equal weight to evolution of the concept of Westernization and domestic developments in the AKP era as explanatory determinants in explaining the policy change in Turkish foreign aid policy. In this regard, the study puts forward that the concurrent occurrence of these determinants have played an important role for emergence of this policy change.

In line with the theoretical assumptions of the study, Westernization is determined as an institution; domestic developments are regarded as contextual factors, while TIKA is referred as the agent. Therefore, each of those determinants is explained in detail in previous parts with the aim of building a sound analysis. In this section of the study, I try to analyze the path that Turkey becomes a donor country of foreign aid through unearthing the effect of dialectical relationship of those determinants.

With the influence of new geographical imagination, the "West" has gained new meanings in the eyes of foreign policy elites of AKP government. This semantic shift of the concept helps Turkish foreign policy elites to enlarge the scope of Turkish foreign policy activities, without falling into conflict with the West. Yet, at this point, the interaction of this shift in the Westernization with the ideational structuring of Turkish foreign policy under the leadership of Davutoğlu should be highlighted. While the West has lost its meaning of reference to modern and civilized Turkey, it takes its final shape through Davutoğlu's concept of 'central country'. With the help of this new term in foreign policy, Turkey's long-lasting aim of becoming a Western country by fulfilling

its mission of bridge country seeps away in Turkish foreign policy formulation. Instead, the West has started to be pointed as a dominant international system which Turkey aims to be part of it as a central country. In this regard, becoming an important player in the world politics is determined as the main objective of Turkish foreign policy. To reach this end, Turkish foreign policy activities is organized through methodological and conceptual foreign policy principles identified by Davutoğlu.

In contrast to the old perception of Turkish foreign policy which directs Turkey to follow isolationist and single-track foreign policy, Turkish foreign policy under AKP government has started to follow multi-dimensional approach via increasing its engagements with its near and wider surrounding regions due to the newly introduced foreign policy principles, tools and instruments. Under this schema of foreign policy formulation, the then Prime Minister Erdoğan stressed the criteria for being a strong and influential state have changed in the 21st century by adding “the power, now, is measured by the contributions to peaceful world order, education, culture, solidarity, and sharing. What is more influential than crude power is the willingness to transform the world into a system based on equality and justice.” (Zaman, April 2013)

In this regard, AKP foreign policy is arranged by the idea that Turkey should follow more responsible and proactive role in promoting regional peace and stability. This newly drawn roadmap is put forward as the most effective way to reveal the significance of Turkey’s role by fulfilling its regional objectives to the West while contributing Western efforts in fighting against security threats and global problems. Moreover, foreign policy elites in the AKP era all agree about the importance of maintaining Turkey’s role as a regional actor which enables Turkey to conduct its own interests and priorities in determining its own hegemonic position within the international arena. In line with this new direction in foreign policy, Turkey has stopped to perceive the outside through the eyes of the West. Instead, Turkey has preferred to make use of its connections with the West while it has also been expanding the scope of its foreign policy activities in the region and in an international arena.

As an outcome of this new orientation, Turkey has become a country that takes advantage of every possible option that may support its own national interests. Instead of breaking its relations with the West, Turkey has realized the opportunity to extend its relations with its neighborhood countries where Turkey has strategic, geographical, and

historical linkages for being as one of the most important global player in Western dominated international system. The co-existence of the West and recent engagement policies of Turkey in several continents, which has always been seen as incompatible to the old foreign policy makers, is far from pointing a reorientation of Turkish foreign policy, rather it reveals Turkey's efforts to strengthen its hand with the aim of becoming a global player same as the major Western countries. In this regard, it can be argued that Western orientation has still constituted the genesis of Turkish foreign policy, yet it took a more flexible form of it.

This theoretical and ideational transformation in Turkish foreign policy has mostly reflected itself in Turkish foreign aid policy in the AKP era. In a short period of time, Turkey has turned into a donor country from a receiver one. Furthermore, Turkey has become a country which is pursuing foreign aid activities in 110 countries ranges from Asia to Africa, Europe to Latin America and to the Middle East. Budget reserved for foreign aid policy in the AKP era has almost reached a billion dollar which is 3 times more of the period between 1992 and 2003. Thanks to this change in Turkish foreign aid policy in 2000s, Turkey has gained a worldwide recognition and succeeded to be one of the most important players in international development arena. As a result of this success, Turkey was offered to be a member of OECD DAC which includes all major Western countries in development arena. However, to explain this change in foreign aid policy under the AKP government, it should be noted that along with the transformation of Turkish foreign policy and the Westernization genesis, domestic developments have all provided an appropriate ground to accomplish sufficient conditions for emergence of the change in foreign aid policy in Turkey.

In this context, relative growth and stability in Turkish economy, political stability of the AKP era, and novel ideational structuring of Turkish foreign policy with the resurfacing of West can be regarded as major domestic supplementary elements of the success of Turkish foreign aid policy. Although these elements seem to refer different things, they have both positive effects on each other. Therefore, having promoted economic and political stability at the same time increases the country's capacity of maneuvering both in its domestic and foreign policy. Under the AKP government, specifically in its first and second term, Turkey has managed to take initial necessary steps in its economy and political policies. Thanks to democratization movements, Turkey has earned respect in the eyes of its neighborhood countries and in

the international arena which facilitate to implement and conduct more valuable and effective projects over those regions. When this democratization process was combined with the political stability thanks to the strong majority government rule, Turkey has turned into a more self-confident country in which political decisions has been taken in a more decisive and quick way.

Along with the strengthened international image of Turkey, these improvements and self-confident stance in domestic arena has brought similar constructiveness in foreign policy arena. Besides, economic growth and stability has also generated opportunities for Turkey in conducting its foreign aid policy activities. Thanks to this relative economic recovery, Turkey has achieved to raise its foreign aid budget and to extend its scope of activities. More specifically, at a time when Western powers were shaking by the bad effects of global economic crisis, Turkey has come into prominence in the international development arena. As a matter of fact, Turkey has turned into an effective donor country which has been wanted and preferred by the receiver countries. Mostly, in the Middle East, Balkans, and Central Asian countries, Turkey has started to satisfy those countries' needs (Personal Communication, June 6, 2014).

In this regard, both TIKA expert and bureaucrat from the Department Turks Abroad and Related Communities that I interviewed point out the mutually complementary presence of improvements in economy and domestic politics behind the emergence of effective foreign aid policy in 2000s. As they argue that in the lack of political stability and raising international profile of Turkey, foreign aid policy would not become effective even if the case of which Turkey's economy is much more better, or vice versa (Personal Communications, June 6, July 15, 2014). Therefore, it would not be mistaken to assert that Turkey has achieved to generate effective foreign aid policy by providing sufficient conditions thanks to the ideational-theoretical transformation of Turkish foreign policy and improvements in domestic and economic realms, which have been under responsibility of Turkey by itself.

In the light of theoretical assumptions and empirical evidences examined in this study, it can be argued that domestic developments in the AKP era have made the emergence of assertive foreign aid policy of Turkey. Their dialectical relationship, where they all have mutual positive impact on each other, has strengthened Turkey's hand in this process. As I try to show in previous sections, concurrent existence of all

factors appears as the most important determinant of the change in Turkish foreign aid policy realized under the AKP government.

Moreover, Turkish foreign aid activism reveals that Turkey has transformed into a country which seeks to be an important global player with a desire to contribute to global issues such as international security and international development. The role attributed to Turkey after the Cold War has become more evident and visible in the last decade. Furthermore, with the strategic depth doctrine of the then Foreign Affairs Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu, Turkey aims to become a country which does not turn its back to its neighboring countries and which also does not ignore global issues at the same time. To that end, as Keyman (2012) argues, “Turkey has no choice but to be innovative and active as a policy leader and globalization visionary.” (p. 74) Yet, it should not be disregarded that Davutoğlu’s formulation offers a new vision which requires considering the variety of civilizations and reshaping international order as such (Aslan, 2013, p. 41). In this regard, Turkey’s recent foreign aid activism and role in human security globalization should be regarded within this formulation.

As a means of becoming an important international player in the world which is becoming more globalized, more interdependent and more risky in terms of global turmoil in the wake of 9/11, Turkey’s important journey with its commitment to political reforms, its economic growth and its proactive, dialogue-based global approach constituted the basis of recent foreign policy activities specifically Turkish foreign aid policy. Thus, establishment of Turkey’s active foreign aid policy can be regarded as Turkey’s response to immediate global crises while also aiming to follow long-term objective of contributing to global stability (Keyman, 2012, p. 75).

As regards the transformation of Turkey’s image in the world, several scholars underline pivotal role played by Turkey at the global stage. For instance, Lenore Martin (2004) argues that Turkey have acted according to its redefined role in the aftermath of critical international events such as 9/11, US intervention in Iraq and growing anti-Western terrorism (p. 3). In addition to Martin, Graham Fuller (2008) identifies Turkey is the leading state among the Muslim countries and emphasizes Turkey’s regional power in the post-9/11 by underlining its proactive foreign policy which became attractive recently.

Yet, recent foreign policy of Turkey is not seen without skepticism. As Keyman (2009) puts forward that there are two main criticism points against Turkey which are ‘strong ideological take’ and ‘neo-Ottomanism’. The former criticism approaches Turkish foreign policy as the continuation of ideological Islamist foreign policy while the latter refers to the overdependence on religious-based cultural affinities in Turkish foreign policy (p. 3). Although both ideological and religious affinities play an important role in Turkish foreign policy formulation of AKP, it would be misleading to argue that they are the only pillars of Turkish foreign policy. As the results presented in this study reveal, Turkish foreign aid policy is not only limited to Islamic societies. For instance, TIKA as the main conducting agency of the foreign aid does not have a religious focus as is seen its major activities in Africa took place in Ethiopia in 2005. In addition, although Ottoman past in terms of physical, cultural and diplomatic geography resurfaced in AKP’s foreign policy, Turkish foreign policy activities does not stay limited with those areas; rather extending beyond its boundaries to from Africa to Latin America.

Turkey, through its global perspective, prefers multilateralism over unilateralism in its relations with other countries in the world. According to Keyman (2012), “new Turkish globalism is not simply an act of augmenting its power and influence or of revitalizing its Ottoman past to extend the sphere of its regional influence; on the contrary, it demonstrates its deep commitment to multilateralism and to enhanced cooperation as a way of making our world stable and peaceful.” (p. 75) Wide range of Turkish foreign aid activities towards numerous countries aiming to contribute economic development and human security can be regarded as in line with this aim.

Within this formulation where the perception of the West has enlarged its boundaries and global point of view has become the pillar of Turkish foreign policy, proactive foreign policy has been increasingly institutionalized, as demonstrated in Turkey’s foreign aid activities in the Middle East, the Balkans, Caucasus and Latin America, aimed at creating peaceful and stable relations with its near and far away neighbors and providing with them economic and cultural cooperation. In the light of the new visionary change in Turkish foreign policy, the ‘closeness’ of these geographies and their ‘availability’ for Turkey’s involvement has been totally changed through the instruments of remembering past relations, unfolding cultural and civilizational

affinities, and exploring opportunities for engagement (Aras, 2009, p.6). Davutoğlu states that “Turkey’s engagements from Chile to Indonesia, from Africa to Central Asia, and from the EU to the OIC will be part of a holistic approach to foreign policy. These initiatives will make Turkey a global actor as we approach 2023, the one hundredth anniversary of the establishment of the Turkish Republic.” (Davutoğlu, 2008, p. 96)

In this regard, the Department Turks Abroad and Related Communities deserves great attention as well. The main aim of the institution is to reach any place in which any citizen or relative of Turkish Republic is living. Since their relativity concept is based on the thousands years historical events, such as great immigrations, all the world is included to the scope foreign policy activities. Therefore, like it seen in the activities of TIKA or numerous civil society organizations, many state apparatus, as well, are having a global visionary in foreign policy formulation. In this sense, Turkey is becoming a country which is playing a role of a regional power focusing more and more on humanitarian aid and assistance as a way of contributing to making globalization more stable, humane, and just. It can be argued that Davutoğlu’s new formulation which is referring to the historical-cultural affinities provides an advantage to Turkey in its involvement in neighboring regions and global issues (Aras, 2009, p. 7).

According to Keyman (2012), those recent developments in Turkish foreign policy have been referring its own unique brand of internationalism. He states that “Turkey’s proactive and multidimensional foreign policy (...) symbolizes Turkey’s expected role in the new global imagination that it is only through multilateralism activated on the basis of enhanced strategic partnerships, and by forging a more just, humane and interdependent world vision that the challenge of global turmoil can be addressed” (Keyman, 2009, p. 10) When all those developments specifically in Turkish foreign aid policy and generally in Turkish foreign policy are considered, it would not be mistake to argue that Turkey has started to follow global governance principles identified by Davutoğlu in the last decade. Although it is early to prove this argument or discuss the sustainability of those principles in Turkish foreign policy, empirical studies generates a suitable ground for developing global governance vision in Turkish foreign policy. Turkish foreign aid policy, as constitutes the empirical part of this study, sets an example of application of global governance principles which are inclusiveness, comprehensiveness, participatory representativeness, effectiveness, and finally future oriented-vision (Davutoğlu, 2009, p. 15).

CONCLUSION

AKP government opened up a new page in Turkish political history during its rule for the last 12 years. Although the effects of AKP governing become tangible even in the present time, long-term effects are yet to be perceived in a bigger magnitude in the future. Thus, any study that attempts to understand and explain the underlying mechanisms of domestic and foreign policy of this era carries a great value for the literature. Although there are many studies conducted in line with this aim, there is still a greater need for more studies that aims to help understanding the general framework of Turkish politics at the present time. In this regard, this study can be considered as a humble attempt to fill a minor gap in the respective literature.

When the 92 years of Turkish political history is taken into account, it is observed that there are recurring concepts and strategies in domestic and foreign policy of Turkey. The foreign policy formulation which is determined by the motto of “peace at home, peace in the world” of the Kemalist establishment, isolationism in relations with other countries remained present despite the dramatic changes in the international structure. Isolationism and uni-dimensional foreign policy vision constituted the basis of Turkish foreign policy activities in the aftermath of the establishment of Republic and for the long years. Within this foreign policy formulation, being a follower of the West was seen as the only option for Turkey whose sole aim was to reach the level of Western civilization. Therefore, Turkey could not transform its geographical assets stemmed from its location at a critical point into a potential advantage due to respective foreign policy vision and domestic incapability. Moreover, Turkey restrained from following active policies towards its surrounding regions even when it has enough means in order not to be perceived as deviating from its Westernization mission which is in fact defined as an end in itself.

Throughout the Cold War years, structural obstacles entered into scene for Turkey in pursuing diversified foreign policy activities when even major countries of Europe was shaping their policies in line with US policies. In such an environment, alignment with the West became inevitable for Turkey. In the aftermath of Cold War years, new developments occurred with regard to foreign policy, especially during Özal government yet with limitations. In this period, Özal government developed certain policies towards Central Asian and Middle Eastern countries to strengthen the relations

with newly-independent Turkic states and to curb Soviet and Iranian influence in the region. However, insufficient economic and political conditions of the era prevented Turkish authorities from conducting successful and sustainable policies. This result did not come as a surprise in such an environment where Turkey had an unstable economy and domestic politics and low level of democratic consolidation. As a matter of course, Turkey which was not able to create a stable environment in domestic politics and not having a say in its surrounding regions could not gain reputation and prestige in the eyes of strong players of the global arena.

The main argument of this study is constructed on this framework of Turkish politics until the AKP era. Previous experiences reveals that having domestic capabilities and solid foreign policy vision have their own merit by themselves but lack of simultaneous emergence of these two factors hampered Turkey for having a powerful stance in the international arena. AKP's significance in Turkish political history becomes evident at this point since it was able to combine those factors. Concurrent occurrence of the political stability with consecutive electoral success of AKP; economic growth that started with the IMF stand-by packages after the 2001 economic crisis; and new foreign policy vision leaded by the then Minister of Foreign Affairs Davutoğlu constitutes the prominent features of the AKP governance.

When Turkish foreign policy in AKP period is taken into consideration, Turkish foreign aid policy drew great attention since it is the combination of those assets in this period. Having 80 years of experience as a receiver country of foreign aid, Turkey has turned into an important do not country and more specifically it became a significant regional and global player in this arena. This is the reason why this study starts its analysis with the aim of understanding the underlying mechanism of the remarkable change in Turkish foreign aid policy in the last decade.

In the new foreign policy formulation of AKP, Westernization has no longer regarded as isolation. Rather, the commitment to West only changed its form as is seen in the critical events of the last decade such as 9/11 attacks, beginning of accession negotiations with the EU, and Arab Spring. Following those events, Turkey enhanced its influence in its surrounding regions and became more engaged with global issues through increasing its level of cooperation with the Western countries. Therefore, Turkey's policies have not contradicted with those of Western countries but it has no

longer remained only as a follower as well. Moreover, the problems originated from unstable coalition governments of previous years in the process of formulating and conducting a foreign policy is overcome by the AKP government. It was almost impossible to develop policies towards Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East simultaneously during previous governments' rule, AKP government has managed to conduct its policies in a wider area due to its homogenous structure.

In addition, thanks to gains of democratization process, AKP government has not encountered suspicion in the countries where Turkey conducted policies about good governance. Although, the discourse of being a model country of the 1980s lost its weight in Turkish politics, Turkey has become a country which is pointed out by other countries as a role model as during the Arab Spring. Following these developments, Turkey has increased its visibility and reputation in the international arena as well as in the international organizations. Therefore, Turkey has turned into a country which uses its capabilities of conducting regional policies while engaging in global issues simultaneously as leverage for the first time in Turkish politics. The most prominent example of this change is seen when Turkey announced 2005 as 'The Year of Africa' and implemented several foreign aid projects in the continent which in turn helped Turkey to ask for the support of the African countries in its attempts for becoming a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council.

Aside from political stability and solid foreign policy vision, economic capabilities are also necessary conditions for Turkey in implementing wide range of activities in a wide range of geography. Thanks to the strengthening of economic indicators, Turkey could deliver high amount of money in foreign aid activities. Even, it became the 3rd largest donor country with proportion to GDP while most of the European countries were still recovering from the economic crises.

In the light of those contextual factors that are explained in more detail in the previous parts of this study, and the new interpretation of Westernization as main institution of Turkish foreign policy TIKA which is the main responsible body of Turkish foreign aid policy has undergone a major transformation as well. Although TIKA has a history of 22 years, in the first decade of its establishment it was not able to follow well-programmed agenda. All aforementioned problems with regard to domestic political structure and economic conditions of previous governments played an

important role in this failure. TIKA's activities were remained limited in scope and in numbers in this period. Yet, with the AKP government TIKA transformed itself into an agency which has 35 offices in 32 countries and operated in 110 countries from all continents and implemented projects ranges from Asia to Africa, Europe to Latin America and Middle East. Thanks to those developments, TIKA has turned into an agency which is pointed as a success story among the international foreign aid agencies and whose annual report of 2006 and 2011 were granted with international awards. Therefore, it can be argued that TIKA's success in 2000s can be seen as a total reflection of concurrent occurrence of political stability and democratization, economic growth, and novel ideational structuring of foreign policy vision. In this regard, studying transformation of TIKA since its establishment to present increases explanatory power of this study.

The empirical evidence supports the hypothesis of this study in line with the theoretical assumptions of flexible version of HI. Dialectical relationship between the main institution, the agent, and the contextual factors constitutes the basis of the remarkable change in Turkish foreign aid policy in the AKP era. As the findings of the study reveal that overlooking the dialectical relationship among those three determinants would be a shortfall in analyzing the change in Turkish aid foreign policy. Therefore, it is possible to come to the conclusion that the AKP or a new government should focus on maintaining this potential in order to sustain and develop Turkey's foreign aid policy, and for even becoming a global player in the world politics.

However, Turkey has encountered many problems with regard to democracy, economy, and foreign policy. AKP government has refrained from taking further steps in democratization process, from following more balanced fiscal and monetary policy, and from developing more effective policies in line with its main principles in its surrounding neighborhoods. In contrast to the progress on those areas obtained in AKP's first and second terms, AKP government has been facing some problems in maintaining this progress since 2008. One of the most prominent example of this shady environment was the local elections held in March 2014. Instead of creating more harmonious environment, the government has taken authoritarian measures which have stirred up polarization of society. Unfortunately, due to AKP government's harsh attitudes and its stance towards public demands, the clashes between public and police

forces escalated during Gezi protests and ended up with many sufferings and deaths of civilians.

These recent developments have also been criticized by many Western countries and have caused them to question Turkey's ability to be an important global player that ponders world problems such as poverty, wars, reconstruction of underdeveloped countries, women killings and so on without overcoming its domestic problems in a democratic and peaceful way and fails to follow successful regional policies. Along with those authoritarian measurements of the government, corruption allegations about the government, mass arrests of journalists, political activists and police violence against anti-government demonstrators have harshly criticized by several states and international organizations. It is highly obvious that unless Turkey ameliorates its prestigious image in the international arena through its domestic and regional policies, its aim of becoming a powerful global player will be edging away eventually.

In the last decade, it can be argued that Turkey's democracy has been facing a crucial test. Although it is too early to argue the impacts of undemocratic measurement of the government on Turkey's foreign policy and specifically on its foreign aid policy, Turkey should simultaneously concentrate and develop the contextual factors; Turkish economy, democracy, political stability, new foreign policy vision to maintain the progress that was held by now. Since the development of all those factors is related in a dialectical manner, it is inevitable for Turkey to be successful in its foreign aid policy with the failure of some of those factors. In this regard, it is possible to come to the conclusion that the AKP or a new government should focus on maintaining this potential of Turkey to sustain and develop Turkey's foreign aid policy, and even for becoming a more powerful global player in the world politics.

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