

**THE PARAMETERS OF TURKISH FOREIGN AID POLICY IN THE  
AKP ERA**

by  
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**THE PARAMETERS OF TURKISH FOREIGN AID POLICY IN THE  
AKP ERA**

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## ABSTRACT

### THE PARAMETERS OF TURKISH FOREIGN AID POLICY IN THE AKP ERA

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As a middle power and an emerging donor, Turkey both receives and distributes foreign aid. The discrepancy between the volume of aid distributed and received, along with Turkey's position as a top donor with respect to aid as a share of the country's GNI makes Turkey an interesting case. Second, despite having the same political party in government, the variation in Turkey's foreign aid policy deserves closer attention. Consequently, this thesis addresses the following questions: 1) How do the commonly accepted drivers of foreign aid affect Turkey's humanitarian and development aid between 1990 and 2020? 2) How does religious similarity with the recipient affect Turkey's foreign aid? 3) What underlying dynamics explain the effect of religion on Turkey's foreign aid? The findings indicate that Turkey assumed different policy positions over time in reaction to changing international, regional, and domestic dynamics. The government used both material and ideational tools to assert influence, where the Islamist tradition constituted the normative basis. Furthermore, a discourse around religion was instrumentalized to assert agency abroad and dominate the political scene at home. Foreign aid, as a niche area, provided Turkey with an opening to exert itself as an emerging middle power and allowed flexibility to change policies as needed during turbulent periods. This thesis contributes to the literature by 1) expanding the period of analysis and examining the variation in the effects of various factors on Turkish aid over time, and 2) connecting the material and non-material factors in explaining the observed variation.

## ÖZET

### AKP DÖNEMİNDE TÜRKİYE’NİN DIŞ YARDIM POLİTİKALARININ PARAMETRELERİ

MERVE MERT

SİYASET BİLİMİ YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZİ, TEMMUZ 2023

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Anahtar Kelimeler: dış yardım politikaları, gelişmekte olan donörler, din, Türkiye

Bir orta güç ve gelişmekte olan bir donör olarak Türkiye hem dış yardım almakta hem de dağıtmaktadır. Dağıtılan ve alınan yardım hacmi arasındaki tutarsızlık ve Türkiye’nin GSMH’ye oranla en çok yardım yapan ülke olması Türkiye’yi ilginç bir örnek haline getirmektedir. İkinci olarak, hükümette aynı siyasi parti olmasına rağmen, Türkiye’nin dış yardım politikasındaki farklılıklar daha yakından incelenmeyi hak etmektedir. Sonuç olarak, bu tez aşağıdaki soruları ele almaktadır: 1) Dış yardımların genel kabul görmüş itici güçleri 1990-2020 yılları arasında Türkiye’nin insani ve kalkınma yardımlarını nasıl etkilemektedir? 2) Yardım alan ülke ile dini benzerlik Türkiye’nin dış yardımlarını nasıl etkilemektedir? 3) Dinin Türkiye’nin dış yardımları üzerindeki etkisini açıklayan temel dinamikler nelerdir? Bulgular, Türkiye’nin değişen uluslararası, bölgesel ve yerel dinamiklere tepki olarak zaman içinde farklı politika pozisyonları benimsediğini göstermektedir. Hükümet, İslamcı geleneğin normatif temelini oluşturduğu nüfuz iddiasında bulunmak için hem maddi hem de düşünsel araçlar kullanmıştır. Dahası, din etrafında şekillenen bir söylem, yurt dışında etkinlik sağlamak ve yurt içinde siyasi sahneye hakim olmak için araçsallaştırıldı. Bir niş alan olarak dış yardım, Türkiye’ye yükselen bir orta güç olarak kendini gösterme imkânı sağlamış ve çalkantılı dönemlerde ihtiyaç duyulan politikaları değiştirme esnekliği sunmuştur. Bu tez, 1) analiz dönemini genişleterek ve çeşitli faktörlerin Türk yardımları üzerindeki etkilerinin zaman içindeki değişimini inceleyerek ve 2) gözlemlenen değişimi açıklamada maddi ve maddi olmayan faktörleri birbirine bağlayarak literatüre katkıda bulunmaktadır.

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*To curiosity and perserverance.*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Foreign aid does not represent a solely material transaction from a party with means to another in need. Initially, foreign aid gained prevalence in the 1950s and was seen as an instrumental policy tool to support economic growth, human well-being, as well as institutional and capacity development. Some also pointed to the historical responsibilities of the industrialized and economically developed Northern and Western countries to assist newly formed states, resource accumulation from which contributed to their current economic and technological success. Nevertheless, in today's world, it is common practice for many states and institutions to engage in foreign aid practices both as donors and recipients.

The literature on foreign aid offers quite a rich set of explanations for states' interest in distributing foreign aid. One such explanation highlights humanitarian and developmental concerns on the donors' side. According to this explanation, the donors take genuine interest in the existing inequalities around the world and aim to contribute to the solutions. Another related set of explanations draws attention to strategic interests of donors as the main drivers of their foreign aid engagements. Strategic interest can encompass economic, political, or security-related issues. Another explanation focuses on the states' instrumentalization of foreign aid in gaining and expanding their soft power capabilities. A third set of explanations take place the donors at the center of analysis and focus on the dynamics and competition between different donor groups as the drivers of their foreign aid activities. A final set of explanations similarly focus on the dynamics between different groups but carries the level of analysis to a sub-state level. Domestic dynamics between communities, interests and ambitions of individual actors that are in power, or transactions between different entities can be listed under this approach.

States have a multitude of reasons for giving foreign aid. In line with the dominant sentiment of the international community during the post-WW2 era, along with the assertions of the international organizations, foreign aid policies were directed towards development assistance to countries that are most in need (Qian 2015).

Humanitarian causes constitute another line of explanation that is frequently put forward by states in their foreign aid distribution decisions. Although not explicitly underlined as a part of states' official foreign policies, scholars also focused on foreign aid as a policy tool to exert soft power or to advance the donor's strategic interests (Adhikari 2019; Alesina and Dollar 2000; Aydın-Düzgit and Dandashly 2021; Cheng and Minhas 2021; Cihangir-Tetik and Müftüler-Baç 2021; De Mesquita and Smith 2007, 2009, 2010; Dreher and Jensen 2013; Dreher, Nunnenkamp, and Thiele 2008; Esen and Tokdemir 2021; Nunnenkamp, Öhler, and Sosa Andrés 2017; Qian 2015; Woods 2008). Whether the states employ foreign aid policies to exert soft power is evaluated with respect to states' voting behaviors at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) and United Nations Security Council (UNSC) (Adhikari 2019; Alesina and Dollar 2000; De Mesquita and Smith 2010; Dreher and Jensen 2013; Dreher, Nunnenkamp, and Thiele 2008), the decisions of the international organizations concerning grants and loans to states (Clark and Dolan 2021; Honig, Lall, and Parks 2022; Nunnenkamp, Öhler, and Sosa Andrés 2017), or the perceptions concerning a state's international image. Strategic interests can encompass various areas from security to trade and access to resources (Brück and Xu 2012; Gafuri and Müftüler-Baç 2020; Horký and Lightfoot 2012; Jones 2015; Lazell and Petrikova 2020; Meernik, Krueger, and Poe 1998; Woods 2008). As the developing states joined the foreign aid community as emerging donors, competition between traditional donors, namely the OECD DAC countries and other traditionally aid giving states, and non-DAC donors became another topic of interest concerning the determinants of foreign aid. Finally, going beyond the state-level analysis and focusing on group- and individual-level motivations, some scholars examined the effect of domestic political ambitions and image boosting efforts as drivers of foreign aid decisions (Adhikari 2019; De Mesquita and Smith 2007, 2009, 2012).

Although such approaches offer some explanation for why the states are willing to distribute foreign aid, many fall short of providing a convincing explanation for the eagerness of certain states that have not been a part of the traditional group of foreign aid donors. The literature on emerging donors and donor competition aims to address this gap. However, mere solidarity with other developing states and offering an alternative approach of development is not enough to explain why states can sometimes over-extend their capabilities. Turkey is one such case where, as an emerging donor, it both receives and distributes foreign aid. On the other hand, the gap between its aid allocation and receipt has gradually widened, with the volume of aid distributed being much higher than aid received.

A second question concerns the trends in Turkey's foreign aid policies over time. The 1990s can be taken as the origin of Turkey's contemporary foreign aid activities.

Turkey's development and foreign aid approach went through several transformations since the initiation of first systematic efforts in the 1990s to the contemporary network of operations undertaken in a multitude of countries currently. It is possible, even expected, for states' foreign aid policies to vary over time. On the other hand, the change within the Turkish case appears curious given that the same political party has been in power for the last two decades of the three-decade-long period. Motivated by these questions, I aim to present a picture of Turkey's foreign aid policies between 1990 and 2020 and offer an explanation for the variation in its foreign aid outlook over the same period.

Turkish foreign aid policies, as an extension of its foreign aid policy, can be examined through a variety of theoretical frameworks. In this thesis, I follow the literature on emerging donors in unpacking the drivers of Turkey's foreign aid policies, particularly the effect of religion on Turkish aid. Related to this, I benefit from the framework provided by literature on middle powers to situate Turkey within the international arena. Following the argument that states' foreign policies are shaped by the dynamic relationship between domestic and international factors (Altunışık 2023; Kutlay and Öniş 2021*a,b*; Köstem 2018), I aim to explain the drivers of Turkish foreign aid through a narrative that pays attention to domestic political and economic developments, along with the changing international dynamics.

In light of these developments, Turkey's foreign aid policy also went through transformations. I attempt to unpack the underlying forces driving Turkish foreign aid in different periods through using both quantitative and qualitative methods. I aim to contribute to the literature in two distinct ways. First, the literature on Turkish foreign aid provides a rich set of explanations concerning its different aspects or varying drivers. On the other hand, the majority of these studies either focus on a select period or a particular region or adopt a more static approach to show different dynamics between periods. In the quantitative empirical chapter, I also follow the established literature on the drivers of Turkey's foreign aid. However, I expand my analysis to a wider time span, covering the period between 1990 and 2020. In addition, and more importantly, I utilize an approach that allows to observe the changes in the effects of different drivers of foreign aid over the years. Although the literature on aid heterogeneity and fluctuations over time has dealt with such questions for a while, to my knowledge, this study constitutes the first attempt to apply this approach to the Turkish case.

My second contribution lies in my approach and argument. Many scholars examined both Turkish foreign policy and foreign aid policy within a framework that takes into account the interactive and mutually inclusive relationship between domestic

and international factors. On the other hand, the majority of the studies focus on either the ideational or material forces driving Turkish foreign aid. Moreover, the studies that examine the interplay between the ideational and material forces appear to focus on Turkey's foreign policy as a whole. I present a two-layered argument which focuses both on the dynamic relationship between material domestic and international factors and on the effect of ideational matters, particularly religion, on Turkish foreign policy. Again, to my knowledge, this study is the first that combines the abovementioned approaches to evaluate Turkey's foreign policy.

Accordingly, I present that foreign aid, as a niche area, both provided Turkey with an opening to exert itself as an emerging middle-power and allowed flexibility to change policies or areas of focus as needed during turbulent periods. Furthermore, the opportunity to combine material and non-material means through foreign aid policies, such as funds and ideology, further added to its versatility as a policy instrument for the state elite. Taking this premise as a starting point, I argue that the versatility of foreign aid policy extended beyond its different uses over time; matters related to foreign aid policy were also used by the state elite in navigating domestic politics when needed. Adding to this argument, I argue that a conservative discourse, particularly one that heavily refers to religion, was used as a rhetoric framework through which foreign aid policy decisions and actions were justified since the AKP came to power in 2002.

In elaborating the theoretical grounds of my argument and findings, the rest of this thesis is organized in four chapters. Following this first introductory chapter, the second chapter presents a broad overview of the literature on foreign aid, Turkish foreign policy, and arguments on the drivers of Turkey's foreign aid. The third chapter presents the quantitative empirical part of my examination where I examine the drivers of Turkish foreign aid by breaking it down into Official Development Assistance (ODA) and humanitarian aid. The fourth chapter presents a deeper look into the drivers of Turkey's foreign aid policy utilizing a qualitative approach. The fifth and final chapter provides a summary of my findings and their resulting implications.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORY**

### **2.1 Overview of the Literature on Foreign Aid**

This sub-chapter aims to provide an overview of the literature on drivers of foreign aid. The organization of the chapter is as follows. The first section discusses the issues related to volume of foreign aid. Descriptive and causal evaluations indicate that foreign aid allocations and the volume of flows change over time due to strategic, political, and economic factors. The second section presents the main themes in the literature concerning the determinants of foreign aid. The weight of donors' interests versus the recipients' needs and merit in driving foreign aid appears to be an ongoing battleground. Other themes include donors' utilization of foreign aid as a policy tool to exert soft power; competition between traditional donors that are members of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) and emerging donors that recently enter the development scene; and finally, the domestic concerns of the recipient states and sub-state level analyses to illuminate factors that affect foreign aid allocations. The third section draws attention to aid heterogeneity and the complexities involved in evaluating foreign aid. Several studies show that examining foreign aid with respect to different donor sub-groups, by disaggregating aid into sectors, and by paying attention to temporal variation is crucial to better understand causal mechanisms, donor motivations, and the impact of foreign aid.

#### **2.1.1 Foreign Aid Policy Overview - Whether and How Much Aid is Given**

Qian (2015) presents a historical overview of aid flows and shows that the aid flows did not change much between 1960s and 2013. During this period, the group of countries that provided most aid remained stable while the top recipient countries changed considerably (Qian 2015). Against this picture, there was also high discrep-

ancy in aid allocations: annual aid to the poorest 20% countries made up between 1.68 - 5.25%, annual total global multilateral aid was between 2 – 10% of annual ODA, and humanitarian aid remained below 8% (Qian 2015, 180).

On the one hand, the proponents of a more optimistic view of aid assert that foreign aid, combined with a substantial increase, a systematic and a consistent push is necessary to combat poverty, ensure economic growth, and to support the well-being of the people living in the recipient countries (Alesina and Dollar 2000; Mavrotas and Ouattara 2006; Qian 2015; Sachs 2005; Wright and Winters 2011). Jeffrey Sachs's (2005) work from the first half of 2000s concerning aid effectiveness and development drew considerable attention both from the supporters and critics. Sachs argues that foreign aid brings about the desired outcomes such as reducing poverty and corruption, as well as increasing the recipient states' capacities. Additionally, he proposes that many of the major issues surrounding global inequality and its consequences can be solved with a "big push," that is, a considerable increase in the amounts of aid, from the donors (Sachs 2005). Sachs argues that his "big push" approach, coupled with comprehensive reforms, planning, and monitoring can help the poorest countries in the world to escape the poverty trap.

On the other hand, scholars who are more skeptical towards the positive effects of foreign aid on development put forward a series of arguments concerning the donors' political, strategic, and economic interests (Qian 2015; Quadir 2013). For instance, Easterly (2006) opposes Sachs's stance and offers a series of counter arguments. He argues that the policies and solutions presented by Sachs have been a focus of development economists since the 1960s and the fact that the issues are ongoing is an indication for their high complexity (Easterly 2006).

In a similar vein, Bickenbach, Mbelu, and Nunnenkamp (2019) examine whether there was a change in main donors' aid allocations after the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, which was another initiative to increase effectiveness of foreign aid by focusing aid efforts on the most needy countries. They find no systematic and consistent change in donor allocations; while there is slight increase in concentration of bilateral aid to poorer countries compared to multilateral aid, aid giving to higher income countries also became less selective. They point to the lack of success of the Paris Declaration to improve merit-based aid allocations and the lack of evidence for donors' altruistic approach, concluding that the discrepancy between donor rhetoric and aid allocation persists.

On macroeconomic management of aid, Addison and Tarp (2015) provide an overview of discussions along aid effectiveness, aid fluctuations and heterogeneity, donor coordination, and macroeconomic effects of aid on the recipients. Global and

domestic economic shocks constitute one group of factors that affect the supply side of foreign aid. Not all countries are affected by such shocks similarly, neither the said shocks affect the distribution of different types of aid in the same fashion. For instance, while more fixed and “slow moving” factors, such as historical ties, affect foreign aid in the long term, economic shocks appear to have a more immediate and short-term effect on aid allocations (Jones 2015). Further, the effect of economic factors is argued to be pro-cyclical: aid rises when the donor experiences economic growth and falls when there is recession, albeit with heterogeneity between the policies of different donors (Addison and Tarp 2015, 3). Aid to low-income countries appears more pro-cyclical compared to the aid given to middle-income countries. It is affected more by economic shocks and developments experienced within the donor countries. On the other hand, bilateral aid increases when there are severe shocks that affect the recipient country (Dabla-Norris, Minoiu, and Zanna 2015).

### **2.1.2 Determinants of Foreign Aid**

The literature on the determinants of foreign aid can be roughly summarized in four categories. The first group of studies focus on whether the donors’ strategic and economic interests drive aid allocations or the recipients’ needs shape and direct foreign aid. The second group of studies start with the assumption that donor interest is the main driver of aid allocations. These studies particularly focus on whether, and to what extent, the donors use foreign aid to increase their soft power in the international arena. Also focusing on the supply-side of aid, the third group of studies turn their attention to different donor sub-groups. These studies examine the variations in the foreign policies of the traditional and emerging donors, and whether the competition between the established and emerging donors affect their aid allocations. The fourth group of studies take the unit of analysis from state level to sub-state level and focus on the effect of non-state actors either on the supply- or demand-side of foreign aid.

Under the first group of studies that focus on the tension between donors’ interests and recipients’ needs, one line of studies argue that recipient need and merit is not prioritized over donor interests. McKinlay and Little (1977) investigate the determinants of the bilateral foreign aid given by the United States between 1960 and 1970. Arguing that humanitarian reasons for bilateral aid allocation present an unrealistically optimistic perspective on the states’ motivations, they propose that what they call a foreign policy view of aid plays a more decisive role for the countries to allocate foreign aid. Evaluating the foreign aid policy of the United

States, they argue that foreign policy concerns, including ideology and militarization of the recipient states, along with promotion of trade drives foreign aid, as opposed to humanitarian motivations or recipient needs. In a similar study, they examine foreign aid policies of the United Kingdom during the same period and find further support for foreign aid policy view as the driver of the U.K.'s foreign aid (McKinlay and Little 1978). Comparing the foreign aid policies of the United States, United Kingdom, and France, they conclude that the foreign aid policies of all three countries were driven by their foreign policy concerns, albeit with different characteristics. While the U.S. distributes foreign aid based on power politics and security, France's foreign aid is driven by maintaining their sphere of influence and promoting its trade interests. The United Kingdom's foreign aid policy is underlined by promoting its political sphere of influence, which is highlighted particularly by their former colonial ties and historical associations, along with some considerations for humanitarian reasons, though the authors note that the humanitarian components are not nearly as prevalent as the British government at the time presented them to be (McKinlay and Little 1978, 330 - 331).

In a study comparing the foreign aid distributions of the United States, Japan, France, and Sweden in Africa during the 1980s, Schraeder, Hook, and Taylor (1998) find support for the argument that donor interests, rather than the recipient needs, are usually the drivers of foreign aid practices. They conclude that foreign aid is not an altruistic foreign policy tool although the donors frame it as such. Furthermore, they conclude that political ideology and strategic interests are important determinants of foreign aid. Finally, they also find trade as an important determinant across the countries examined, which casts doubt on the motivations and rhetoric of these industrialized Northern democratic countries, including Sweden which has been known for altruistic aid practices. In a widely cited study Alesina and Dollar (2000) examine the patterns of foreign aid flows with respect to factors, such as countries' historical past, international voting patterns, and democratic features. They find that colonial relationship between the donor and the recipient, along with the countries' voting patterns at the UN, better explain donors' allocation decisions, as opposed to the political institutions and economic policies of the recipient countries, although different donors assign different weight to individual factors. Controlling for various factors that might affect the donors' aid allocations during the period studied, they point that the findings do not permit a conclusion in favor of recipient need and merit as the main driver of aid allocation decisions.

Another line of literature focuses on securitization of foreign aid. Meernik, Krueger, and Poe (1998) analyze the United States' foreign aid allocation with respect to security, economic concerns, and ideological goals between 1977 and 1994 by dividing

the period in two parts: during and after the Cold war. They find that, although security driven goals have been the primary drivers of the U.S. foreign aid during the Cold War, these goals started losing prevalence and were replaced by ideological goals. These included democracy and norms-spreading, during the post-Cold War period. Brück and Xu (2012) cover the period between 1960 and 2007 to examine the changing trends and accelerations in aid, as well as the drivers of aid. The authors find a positive relationship between domestic developments and aid accelerations. Particularly, positive regime changes and wars appear to significantly predict aid flows. Further, international wars accelerate aid flows both for the recipient country and the neighboring countries. However, internal conflicts do not have a systematic effect. Horký and Lightfoot (2012) evaluate the development policies of Central and Eastern European states with respect to aid-giving and argue that their development policies are delineated by a narrow national interest that focuses on security and regional power.

Lazell and Petrikova (2020) focus on securitization of bilateral development aid by utilizing mixed methods. The assumption that specific concerns of the donors will affect the types of aid that they fund constitutes the study's departing point. The authors examine commitments by the UK, US, Denmark, and Sweden to the democratization and peace, conflict and security sectors. Their findings show that while the amount of the commitments to the two sectors have increased over time, donors directed their efforts to states that are not directly affected by conflict yet that are of high strategic interest rather than those directly affected by conflict. Further, they find that when a state which is of strategic importance to the donor is affected by conflict, development aid is more likely to reflect the security concerns of the donors, concluding that both the strategic importance and donor's domestic policy preferences affect the strength of aid securitization (Lazell and Petrikova 2020, 324).

In the second group of studies focusing on soft power, some scholars argue that the function of foreign aid in influencing foreign policy makes it a preferable tool for the donors to exert soft power, obtain policy concessions, or to present themselves as benevolent actors in the international arena (De Mesquita and Smith 2012; Qian 2015). Alesina and Dollar (2000) find that recipients' voting patterns at the UN General Assembly, particularly their voting alignment with the donor country, is one of the supply-side determinants of foreign aid. Dreher, Nunnenkamp, and Thiele (2008) use data for 143 countries covering the period between 1973 – 2002 to examine the influence of the US aid on countries' voting patterns in the UN General Assembly. They find that the US uses aid distribution, particularly general budget support and grant, to obtain voting compliance. However, they point that a similar

pattern of buying voting compliance is not observed for other G7 countries. Adhikari (2019) examines the effect of foreign aid on the relationship between foreign aid and recipient states' vote in the UN General Assembly (UNGA). Splitting donor countries into two groups as major and minor donors, he finds that different motivations drive foreign aid policies of the two groups. Accordingly, while the major power donors allocate foreign aid in line with their strategic goals, such as a recipient's voting behavior in the UNGA, the minor donors appear to prioritize the recipient needs in giving aid.

The debate on donor motivations pitch donors' strategic interests and their humanitarian or development-related orientations against each other. Studies that examine the traditional DAC donors and their allocation policies at the aggregate level reach different conclusions (Acht, Mahmoud, and Thiele 2015; Dietrich 2013; Qian 2015; Wright and Winters 2011). On the other hand, examining the motivations of donor sub-groups can help delineate common trends within groups as well as the variation between them. For instance, Dreher and Jensen (2013) examine the voting patterns of newly elected leaders in the UN General Assembly. Although their theoretical assumptions are in line with the longstanding argument that the United States uses foreign aid policy as a reward and punishment mechanism, the authors turn their attention to newly elected leaders and evaluate their voting patterns with respect to "key" and "non-key" votes. While moral and material reasons can motivate the new leaders' votes, the authors argue that differentiating between "key" and "non-key" votes and comparing the new leaders' votes with the average votes provides an insight into the material motivations of the new leaders. They find that new leaders differ from the average both on key and non-key votes, yet "only voting on key-votes is systematically more in line with the United States" (Dreher and Jensen 2013, 194). Also related to donors' strategic interests, Esen and Tokdemir (2021) focus on populist leaders' use of foreign aid as a policy tool. Their results indicate that countries with populist leaders tend to allocate higher amounts of foreign aid compared to countries not run by populists. On the other hand, countries with populist governments receive less aid both from other populist regimes and from countries with non-populist governments. Consequently, the authors argue that while populist regimes attempt to utilize foreign aid policy in line with their strategic pursuits, populist recipients are not very attractive to either donor group.

Clark and Dolan (2021) evaluate the conditions that are associated with World Bank (WB) loans. They find that countries that vote in line with the US at the UN receive fewer requirements for domestic policy reforms, and on softer issue areas. They interpret the findings that although there is no direct influence of the policies of the US on the WB's loan conditionality, the US's influence is permeated in the

WB when the WB staff design programs that are compatible with US preferences.

The third point concerns competition between donors in driving foreign aid. Such competition can be between traditional donors over expanding influence or capturing policy concessions. It can also occur as a result of the entrance of new actors as donors into the development realm. Emerging donors are states that are not traditionally a part of the OECD's Development Assistance Committee. These actors are diverse in their size, effect, and engagement. There are various classifications, such as "black knights" (i.e., Russia, China, and Saudi Arabia) (Aydın-Düzgit 2019*a*) to describe the more influential non-DAC actors, and "the third wave" or "CIVETS" (i.e., Colombia, Indonesia, Vietnam, Egypt, and Turkey) to define smaller emerging donors (Lundsgaarde 2011; Schulz 2010). Despite their differences, they share commonalities: they position themselves as separate from the traditional OECD donors, if not against; they emphasize the principle of non-interference and have lenient assistance conditionality; they stress the priorities of the recipients; they try to foster "South-South" partnership and peer-learning for development; and overall, they present an "alternative development" stance (Aydın-Düzgit 2019*a*; Lundsgaarde 2011; Quadir 2013; Schulz 2010; Woods 2008).

Woods (2008) presents one of the earlier discussions on the disruption brought to the foreign aid and development sector by the emerging donors and discusses the reasons that make them attractive alternatives against the traditional donors. She argues that a number of factors, such as broken promises of the traditional donors to disperse more aid over the years; insisting on certain conditions that are found to be unsuccessful, ineffective, and that resulted in failure; inability to increase coordination and alignment which create hard-to-manage overhead costs and bureaucratic traffic for the recipients; and lack of incentives to engage emerging donors in the multilateral system, make the alternative offered by those new actors attractive (Woods 2008, 1213-1219).

Nevertheless, there are also debates over the altruism of emerging donors due to the blurring of aid flows and trade in bilateral relations (Altunışık 2014; Aydın-Düzgit 2019*a*; Kavaklı 2018; Lundsgaarde 2011; Quadir 2013; Schulz 2010). The criticisms towards emerging donors span a variety of issues. First, due to their adherence to unconditionality and non-involvement in the recipient states' domestic affairs, the emerging donors are criticized for providing "rogue aid" to states, allowing them to continue their political and economic status quo, and enabling them to avoid implementing reforms and policies that would improve their economy and create prosperity (Woods 2008, 1208). Second, there are concerns over the consequences of loans provided by the emerging donors for the recipient countries. Such concerns are

centered around the “renewed indebtedness” of the low-income countries who receive debt relief from the traditional donors but are presented with alternative channels for loans by the emerging donors. Doing so, the emerging donors are criticized for free riding on the traditional donors’ debt relief programs (Woods 2008, 1209). The third issue regards good governance and standards. Since they provide an alternative for foreign aid with no strings attached, the emerging donors are criticized to enable the states that have subpar regulations and questionable governance quality to bypass the requirements for good governance and sustainability, which are usually included as a part of the aid deals with the established donors.

These are rather valid concerns and still of interest to academics and practitioners today. On the other hand, the extent and gravity of these concerns are debated. For instance, Woods (2008) discusses nuances regarding the highlighted concerns and points that the severity of the issues can be overplayed although there is a “silent revolution” brought by the emerging donors. Concerning the first point on indirectly supporting unfavorable economic policies of the recipients, Woods (2008) points to a lack of clear evidence that economic crises are followed by acceptance of aid, adding that some countries even experience economic growth following increased aid and trade ties with China (Woods 2008, 1208). Second, she argues that the discussion on re-indebting low-income countries misses China’s own involvement in debt relief, which is considerable. She argues that providing loan to the countries in need and relieving the debt afterwards serves as a two-step public relations tool for China (Woods 2008, 1209). The third point concerning the established foreign aid standards are complicated due to the already fractured nature of the traditional foreign aid practices. Woods (2008) points that many established donors provide bilateral aid besides their contribution to the multilateral channels. Most individual donors bring their own requirements to those bilateral deals and do not follow the standards set by the international organizations despite being a part of those institutions. The author emphasizes the importance of the standards but argues that “conditionality alone does not improve those standards” and a more holistic and inclusive process is needed to improve the situation (Woods 2008, 1212).

Motivated to contribute to the discussion on emerging donors by providing solid empirical evidence, Dreher, Nunnenkamp, and Thiele (2011) compare bilateral aid distributions of the traditional and emerging donors. In a quantitative study where they employ project-level data from the AidData Project version 1.9, they compare the aid allocations of 16 new donors and 22 traditional DAC donors with respect to recipient need, merit, as well as donor self-interest, the last of which is manifested in increasing trade relations or rewarding political allies. Their findings indicate that recipient need, measured as income per capita, malnutrition, and child mortality, is

not a strong driver for new donors when compared to the traditional donors (Dreher, Nunnenkamp, and Thiele 2011, 1961). Further, while recipient need appears selective at the gate-keeping stage, increased familiarity with the needs of the recipient does not materialize in a needs-based aid allocation strategy. On the other hand, the new and old donors show similarity with respect to recipient merit and donor self-interest. Governance quality does not appear to drive aid allocations for either group. Additionally, the authors highlight that the worries that new donors use aid to advance their commercial interests are not supported by empirical evidence.

In the fourth and final group of studies, researchers turn their attention to sub-state level. A main line of argument in this group is that domestic factors in the donor and recipient countries can shape foreign aid decisions as opposed to recipient need. De Mesquita and Smith (2007) examine the foreign aid policy of the USAID in the post-WW2 period. They assess aid-giving and aid-receiving within a political survival framework based on the selectorate theory developed by De Mesquita in earlier studies (De Mesquita 2003). Accordingly, they assume that the leaders of all countries want to maximize their time in office, and their survival depends on what the authors call as their selectorate and the winning coalition. In a context where foreign aid is increasingly instrumentalized as a tool to receive policy concessions and political gains, the authors propose that the selectorate and the winning coalition affect foreign aid giving and receiving (De Mesquita and Smith 2007, 254). In their selectorate model, aid transfers occur between potential donor and recipient states, and the decisions concerning aid are made by individual leaders who prioritize their political survival over the welfare of the overall public, presenting a clash between the two. The “winning coalition” is defined as “the set of people whose support is essential to keep a leader in office,” and the “selectorate” is defined as “the pool of potential supporters from which these essential backers are drawn to form a winning coalition” (De Mesquita and Smith 2007, 251). Given this theory, the authors test whether any aid is given, and if yes, how much. Concerning the first question, they conclude that leaders are likely to give aid when they depend on a large coalition and a small selectorate, and when they can extract policy concessions from potential recipients, which enables them to distribute benefits to their selectorate. Prospective recipients who have limited resources, who depend on a small coalition and a large selectorate are likely to receive aid when the policy concessions are not too politically costly (De Mesquita and Smith 2007, 251). Concerning the second question on the amount of aid, they find that the increase in the recipient leader’s coalition, decrease in the selectorate size, increase in the salience of the issue at hand, and increase in the domestic resources are linked to increasing the amount of aid received.

In a similar study where they examine the bilateral aid by OECD DAC donors

between 1960 and 2001, De Mesquita and Smith (2009) test the donors' motivations within a selectorate framework. They argue that foreign aid transactions benefit the leaders of both the donor and recipient states, as well as the citizens of the donor state, while the citizens of the recipient state are harmed by it. Their findings show that wealthy states with large coalition systems are likely to give aid, poorer states with small coalition systems are likely to receive aid, and the amount of aid received increases as the recipient's coalition size, issue importance, and wealth increases. They argue that the findings are in line with their expectations as wealthy states with large coalition systems would be more prone to extracting policy concessions in return for foreign aid, which would benefit their larger population. Leaders of poorer states with smaller coalitions would be more willing to trade policy concessions in exchange for aid and distribute the received gains among their exclusive group of cronies. As a result of the transaction, the citizens in the donor state benefit from the transaction whereas those in the recipient country are harmed by it. Consequently, De Mesquita and Smith (2009) highlight that their findings challenge the argument for the humanitarian motivations of the donor states.

Additionally, there are a myriad of studies that focus on the motivations of international organizations and non-state actors in providing aid and grants. A similar line of argument that priority-issues drive the decisions to allocate aid is found under this theme, as well. For instance Nunnenkamp, Öhler, and Sosa Andrés (2017) evaluate aid given by the World Bank across different districts in India and find that, while the WB favor districts where infrastructure projects would also benefit the foreign direct investors, greater need for aid does not appear to be a significant determinant of WB's aid allocations.

### **2.1.3 Foreign Aid Heterogeneity**

Foreign aid is a phenomenon too complex that monolithic evaluations of its drivers and effects alike can lead to misleading conclusions. The development community is very diverse, with many states along with non-state actors, and this diversity is multiplied within different donor groups. There are also many types of foreign aid that can appeal differently to different donors and recipients. Aid delivery channels also constitute many different options. Such diversity and multiplicity give rise to both opportunities and challenges for theoretical and methodological examinations in the foreign aid literature. Disaggregating foreign aid into sectors or evaluating different channels through which it is delivered would be one solution to this challenge. For empirical purposes, aid types can be determined with respect to the channels within

which they are delivered (Acht, Mahmoud, and Thiele 2015; Dietrich 2013); their function as geared towards either short- or long-term contribution to recipients' development or economic growth (Cheng and Minhas 2021); or the ease, pace, and duration of delivery along with supply-side considerations of donors (Brück and Xu 2012; Jones 2015).

Concerning aid effectiveness, Mavrotas and Ouattara (2006) point to aid heterogeneity and argue that “[a]id is heterogeneous and each of its components exerts different macroeconomic effects on the aid-recipient economy,” and failing to recognize this could lead to “aggregation bias in the empirical evidence reported” (435). Stressing that aid to different sectors prompts different policy responses from the recipients, the authors examine the effect of aggregated foreign aid on the fiscal response of the government in Côte D’Ivoire. They then repeat their analysis by disaggregating foreign aid into four different sectors: namely, project aid, program aid, technical assistance, and food aid. They find that while foreign aid does not have an effect on government’s fiscal response when used as an aggregated measure, the government appears to respond differently to different types of aid when foreign aid is disaggregated and when government response is tested with respect to each sector. Accordingly, technical assistance and food aid are used to boost consumption, and project aid and program aid are used for investment purposes (Mavrotas and Ouattara 2006, 445). In an Annual Review piece, Wright and Winters (2011) discuss various issues around aid effectiveness. They pay particular attention to difficulty of establishing causality between foreign aid and economic growth, along with the effects of conditionality. Keeping in mind the theoretical and methodological challenges, they propose that examining different types of aid can allow researchers to “test distinct claims about the causal mechanisms that link aid to growth,” “better capture the causal processes by analyzing aid by type or donor,” and “more precisely assess the causal effect of aid on particular outcomes of aid such as health, education, environment, and democracy” (Wright and Winters 2011, 74-75).

Concerning the supply-side of foreign aid, paying attention to aid heterogeneity appears no less important. Many branches of foreign aid literature that focus on distinct questions, such as donors’ interests, recipients’ need and merit, different types or channels of aid delivery, as well as the trends in foreign aid drivers with respect to temporal variation, benefit from the improved understanding gained through an attention to aid heterogeneity.

Concerning recipient need, aid to the neediest countries appear to be more fragile and pro-cyclical, that is, increasing and decreasing in amount following economic shocks experienced by the donors (Addison and Tarp 2015; Dabla-Norris, Minoiu,

and Zanna 2015). Natural disasters constitute one of the need-based drivers of foreign aid. Usually, a prompt and generous donor response follows natural disasters Cheng and Minhas (2021). Nonetheless, even this seemingly agreed upon view is contested by recent studies.

Cheng and Minhas (2021) differentiate between different types of aid (i.e., humanitarian aid, aid to civil society, and development aid), and propose a new measure of strategic interest using a latent variable approach. They explain that this latent variable accounts for both the indirect ties that the states might have and the multiple dimensions where the states interact. The authors argue that natural disasters provide a window of opportunity for donor states to exert influence on the recipient states, even though the recipient might be a strategic opponent. Traditionally, strategic interest has been operationalized as trade intensity, UN voting scores, arms transfers, colonial legacy, alliances, regional dummies, bilateral dummies, or some combination of these (Cheng and Minhas 2021, 949). The authors argue that although they provide some insight into strategic interest, these operationalizations are not able to capture the complex relationship between various dimensions. They assert that a latent variable approach encompasses the direct and indirect ways that states are connected and thus provides a way to estimate the relational measure. They identify dyadic alliances, UN voting, and joint membership in IGOs as three latent dimensions of state relations. Their findings are rather interesting and provide insights into short- and long-term drivers of donors' aid allocations vis-a-vis different sectors. Concerning short-term reactions, the authors find that the donors view natural disasters as a chance to improve their relations with their strategic opponents and are likely to send more humanitarian aid to them compared to their strategic allies. Regarding the long-term effects, donors take advantage of the opportunity provided by natural disasters to exert influence over their strategic opponents and, therefore, are likely to send additional civil society aid to them. Furthermore, given the enabling effect of development aid on recipients' long-term economic growth, donors are more likely to send greater development aid to their strategic allies, irrespective of the number of natural disasters experienced.

The influence of recipient merit on foreign aid allocation is another area that is frequently examined. Neumayer (2003) provides a comprehensive discussion and summary of the literature on good governance and development assistance. He outlines the disagreement in the literature over main drivers on aid (Table 3.1 on pp.21-29), then evaluates the aid allocations of the Western and Arab countries in the 1990s. Examining aid allocations at the eligibility stage (i.e., decision to provide aid or not) and at level stage (i.e., aid allocations post-eligibility stage), he finds heterogeneous effects of donor interest, recipient need, and good governance.

Also, individual indices of good governance, including democracy, respect for human rights, low military expenditures, and low regulatory burden, appear to be significant determinants of aid at the level stage, whereas their effect is null at the eligibility stage. At the level stage, low regulatory burden is found to be significant in more cases compared to other indices (Neumayer 2003, 97). The study's approach and its results show how much critical information can be gained from studying foreign aid when aid heterogeneity is taken into account.

Dietrich (2013) draws attention to the variation in donor delivery tactics. The author points that the dilemma arises from the "growing consensus on the need to maintain sustained engagement in the world's poorest and often most fragile states" (Dietrich 2013, 701). On the one hand, foreign aid is crucial for the economies of these states. On the other hand, their limited state capacities, incidents of corruption, and donors' inability to enforce conditions give rise to concerns over aid waste and questions on donors' development motivations (Dietrich 2013, 698). Dietrich (2013) argues that donors can change their delivery tactics based on their evaluations of the recipients' governance quality. Pointing that most studies on aid effectiveness and donor motivations evaluate government-to-government aid, but that explains only a part of the story. The author differentiates between government-to-government aid and what she calls "bypass aid," which is defined as "aid delivered through non-state development channels as that which does not directly engage government authorities at all" (Dietrich 2013, 701). Her findings indicate that donors bypass the government and allocate more aid through non-state actors in recipient countries with poor governance quality, whereas they deliver more state-to-state aid when the recipients' governance quality is high.

Acht, Mahmoud, and Thiele (2015) also examine the effect of governance quality on donors' decisions to deliver aid through non-state actors. They extend Dietrich's analysis by evaluating the relative and absolute amounts of aid to recipients, as well as the variation in donors' bypassing decisions for different sectors. While their results corroborate earlier studies, which argue that states with more corrupt governments receive more overall aid, they find that bypassing is more common in these cases, and majority of aid is provided through non-state actors (Acht, Mahmoud, and Thiele 2015, 28). Concerning sectoral variation, the authors argue that bypassing varies between sectors since working with non-state actors is usually easier in some sectors, such as emergency assistance and health interventions, than some other large-scale projects, including those targeting infrastructure or development (Acht, Mahmoud, and Thiele 2015, 21). They also propose that donors' changing bypassing decisions in different sectors provide an insight into their motivations. For instance, if a donor is motivated more by economic interests, then it might as well

be possible to receive benefits through engaging directly with a state government, regardless of the quality of their governance. On the other hand, if a donor places more weight on development objectives within the recipient, which is found to be associated with economic growth, and if they still bypass the government while delivering aid, then it is an indication of their selfless orientation (Acht, Mahmoud, and Thiele 2015, 29). The results support their expectations: bypassing weak governments is less common where there is stronger economic interest in recipients, and it has a stronger effect for sectors where alternative channels of delivery are more available.

Concerning the trends and changes in aid supplies, Brück and Xu (2012) address the important issue of the fit between a real-life phenomenon of interest and its measurement in testing causal relationships. More specifically, they examine if, and to what extent, economic, political, and social events in a recipient country affect donors' decisions on aid flows. They point that many studies in the growth literature examine growth by averaging growth rates for some specified periods. Although this approach helps to remove measurement errors, the authors argue that averaging "came at the cost of introducing serial correlation and losing annual variations that were possibly keys to understanding the drivers of growth" (Brück and Xu 2012, 594). Indeed, many countries experience volatility in their economic growth where collapses and boosts in growth can follow each other, and averaging cancels the effect of such variations (Brück and Xu 2012, 594). Departing from this point, Brück and Xu (2012) argue that paying attention to volatility and time-variant factors in assessing the drivers of aid is even more important. For one, the procyclical tendency of aid allocations, as affected by developments within the donor country, necessitates paying attention to changing trends over time. Additionally, shocks and events that are experienced by the recipient country, such as natural disasters or negative regime changes, can lead to a sudden increase or a sharp decline in the aid inflows (Brück and Xu 2012, 594). Thus, paying attention to aid volatility, as in change in the trends and volume of aid allocations, becomes crucial to examine drivers of aid. Brück and Xu (2012) argue that drivers of aid accelerations differ from drivers of average aid flows. Their findings suggest that domestic events within a recipient country, particularly positive regime change and wars, increase aid flows to that country. Moreover, they find that international wars increase aid acceleration in the recipient and the aid acceleration to neighboring countries through a spillover effect, while internal wars do not have a significant effect on aid accelerations.

Jones (2015) also examines the heterogeneity and trends of aid supplies over time. He points that not only are there a variety of factors that affect donors' aid allocations but also donors' response to similar shocks can be different given their priorities

and orientations. He argues that many studies aim to unpack the effect of different determinants of aid do so by “imposing a static specification, focusing on the average long-run properties of aid behaviors across donors,” “focus[ing] only one aspect of differences in behaviors [... whereas] countries may place different weights on the importance of longer- and shorter-term influences,” and “treat[ing] aid supplies as a stationary process, in the sense of having a mean and variance that are independent of time” (Jones 2015, 33). Paying attention to time series properties of foreign aid data, Jones (2015) aims to distinguish between long- and short-run factors, along with different donor behaviors. He finds heterogeneity in the determinants of aid both between countries and over time, indicating distinct “aid regimes” in different periods (Jones 2015, 31).

## **2.2 Overview of Turkey’s Political and Economic Background and Foreign Aid Policies**

In this thesis, I follow the literature on emerging donors in unpacking the drivers of Turkey’s foreign aid policies, particularly the effect of religion on Turkish aid. Related to this, I benefit from the framework provided by literature on middle powers to situate Turkey within the international arena. For instance, Öniş and Kutlay (2017) define Turkey as an emerging middle power, contrasting it to established middle powers. The authors argue that emerging middle powers share commonalities with the established middle powers with respect to the limitations on their material capacities, including military power, size, and demography. On the other hand, their governance capacities and inability to become role-models in their regions set emerging middle powers apart. In a similar vein, Altunışık (2023) evaluates Turkish foreign policy within a middle power framework. She argues that Turkey lacked the material conditions, such as military and economic capabilities, to be properly categorized as a middle power in the earlier years of the Republic. However, its preference for multilateralism, diplomacy, and involvement in regional cooperation that can be considered as non-material conditions for middle powers allowed Turkey to be referred as one. Altunışık (2023) argues that this unique dynamic makes Turkey a “modified middle power”.

Köstem (2018) also highlights domestic contestation over national identity as the underlying factor that shaped Turkey’s foreign economic policy ambitions as a regional power. He argues that regional powers’ national economic interests, and hence their foreign economic policies toward their neighbors, are shaped by the ruling elite’s

national identity conceptions. On the other hand, national identity conceptions are shaped through domestic contestation of identity among the political elite, where the state elites with a certain national identity outlook hold office and can have the upper hand in shaping the discourse if they can remain in power long enough. Köstem (2018) outlines Turkey's foreign economic policy ambition as one that aims to be the "regional order provider in the Middle East", where the AKP, "[a]s party with political Islamist roots, it has adopted a liberal, inclusive strategy in order to contrast with the security-oriented and coercive approach of the Kemalist/Westernist elite toward the region" (Köstem 2018, 728).

İpek (2015) also examines foreign policy change within a constructivist framework with a particular focus on Turkey's foreign aid policies. Similar to the studies discussed above, the interplay between domestic and international factors as forces that shape foreign policy constitutes her starting point. Given this premise, İpek (2015) proposes an approach that takes "not only ideas but also material interests as exogenous factors constituted within domestic structures" can better explain policy change (İpek 2015, 173). Moreover, she argues that ideas preceded policies, as opposed to the other way around.

This implication is important as it provides a link between domestic and foreign policy, as well as a mechanism that can help better trace the changes in political elites' ideations and their reflections on policy decisions. In light of the framework provided by the literature on middle powers, along with the mechanisms presented to explain foreign policy change, I now focus on the Turkish case. First, I provide an overview of the domestic political and economic developments in Turkey. Next, I turn to international developments and Turkish foreign policy. Finally, building on the domestic and international developments, I present a discussion on the drivers of Turkey's foreign aid policy.

### **2.2.1 Overview of Turkey's Domestic and Foreign Policies Under the AKP Rule**

A brief overview of the Turkish political history after the first military coup shows that the period between 1965-1971 experienced a single cabinet rule, followed by a military involvement in the early 1970s, and a period of coalitions between 1971-1980. Another military coup took place in 1980 and resulted in a military rule between 1980-1983.

The Democratic Party (Demokrat Parti, DP) emerged as the first opposition party in

the 1950s, where its leader, Adnan Menderes, heavily used a rhetoric that highlighted the significance of electoral victory as the representation of people's discontent manifested in a symbolic uprising against the elite institutions, the disillusionment with the separation of powers, along with the appeal to the parliamentary majority as the only legitimate constitutional power (Aytaç and Elçi 2019, 92). The military staged a coup d'état in 1960, which is believed to be based on the discontent with DP's policies and their actions that violate the principle of separation of powers principle (Aytaç and Elçi 2019, 91). The post-1960 era led to the foundation of the Justice Party (Adalet Partisi, AP) which was led by Süleyman Demirel. Similarly, Demirel utilized a rhetoric that revolved around the struggle of "the people" against "the elites."

Turkish political scene became increasingly fragmented after the 1960s, with political parties that represented a variety of stances with different degrees of populist appeals, and which were closed during the military coup in 1980. The period between 1980 and 1983 involved attempts to "top-down re-democratization" (Öniş and Kutlay 2020). Also, a new constitution was introduced in 1982, which entailed expansion of the previously-ceremonial power of the president by granting the president the power over legislative, executive and judicial branches, as well as the ability to make appointments in crucial public offices (Öniş and Kutlay 2020; Özbudun 2012). Özbudun (2012) argues that this constitution brought Turkey closer to a hybrid position between parliamentary and presidential system, albeit without an elected president, which is a central characteristic of hybrid systems.

On the economic front, Turkey wrestled with structural issues in the 1970s. These issues were tied to Turkey's import-substitution strategy and a related export-pessimism that led to "unsustainable balance-of-payment-deficits" (Öniş and Kutlay 2020, 9). The adjustment process following the crisis included structural reforms and an export-oriented growth model which was implemented with "the neoliberal-oriented 24 January 1980 Decisions under the cross-conditionality of the IMF and the World Bank" (Öniş and Kutlay 2020, 9). This, in turn, served to integrate Turkey into the global economy in the 1980s.

The political scene during the period between 1980 and 2002 witnessed a branching and domination of two peripheral DP-AP generation parties: the Motherland Party (Anavatan Partisi, ANAP) of Turgut Özal and the True Path Party (Doğru Yol Partisi, DYP) of Süleyman Demirel (Aytaç and Elçi 2019, 92). Also vocal in the post-1980 era politics was the National Outlook (Milli Görüş) movement. Milli Görüş, with populist appeals along with an Islamist ideology, has built its discourse on the notion of a struggle between the oppressive, materialist, and secular West,

and the moral, pious, Muslim community that was oppressed (Aytaç and Elçi 2019, 93). A single-party rule, accompanied by military's tutelage over the executive and legislative branches characterized the period between 1983-91. During the 1990s another decade of unstable coalitions defined the political environment. For the economic environment, the unregulated banking system in the “premature liberalization” of the Turkish context led Turkey to be exposed to global dynamics and constituted the key problem (Öniş and Kutlay 2020, 9), leading to the 2000-1 crisis. The Justice and Development Party (AKP) emerged from the Milli Görüş movement, also representing the modest, pious conservative people against the corrupt elite establishment (Aytaç and Elçi 2019; Elçi 2019; Gürsoy 2021).

The AKP came to power as a single party in 2002. The change in government with the election of the Justice and Development Party (AKP) to office in 2002 and the relative stability that followed brought an air of optimism, where the domestic and international policies undertaken during the second half of the 2000s contributed to this optimism (Keyman 2016; Kutlay and Öniş 2021*a*; Öniş and Kutlay 2017). Turkey experienced a significant political and economic development during AKP's first term. In the political sphere, the government under the AKP initiated a series of liberalizing reforms, which included measures to improve human rights, freedom of expression and assembly, gender equality, and minority rights (Kutlay and Öniş 2021*a*; Öniş and Kutlay 2017). In the legal sphere, death penalty was abolished in line with the EU legislation, the frequently criticized anti-terror law was revised and liberalized, and the rights of non-Muslim communities were expanded through new measures that allowed these communities to build places of worship (Kutlay and Öniş 2021*a*; Öniş and Kutlay 2017).

Economic transformation occurred in parallel to the developments in the legal and political spheres. The AKP came to power in the wake of the 2001 global financial crisis where the deeply-shook international community was still recovering. In this context, economic recovery was one of the main priority agenda items. To address the challenge, the AKP government worked very closely with international organizations, including the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank (WB), and European Union (EU); implemented strict regulations on the financial sector; and adopted a broad-based macroeconomic discipline (Öniş and Kutlay 2017, 171). The adjustment measures targeted restructuring the state-market relations by establishing strong regulatory institutions. The reforms entailed extensive privatization to reduce state's presence in the economy, establishment of independent regulatory institutions to enable a rule-based market economy, and the “independence of the central bank to maintain price stability” (Öniş and Kutlay 2020, 9). Both instances of structural adjustment reforms (in 1980 and 2001) took place with the involvement

of foreign financial institutions and in a context where Turkey's ties to the West and NATO were emphasized (Öniş and Kutlay 2020). These measures led Turkey to achieve a notable growth performance in a context where many other countries were still struggling.

In contrast to the abovementioned outcomes, such as steps toward democratization and economic improvement, during the AKP's earlier terms, the motivation of the AKP elites remains as a contested issue. Aytaç and Elçi (2019) argue that Turkey was a "tutelary democracy" with the shadow of the military constantly felt over the judiciary and government prior to 2002. Against the backdrop of this legacy, the first two terms of AKP in the government is characterized by the party's struggle to retain power and deliver promises to its constituents against the secular and republican elites that were still occupying the key positions in the judiciary and bureaucracy (Aytaç and Elçi 2019). Throughout the first phase, both the party and Erdoğan gained power through constitutional amendments, increasing use of omnibus bills, and executive decrees, as well as by the subduing of the military and political elites (Aytaç and Elçi 2019, 95-98). A result of these developments was the demilitarization of Turkish politics and changing dynamics in favor of the elected politicians (Kutlay and Öniş 2021*a*; Öniş and Kutlay 2017). The AKP started reaping the benefits of these developments relatively early on. In the 2004 local elections, the party was seen to gain broad support and won the governance of the municipalities in the major cities.

The period between 2008 and 2015, starting with AKP's second term in government, constituted a transition from the earlier liberal policies towards practices with increasingly authoritarian practices. The general elections and referendum concerning the election of the president in 2007, along with another successful outcome in the 2009 local elections, aided AKP to consolidate its power in politics and curb the military's influence on politics (Kutlay and Öniş 2021*b*; Köstem 2018; Öniş and Kutlay 2017). During AKP's second term, between 2007 and 2011, the earlier momentum of reform disappeared and domestic policies experienced relative stagnation, with the added effect of the stalemate in the EU accession process (Kutlay and Öniş 2021*b*; Köstem 2018; Öniş and Kutlay 2017). On the other hand, some reforms that were implemented earlier towards democratization were undone, pulling the country in the reverse direction. For instance, Turkey held another constitutional referendum in 2010 that contained various amendments, among which changes to the structure of the main judiciary bodies were notable (Aytaç and Elçi 2019), which paved the way for the dismantling of domestic institutions and checks and balances (Kutlay and Öniş 2021*b*; Öniş and Kutlay 2017).

In 2011, the prime minister of the time, Erdoğan, started voicing the option concerning a switch to presidentialism albeit very vaguely (Öniş and Kutlay 2020). Former presidents Özal and Demirel also made similar attempts in the 1980s and 1990s, yet without success (Özbudun 2012). 2013 experienced a turbulent political environment with the public demonstrations and mass mobilizations during the Gezi protests between May and June. Serious corruption allegations that broke out in December 2013 contributed to this environment, and created a rift between the conservative religious sect, which was later declared a terrorist organization, and the governing AKP. Following Abdullah Gül's fulfillment of his term as the President of Turkey, the Turkey's first presidential elections were held in 2014 where Erdoğan became the first publicly elected president (Haugom 2019). Nevertheless, the general elections in June 2015 constituted a challenge to the political confidence of the AKP where the pro-Kurdish HDP gained enough support to be represented in the parliament (Balta 2018; Haugom 2019; Kutlay and Öniş 2021*a,b*). This period aligned with the end of the "peace process" with the PKK. The political developments in 2013 and 2015 contributed to the AKP's authoritarian slide (Balta 2018; Esen and Gümüşçü 2016; Öniş and Kutlay 2020). Throughout the period between 2008 and 2015, frequent elections and the rhetoric of the political elites led to intense political polarization; the changes in the constitution and judiciary rendered the checks and balances ineffective against exclusive accumulation of power, and increased involvement and intervention of the AKP politicians in the social and political life with an explicitly conservative approach that heavily carried Islamist undertones accelerated Turkey's democratic free fall (Altunışık 2022; Aydın-Düzgüt 2019*b*; Aydın-Düzgüt and Balta 2019; Esen and Gümüşçü 2016, 2017; Kutlay and Öniş 2021*a,b*; Öniş and Kutlay 2017; ?).

These political developments both affected and were influenced by the economic policy. Owing to the relative success of the economic policies, Turkey upgraded its status in the IMF from a debtor to a creditor country in 2008 (Kutlay and Öniş 2021*a*; Öniş and Kutlay 2017). Following the 2008-9 global financial crisis and the 2011 elections, the AKP started moving away from the Western institutions towards an increased partnership with Russia and China (Öniş and Kutlay 2020). Öniş and Kutlay (2020) point that the overall trends in the post-2011 period included the challenging of the central bank autonomy; the expansion of the public expenditures; increased use of discretionary measures in economic policymaking, as opposed to primary law; increased public-private-partnerships; and AKP's increased control over the market. Furthermore, increasing public expenditures in the post-2011 period had various consequences. The government significantly expanded public expenditure to secure popular support for the referendum and elections, which, in turn, increased

the inflation rates. Public-private partnerships, as “highly non-transparent capital accumulation and wealth creation mechanism[s],” increased to record numbers where Turkey became the fourth largest investor in such partnerships in the world (Öniş and Kutlay 2020, 21). Overall, problems in the global economy after the 2008 financial crisis, the spillover of the increasing authoritarianism over the economic sector, and the corruption allegations against key figures representing AKP all contributed to the regressive economic outlook (Esen and Gümüşçü 2018, 2020; Kutlay and Öniş 2021*a,b*; Öniş and Kutlay 2017).

The third period of focus roughly covers the timeframe between 2015 and 2020. One of the earliest developments occurred in 2015 where Turkey lost its democratic status and took an increasingly authoritarian turn (Lührmann et al. 2020). Esen and Gümüşçü (2016) take 2015 as a critical juncture to argue Turkey’s transition to “competitive authoritarianism” where there is systematic violation of civil liberties, no level playing field for political parties, and elections were not free and fair. Democratic backsliding came hand in hand with populism under the AKP rule in Turkey. Various explanations were presented as a catalyst of Turkey’s democratic backsliding. Esen and Gümüşçü (2016) stress that democracy in Turkey has been curtailed by unfair elections, systematic violations of civil liberties, and the uneven power and influence structure that enabled the incumbent party to exert increasingly more control over public institutions and markets.

In a similar vein, a failed coup attempt on 15 July 2016 and the consequent developments accelerated the AKP’s centralization of political power and influence on the economy (Balta 2018; Esen and Gümüşçü 2017; Haugom 2019; Kubicek 2022; Kutlay and Öniş 2021*a*). Immediately following the failed coup attempt, the government declared a state of emergency which lasted until 2018. During this period, over a 100 thousand civil servants were dismissed, more than 70 thousand people were detained, over 1,500 civil society organizations were closed, more than 150 journalists were imprisoned and close to 170 media organizations were closed (Öniş and Kutlay 2020). Furthermore, a close and contentious referendum in 2017 gave a green light to the switch to the presidential system. In 2018, Turkey experienced a series of political and economic shocks. Erdoğan was elected as the first president of the new presidential system and appointed his son-in-law to the influential position of the Minister of Treasury and Finance which was met with dissatisfaction and distrust on the side of the economic actors (Altunışık 2023; Öniş and Kutlay 2020).

The 2019 municipal elections unfolded in this background and presented yet another challenge to the confidence of the AKP when the management of the biggest metropolitan cities switched to the majors representing the main opposition party.

Öniş and Kutlay (2020) highlight that “[b]efore the March 2019 local elections, the share of the AKP-led municipalities in Turkey’s economic production had been 74.5 per cent; this decreased to around 30 per cent after the elections – an enormous loss in terms of the government’s populist distributional strategies at the local level” (19). Increasing dissatisfaction among the AKP’s party elites culminated in the splits of two important party figures, Babacan and Davutoğlu, in 2019. Both had occupied important ministerial positions in the past, and both consequently formed their own political parties.

AKP’s increased control over the domestic market continued in this period. The number of changes in business environment between 2010-2018 were almost six-fold compared to the 2000-2009 period, where most changes were implemented through regulations after 2009, and around 90 per cent were initiated between 2016-2018 (Öniş and Kutlay 2020, 20-21). Erdoğan appointed himself as the chair and his son-in-law as the vice-chair of the Turkey Wealth Fund in 2018 to allocate further funds for the mega projects (Öniş and Kutlay 2020). Further legal changes in 2019 allowed the government to rescue bankrupting companies with public funds (Öniş and Kutlay 2020, 21). Both Turkey’s turbulent foreign affairs and resulting US sanctions in 2018, and the transition to the presidential system led the Turkish lira to lose more than 30 per cent value (Haugom 2019; Kutlay and Öniş 2021*b*; Öniş and Kutlay 2020). The government responded by pressuring the central bank to use reserves to counterbalance the exchange rate, which led a depletion of the central bank’s reserves. Public banks were used to provide loans to stimulate consumption, particularly in the housing and construction sector. Also, the government intervened in the market by imposing strict pricing regulations and setting up stands for low-priced vegetables and supplies through municipality run stands.

Increased centralization of economic decision-making through changes in the political system and the discretionary measures created a new group of economic elite loyal to the AKP: especially, the construction sector became an area for rent extraction (Öniş and Kutlay 2020). On the other hand, economic policies lacked mechanisms to “address the technological gap in the Turkish economy and improve domestic high value-added production capacity” (Öniş and Kutlay 2020, 21). Additionally, referring to the World Bank’s calculations, Öniş and Kutlay (2020) argue that “de-institutionalization, deterioration of property rights and regression in rule of law [...] [have] undermined state capacity and efficient allocation of resources” (22) and led to a “combination of slow growth, high inflation, rising unemployment, and greater income and wealth inequality” (24).

The earlier periods of Turkish foreign policy were shaped by the tumultuous political

events and related international instability at the turn of the 19th century. Developments, including the military, political and economic struggles of the Ottoman empire in the late 18th century; the debilitating effects of the defeat in World War I; the resulting attempts by the winning European countries to share the control of the Ottoman territory with the Sevres Treaty in 1920; and the War of Independence between 1920 and 1923, which led to the formation of the modern Turkish state, can be highlighted as crucial elements whose influence have carried over into the collective and institutional memory of the newly-formed Turkish state (Haugom 2019). Until World War II, concerns over national security, which were accentuated by the country's geostrategic position and its precarious political situation within the international great-power dynamics, shaped Turkish foreign policy (Haugom 2019, 209). Turkey pursued a more isolationist foreign policy during World War II, which was replaced by a more Western-oriented foreign policy starting from 1950s until the end of the Cold War.

The end of the Cold War and changing international power dynamics altered Turkey's position in the region (Altunışık 2023; Balta 2018; Haugom 2019; Keyman 2016). The late 1980s and early 1990s served as a turning point for Turkish foreign policy. The country not only opened its market and adopted more liberal economic policies, but also the scope of Turkish foreign policy expanded to the broader region (Öniş and Kutlay 2020). The expansion in focus came with a mixed bag of outcomes. On the one hand, Turkey's foreign policy elite re-interpreted the country's geostrategic position as an asset that can allow increased diplomatic, cultural, and trade-related engagements (Haugom 2019). Turkey's ties in the Balkan region were revitalized during the Özal era in the 1980s and had slowed down following his death (Alpan and Öztürk 2022; Haugom 2019). Although Turkish activity in the Balkans declined in the 1990s, it did not come to a complete halt, as manifested in Turkey's response to and involvement in the Bosnian War, along with its relations with other countries such as Serbia, North Macedonia, and Albania (Alpan and Öztürk 2022). On the other hand, Turkey's relations with its neighbors, both in the West and along the Southeastern border, had sour instances due to Turkey's national security concerns. For instance, Turkey increased its military activity during the 90s, especially along the Southeastern border (Alpan and Öztürk 2022). The gradual opening of the market and changing economic outlooks since the 1980s also changed Turkish foreign policy orientation from primarily security-driven to one that is more driven by trade (Haugom 2019).

Turkey, as a middle power, has felt pressed for balancing (Altunışık 2022). Roots of such balancing goes back to the founding years of the Turkish republic. The state elites of the newly founded Turkey worked hard to ensure independence and

national sovereignty, on the one hand, and aspired to be included in the Western community, on the other hand (Altunışık 2022). Turkey's geostrategic position, and its perceived importance in the international arena has changed over time due to the power dynamics of the international order. The bipolar world order of the Cold War era provided an opening for Turkey to position itself as a pivotal ally and a middle power for the Western block. The dissolution of the Soviet Union led Turkey to lose its importance as a strategic partner. As a result, Turkey started exploring new allyships in search of a renewed purpose and reputation, which played out in Turkey's distancing itself from the United States and its reproachment to the European Union.

At the same time, regional developments and emergence of new states following the end of the Cold War era created an opportunity for Turkish foreign aid efforts to take off. TIKA was founded in 1992 with the purpose of assisting newly founded Turkic states in their state-building and development efforts. Although TIKA's establishment can be considered as a milestone for Turkish foreign aid, domestic and regional dynamics prevented both TIKA and Turkish foreign aid policy from immediately taking off (Apaydın 2012; Fidan 2013; Fidan and Nurdun 2008; Tezcür and Grigorescu 2014; Çelik and İşeri 2016). Internationally, instability in the region that was fueled by wars and invasions, such as the Gulf War and the US's invasion of Afghanistan, necessitated a focus on security. Domestically, frequent changes in the political scene due to the failure of coalition governments where political parties and leaders were unwilling and unable to work together, as well as the economic hardship felt at home, curtailed the creation of a cohesive foreign aid policy and the coordination of resources to make such a policy functional.

A new period started with the early 2000s. In the backdrop of the abovementioned issues, the AKP came to power as the governing party in 2002. The AKP's first term came to be characterized by close cooperation and collaboration with the international financial institutions, such as the IMF, to improve the economic conditions; a turn towards liberal economic policies and opening of the domestic market through various trade agreements and incentives; an increasing interest in and seeming willingness to join the European Union; and a quest for expanding the country's partner network, especially in the African continent. Simultaneous steps taken towards improving civil and political liberties through policies and programs led Turkey to be recognized as the real-life example for a Muslim democratic model in the MENA region.

In this period (2002-2008), Turkey positioned itself as a bridge between the East and the West. The revitalization of the accession process and reproachment with the EU,

and the country's domestic track record served as the basis for this approach (Balta 2018; Haugom 2019; Kubicek 2022; Kutlay and Öniş 2021*b*). In its proactive foreign policy, Turkey positioned itself as an emerging soft power in the MENA region while continuing to have strong ties to the traditional Western powers (Altunışık 2023; Balta 2018; Kutlay and Öniş 2021*b*; Öniş and Kutlay 2017). At the same time, Turkey prioritized establishing coalitions with both traditional major powers and emerging regional actors within an inclusive and mutual-benefit scheme, which also led its characterization as a "trading state" (Kirişçi 2009; Kutlay and Öniş 2021*b*; Köstem 2018; Öniş and Kutlay 2017). Turkey's foreign policy activism and expansion of geographical focus was explained in terms of Turkey's "smart coalition strategy" as an emerging middle power in which the elites emphasized Turkey's role as a broker in the region and which was driven by the desire to have increased visibility beyond its region (Öniş and Kutlay 2017). In a similar interpretation, the vagueness of the AKP government's ideological, political and economic alliance strategy contributed to Turkey's status as a "modified middle power" where its "in betweenness" allowed Turkey maneuver space for adapting a variety of policies (Altunışık 2023). Particularly, the invasion of Iraq in 2003, along with the increased tensions and stability concerns for the MENA region provided an opportunity for Turkey to play a more pivotal role (Altunışık 2023). Beyond its region, Turkey also aimed to increase its visibility by becoming a more active member in the G20 summits (Kutlay and Öniş 2021*a,b*).

Turkey's image as an exemplary model started faltering with the Arab Spring. 2008 constituted another milestone as the AKP's second term in government brought changes to both domestic and foreign policies. Domestically, government elites utilized the repeated victory in the elections as an opportunity to consolidate power. Their confidence, fed by domestic electoral success, manifested itself in an increased ambition in the international sphere in the form of an active and expansionist foreign policy. In particular, the "strategic depth" doctrine proposed by Ahmet Davutoğlu, the Minister of Foreign Affairs at the time, contributed to this change in the foreign policy outlook. Especially between 2009 and 2014, where Davutoğlu was the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Turkey presented itself as a humanitarian state whose amplified role and increased activities in its neighborhood would not only benefit Turkey but also constitute a strategic, political, and economic win-win situation for all parties involved. During this period, Turkish foreign policy was molded both by the abovementioned domestic political and economic developments and by a variety of international events that gave rise to uncertainty, instability, as well as concerns over national security. Although there is no rigid consensus among the scholars concerning the exact periodization, the period between the late 2000s and mid-2010s

commonly referenced as one where Turkish foreign policy became increasingly activist with its focus shifting towards improving relations with southern and eastern neighbors and establishing new relationships with other countries (Haugom 2019; Kutlay and Öniş 2021*b*; Köstem 2018). Balta (2018) characterizes this period as “civilizational expansionism” which was characterized by an overly confident, pan-Islamist, and expansionist tendency. Turkey owed its increased activism to a set of international developments, where the partial withdrawal of the US from Iraq and changing international dynamics toward a multi-polar world order created a relative power vacuum where middle powers seized as an opportunity for strategic autonomy (Balta 2018; Haugom 2019; Kubicek 2022; Kutlay and Öniş 2021*a*; Öniş and Kutlay 2017).

On the other hand, changing dynamics with the Arab Spring abroad and developments at home led the AKP to change course, yet again, starting in the mid-2010s. The upheavals in many countries in the MENA region was initially perceived as an opportunity to exert the “Turkish Model” (Kutlay and Öniş 2021*b*; Öniş and Kutlay 2017). However, the discrepancy between increasing domestic authoritarianism and Turkey’s claim to promote democratization in the neighborhood undermined its credibility (Aydın-Düzgit and Dandashly 2021; Öniş and Kutlay 2017). According to Öniş and Kutlay (2017), Turkey also suffered from inconsistencies between its material capabilities and expectations as a middle power. Turkey’s ambition for order-setting materialized in its over-involvement in the countries, particularly Syria and Egypt, and led Turkey to be perceived as contributing to instability in the region.

Compared to the earlier periods where changes in Turkey’s foreign policy unfolded in a relatively transitional manner, the turn of its foreign policy in the post-2015 period was rather drastic. Scholars propose various characterizations in explaining this period. For instance, Balta (2018) argues that ultra-nationalism, anti-Westernism, re-ignition of the Kurdish issue within a security discourse were underlying factors shaping this period. Similarly, Alpan and Öztürk (2022) point to a change from liberalization to security oriented approaches. Altunışık (2022) highlights a realist turn to foreign policy since 2016. Haugom (2019) also points to a departure from the earlier civilizationist approach to one that was more oriented toward strategy and security oriented where national interests were placed first (216). Instances such as the migration crisis, the clash between Turkey and the EU over issues including Cyprus and Turkey’s drilling activities in the Eastern Mediterranean, increased tensions between Turkey and the US, and disagreement with Russia on the security situation in the northern Syria, as well as a series of military operations by the Turkish military across the Syrian border are given as support for Turkey’s prioritization

of security over approaches favoring trade or civilizationist liberal policies (Alpan and Öztürk 2022; Balta 2018; Keyman 2016; Kutlay and Öniş 2021*a,b*; Köstem 2018; Taş 2020).

Following the failed coup attempt in 2016, Turkey demanded the extradition of Fethullah Gülen from the US, who Turkey claimed to be the mastermind behind it. The US's rejection of Turkey's demand increased the tension between the two countries, and their relationship was further marred when a US citizen was detained on the charges of espionage and led to US sanctions on certain Turkish imports (Haugom 2019). The deterioration of Turkey's relationship with the US, coupled with its uneasy relations with the other Western states, provided an incentive for Turkey to strengthen its relationship with other major powers, such as Russia and China (Haugom 2019; Kutlay and Öniş 2021*a*). Simultaneously, Freedom House downgraded Turkey's status to "not free" in 2018. These developments had a toll on the Turkish economy and led to an expansion of dissatisfaction both among economic actors and in the country's overall environment. 2019 was similarly turbulent: the security and trade deals with Russia, which included the purchase of the Russian S-400 defense system, further exacerbated the Turkey-US relations, which led the US to sanction Turkey from the F-35 fighter jet program and impose additional economic sanctions in 2019 (Haugom 2019; Kutlay and Öniş 2021*a,b*).

Given this rather high-level picture, the role of Turkish foreign aid policy might appear irrelevant to the discussion at first. However, foreign aid was chosen and used as a niche policy area by the state elites since the AKP came to power (Altunışık 2022, 2023; Apaydın 2012; Kutlay and Öniş 2021*b*; İpek 2015; ?).

### **2.2.2 Determinants of Turkey's Foreign Aid**

Turkey is conventionally included in the group of emerging donors, a classification rightly made. On the other hand, scholars point that certain features set Turkey apart from the third wave development actors. Following the second Turkey-Africa cooperation summit in Turkey in 2014 (Donelli 2022, 6), the rhetoric and policies depicted Turkey as a benevolent actor and active partner for development assistance. This position is presented as the "Turkish-type development assistance model" in official accounts and as the "Turkish Model" in the literature (Aydın-Düzgüt and Dandashly 2021; Donelli 2022; Turhan 2021). The Turkish Model is discussed to have a non-hierarchical approach, human-oriented outlook, focus on transparency and unconditionality, as well as attention to recipient's local sensitivities as its normative bases (Donelli 2022; Turhan 2021). These points are advanced by govern-

ment officials through criticizing the traditional donors' aid policies; highlighting the colonial track record of the traditional donors and questioning their sincere motivations; emphasizing the mutually beneficial focus of Turkish development assistance; appealing to historical, cultural, and religious affinity between Turkey and the recipient; and promoting non-interference in the recipients' domestic affairs and their independent development (Donelli 2022; Kavaklı 2018; Langan 2017; Thiessen and Özerdem 2019; Turhan 2021; Zengin and Korkmaz 2019; Çelik and İşeri 2016).

Several features underlie the foreign aid policy implementation and operation. The volume of Turkey's humanitarian aid rose considerably since 2002. The Turkish state increased its collaboration with non-state actors in development projects, particularly religiously oriented humanitarian NGOs and firms as part of public-private-partnerships (Apaydın 2012; Donelli 2022; Langan 2017; Thiessen and Özerdem 2019; Turhan 2021; Çelik and İşeri 2016; ?). Also, Turkey adopted an overwhelmingly unilateral aid strategy, as opposed to contribution to multilateral efforts (Donelli 2022; Turhan 2021). Finally, localized Turkish presence maintained through Turkish nationals located in the recipient state underlie the Turkish Model (Donelli 2022; Turhan 2021). Consequently, Turkey is discussed as an "humanitarian state" (Sazak 2018; Çelik and İşeri 2016) and as a "benevolent" and "virtuous power" (Langan 2017).

Similar to the discussions within the broader foreign aid literature, Turkish foreign aid is not immune to issues concerning discrepancy between donor rhetoric and actual aid policy. Altunışık (2014) discusses Turkey as an emerging donor in the Middle East since 2002, which became more prominent after 2012. She argues that the Turkish foreign policy focused on stability and security in the region, as well as consolidating power among new regimes in the region. She adds that this focus led the direction of foreign policy to be regional, and the framing of the issues as tied to the historical and cultural affinity and responsibility. Consequently, the bulk of the foreign aid was humanitarian, and some targeted infrastructure and provision of basic services (Altunışık 2014). On a similar vein, Guo (2020) examines the motivations of the AKP and argues that the AKP-era foreign policy is motivated both by domestic concerns, partly influenced by the Ottoman legacy of assisting other nations and by a "realist concern for security and economic agenda capturing" (Guo 2020, 140). Aydın-Düzgit (2019a) focuses on a variety of instruments, including ODA, diplomacy, political conditionality, and intervention, and argues that Turkey, as an illiberal donor, contributed to democratization in the MENA region and sub-Saharan Africa through its foreign aid policy. She argues that Turkey's foreign aid more explicitly targeted democratic measures in the MENA region following the Arab Spring due to its concerns over stability in the region and its initial

expectations for longer-term benefits from close ties with newly established governments with which they had an ideological affinity. On the other hand, Turkey has been employing democracy support instruments in sub-Saharan Africa without a particular goal in facilitating democratic transition (Aydın-Düzgit 2019*a*, 3). Efforts in the ME were concentrated on democratic transition, whereas engagement in sub-Saharan Africa focused on state-building. In line with the consensus in the literature, Aydın-Düzgit (2019*a*) argues that Turkey's foreign aid policy was strategic to the extent that it served the country's economic and geostrategic interests.

Further, in one of the first quantitative study conducted on drivers of Turkish foreign aid, Kavaklı (2018) shows that Turkish aid policy significantly changed after 2003 but the expansion happened after the Syrian War. Concerning economic aid, he finds that the AKP prioritizes allocating resources to Turkey's trade partners rather than based on the international alignments and ethnic ties. Concerning humanitarian aid, he finds that ethnic and religious ties (the latter for the first time) became important in allocating aid (Kavaklı 2018, 624). In another quantitative study, Zengin and Korkmaz (2019) find that Turkey has become a regular foreign aid donor, dispersing aid proportional to the export-based embeddedness of the Turkish firms in recipient states. They find that low per-capita income, ties to the Ottoman Empire, being a Turkic state, and history of receiving aid from other OECD DAC countries positively affect the allocation of Turkish aid to the recipients. Concerning the effect of religion, religious affinity with the recipient country appears to attract foreign aid, but this effect loses weight once controlled for being a Turkic state or a former Ottoman territory. In a more recent study, Güngör (2021) assesses Turkey's medical aid during the COVID-19 pandemic and reaches a similar conclusion. He finds that ties to the Ottoman Empire, imports from Turkey, recipient need as indicated by their health systems were the main drivers of Turkish medical aid. Pointing to partial evidence for cultural similarity, he finds a positive effect for Turkic affinity and no significant effect of religious affinity in predicting aid.

## 2.3 Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter aimed to provide an overview of the overarching foreign aid literature as well as the foreign aid literature on Turkey. As I attempted to show, foreign aid can be examined from a multitude of perspectives. The outcome/effectiveness of foreign aid constitute the focus of one line of research, whereas the drivers of aid is another main focus in the literature. In this thesis, I focus on

the supply-side of aid, more specifically, the drivers of Turkey's foreign aid.

The overview of the literature presented in this chapter indicates that donors' foreign aid decisions can be driven by a variety of factors. These include humanitarian concerns, economic interests, political and geostrategic priorities, as well as domestic dynamics on the donors' side; and include the economic or humanitarian needs or the ability to effectively utilize the aid received on the recipients' side. In evaluating the drivers and dynamics of foreign aid, scholars also stress the importance of recognizing the heterogeneity. Aid heterogeneity literature highlights that foreign aid, regardless of the main theoretical perspective within which a researcher chooses, has many layers. Sectoral differences and disaggregating foreign aid into sub-sectors; aid disbursement and different channels of delivery; short- and long-term drivers and effects of foreign aid; variations in the importance of different drivers of foreign aid for different donors and in different periods can all be given as examples for issues that scholars point to in relation to aid heterogeneity. Paying attention to such differences can help uncover different phenomena and lead to a better and more nuanced understanding. Indeed, varying arguments and conclusions concerning the drivers of foreign aid can be a testament to this.

Similar to the overall literature on foreign aid, the literature on Turkey's foreign aid is also rich with studies that focus on its different drivers and different periods. As an emerging donor, Turkey represents an interesting case. On the one hand, it has ties to the traditional foreign aid players and has been a recipient. On the other hand, as a donor, it gives foreign aid to different states. Furthermore, Turkey's overall foreign aid followed an increasing pattern since early 2000s. Informed by the literature on foreign aid, aid heterogeneity, and Turkish foreign aid, the following chapters aim to examine the motivations of the Turkish state in allocating foreign aid.

### **3. QUALITATIVE ASSESSMENT OF TURKEY'S FOREIGN AID MOTIVATION**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents an attempt to better understand the nuances concerning the drivers of Turkish foreign aid. Particularly, the role of religion in Turkey's foreign aid policies and aid disbursements constitutes the focus of this chapter. The main argument highlighted in this chapter can be summarized as this: As a middle power and an emerging donor, Turkey assumed different policy positions over time in reaction to changing international, regional, and domestic dynamics. The Turkish state used both material and ideational tools in navigating uncertainties, drawing support, and asserting legitimacy, both domestically and internationally. Through this process, references to Islam and its teachings provided a normative basis upon which the objectives were legitimized, and means were justified. The relationship between religion and Turkish foreign aid policy, which is the focus of this chapter, is examined from this perspective. Although the effect of religious similarity and Islamic kinship on Turkey's foreign aid policies is widely discussed in the literature, this chapter aims to contribute to this discussion by providing a dynamic explanation for the relationship between religion and Turkish foreign aid both over time and at different levels, namely the international and domestic levels. Consequently, I argue that not only there is a positive relationship between religious similarity and Turkey's foreign aid, but also references to religious discourse and relevant norms have been strategically instrumentalized through foreign aid policies to assert agency abroad and dominate the political scene at home.

To re-assert my argument, foreign aid, as a niche area, both provided Turkey with an opening to exert itself as an emerging middle-power and allowed flexibility to change policies or areas of focus as needed during turbulent periods. What is more, the opportunity to combine material and non-material means through foreign aid

policies, such as funds and ideology, further added to its versatility as a policy instrument for the state elite. Taking this premise as a starting point, I argue that the versatility of foreign aid policy extended beyond its different uses over time; matters related to foreign aid policy were also used by the state elite in navigating domestic politics when needed. Adding to this argument, I argue that a conservative discourse, particularly one that heavily refers to religion, was used as a framework through which foreign aid policy decisions and actions were justified since the AKP came to power in 2002.

The remaining parts of this chapter lay out this argument in detail. The sub-chapters are arranged with respect to different periods in Turkey’s domestic and foreign policies, and focus on the periods between 2002 – 2008, 2008 – 2015, and the post-2015 period.

### **3.2 Turkish Foreign Aid Trends Over Time**

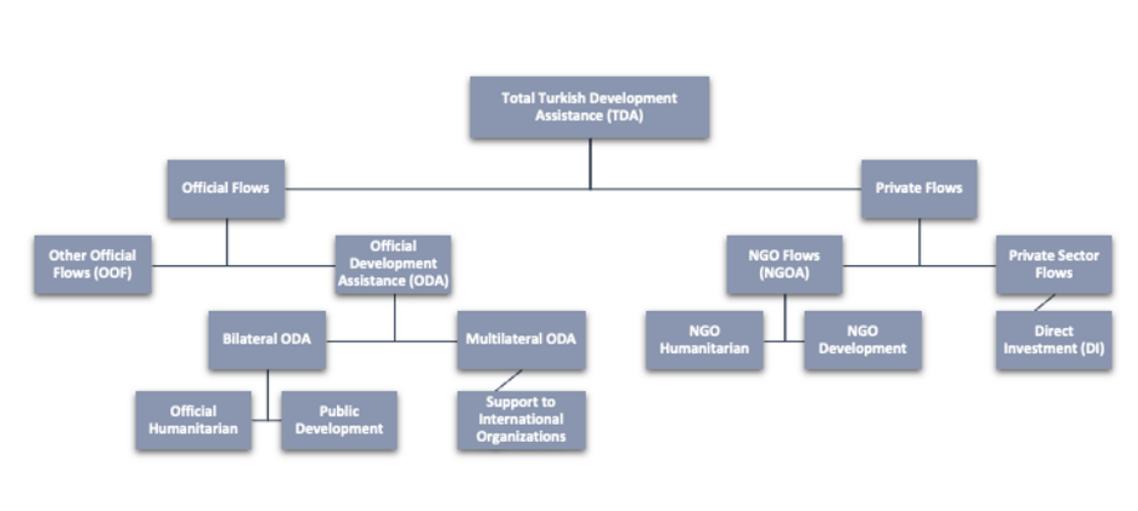
Turkey’s engagement with ODA is relatively recent considering the emergence of “development” approaches in the 1950s (Quadir 2013). Scholars point that the rhetorical foundations of development assistance can find roots in the Ottoman Empire (Aydın-Düzgit 2019*a*; Guo 2020). On the other hand, Turkey’s role as an emerging donor is more recent. Turkey has been considered as an emerging development player both in academic discussions (Altunışık 2014; Apaydın 2012; Cihangir-Tetik and Müftüler-Baç 2018, 2021; Donelli 2022; Guo 2020; Kavaklı 2018; Langan 2017; Quadir 2013; Thiessen and Özerdem 2019; Zengin and Korkmaz 2019) and among practitioners (Lundsgaarde 2011; Schulz 2010). On the one hand, Turkey has been gradually allocating resources for foreign aid, as seen in the consistent increase in the share of the aid to the gross national income (GNI) (OECD 2020). On the other hand, Turkey continues to receive both bilateral and multilateral aid (OECD 2023*a*).

#### **3.2.1 The Structure and Activities of TİKA**

Figure 3.1 shows the hierarchical organization of total Turkish development assistance, distributed through Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TİKA), Turkey’s official development agency. According to the figure, Turkish development assistance includes both humanitarian assistance and public development assistance

and is comprised of both official and private flows. Official flows involve both Official Development Assistance (ODA) and other official flows.

Figure 3.1 Hierarchical breakdown of Turkish development assistance



The establishment of the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA) is discussed related to Turkey’s emerging role as a donor (Altunışık 2014; Apaydın 2012; Aydın-Düzgüt 2019a; Cihangir-Tetik and Müftüler-Baç 2018). Following the Cold War, TIKA was established in 1992 in affiliation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and transferred under the Prime Ministry in 1999. Its organizational body was delineated with the law on the “Organization and Tasks of Turkish Cooperation and Development Administration Directorate” in 2001 and was restructured and took the name “Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA)” through another decree in 2011. In 2018, a presidential decree described TIKA as having a legal public entity with a private budget and transferred it under the Ministry of Culture and Tourism with which it is currently affiliated. Today, TIKA operates 62 Program Coordination Offices in 60 countries and implement projects in 150 countries (TIKA 2021).

TIKA’s efforts in the 1990s focused on Turkic Republics in the Caucasus and Central Asia following the collapse of the Soviet Union and soon included the Balkans, a region that also experienced instability with the disintegration of Yugoslavia (Altunışık 2014; Apaydın 2012; Aydın-Düzgüt 2019a). Its activities entailed providing development aid and technical assistance to help aid state-building in those regions (Apaydın 2012; Aydın-Düzgüt 2019a). Parallel to the restructuring of TIKA and the related increase in its institutional capacity in 2001, its focus expanded to sub-Saharan Africa and MENA in the mid-2000s (Altunışık 2014; Apaydın 2012; Aydın-Düzgüt 2019a). There is a consensus that both Turkey’s foreign aid policy

and TIKA's prominence changed following the election of the Justice and Development Party (AKP) in 2002 (Altunışık 2014; Apaydın 2012; Aydın-Düzgüt 2019*a*; Guo 2020; Kavaklı 2018).

Despite the overwhelming influence of the Syrian crisis on Turkey's foreign aid, Turkey's official aid institution, TIKA, appears to show a deliberate effort in framing Turkey's foreign aid efforts as having a greater reach and impact. I analyzed all publicly available activity reports and annual development reports published by TIKA in exploring this point. The findings of concerning TIKA's recent activities in the top aid recipients support my argument concerning the discrepancy between Turkey's aid allocations and the official rhetoric around it.

TIKA's recent engagement in Somalia can be summarized as focusing on social infrastructure (particularly health), administrative and civil infrastructure, humanitarian aid, and strategic cultural activities (TIKA 2017, 2018, 2019*a*). Activities in the health area included equipment support and training of personnel for capacity building (TIKA 2019*a*). Administrative and civil infrastructure efforts take the form of facility and road construction, such as the construction of the parliament building (TIKA 2018, 2019*a*) and military facilities. The construction of military facilities was carried out under the agreement signed by Turkey and Somalia in 2012, which also included building and refurbishing military training and education facilities, as well as providing training to Somali soldiers to contribute to the security and stability of the country (TIKA 2017, 2018). Both humanitarian and emergency food aid were delivered in response to natural disasters and floods in the region (TIKA 2018, 2019*a*). Also, Somalia was included in the projects and programs that were devised for the first anniversary of July 15th. These included events in the regions where TIKA is active, specific projects that "were named after the martyrs of July 15th", as well as publicity activities, such as panels, exhibitions, and media campaigns (TIKA 2017, 77).

In Kyrgyzstan TIKA's activities concerned the social infrastructure, administrative and civil infrastructure (focusing on security), and manufacturing, cultural activities (TIKA 2017, 2018, 2019*a*). Activities related to social infrastructure included construction and furnishing of hospitals, and equipment support in the health area; and facility (i.e., university sports hall) construction in education (TIKA 2017, 2018, 2019*a*). Also, TIKA carried out water rehabilitation and canal construction projects, with dual aims to increase access to water and mitigate ethnic conflicts over irrigation issues (TIKA 2017, 2019*a*). Kyrgyzstan, along with Albania, was a pilot country for the "International Police Training Cooperation Project" that was launched by TIKA in cooperation with the General Directorate of Law Enforcement, in 2007-

2008 (TIKA 2019a, 68). Since then, the project gradually expanded and included other countries. Activities in the manufacturing area included establishing the Turkish Textile Development Centre and Cooperative System Training and Consultancy Centre to support the development of an agricultural cooperation system in Kyrgyzstan, and to support economic and agricultural cooperation between Turkey and Kyrgyzstan (TIKA 2019a). Finally, cultural activities involved construction of a Turkish cultural center (TIKA 2018), facilitating experience sharing between university students and young diplomats (TIKA 2015, 2019a), and supporting the World Ethnosport Confederation which was founded in 2015 in Kyrgyzstan. The Confederation represents traditional sports, is the main sponsor of the World Nomad Games, and organizes Ethnosport Culture Festival in Turkey. TIKAs support to the Confederation includes support to the festivals and repairment of their Bishkek office (TIKA 2018).

TIKA conducted a variety of projects in Afghanistan under the areas of social infrastructure, administrative and civil infrastructure, manufacturing, and humanitarian support. Social infrastructure encompasses projects on both health and education. TIKAs health-related activities included the provision of equipment, drug, and medical support to hospitals, and the establishment of a midwifery school, most of them are connected by a focus on maternal and child health (TIKA 2017, 2018, 2019a). Providing equipment for vocational education, construction and equipment provision for a military high school that was established by Turkey in 1935, and refurbishing girls' vocational education schools and orphanages for girls can be listed among the activities related to education support. Afghanistan was included in the "International Police Training Cooperation Project" against the "war on drugs," and TIKAs organized a training for the Afghan law enforcement officials in Turkey in 2019 (TIKA 2019a, 68). Programs related to economic infrastructure included equipment support to ASIA Television, which is significant with its programs that aim to reinforce the ties between Turkey and the Afghan public, as well as training for war correspondences (TIKA 2019a). Manufacturing programs in recent years aimed to empower the local public, such as vocational training for women and establishing greenhouses to support agriculture. Humanitarian support in the form of emergency and food aid is provided to those displaced as a result of terror (TIKA 2018, 2019a). Additionally, TIKAs undertook cultural prestige projects such as the construction of mosques and July 15th commemorations in Afghanistan (TIKA 2017).

Social infrastructure, administrative and civil infrastructure, and manufacturing appear as the main foci of TIKAs in Bosnia and Herzegovina in recent years. Activities related to education mainly included renovations of schools and university libraries, as well as modernization of madrasas (esp. those that are deemed to embody the

joint cultural heritage of Turkey and Bosnia and Herzegovina) (TIKA 2015, 2017, 2018, 2019*a*). Health-related activities included renovations of health centers, capacity building for emergency medicine, emergency response, and hearing aids support (TIKA 2017, 2018, 2019*a*). The “International Police Training Cooperation Project” concerning narcotics, the “Experience Sharing Program” on volunteerism, material and equipment support to a publicly owned TV channel, and river stream treatment projects as precautions for natural disasters were among TIKA’s administrative, social, economic and overlapping infrastructure projects in Bosnia and Herzegovina (TIKA 2019*a*). TIKA’s recent efforts concerning manufacturing support were linked to agriculture and support for families that were affected by the war in the region. For instance, TIKA highlights its cooperation with Sarajevo University Faculty of Agriculture and NGOs to provide material and infrastructural support for agriculture. It also undertook activities to train women from the low-income groups, and especially help support families that were displaced after the Balkan wars to engage in revenue-generating activities (TIKA 2017, 2018, 2019*a*).

TIKA conducted a variety of activities for Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, but also in third countries. These activities are concentrated on social, administrative, economic, and infrastructural services, as well as multiple overlapping sectors. TIKA’s support in the education field included renovations of the all girls’ school in the Amman New Camp (known as Wihdat), in Jordan; its health-related activities included refurbishing of health centers and emergency medicine capacity increase (TIKA 2018, 2019*a*). Under the administrative and security-related activities were the “International Police Training Cooperation Project,” as well as the refurbishing of a military facility for language training (TIKA 2018, 2019*a*). TIKA’s engagement on economic infrastructure ranged from journalism, exemplified in the training for war correspondents (TIKA 2019*a*), to agricultural and apiculture, where TIKA provided material support, established greenhouses, and provided bee hives (TIKA 2017, 2018). Also, housing construction and infrastructure support appear as another priority for TIKA’s activities in Palestine. These included the repair of the houses that are owned by families whose members were disabled after injuries from armed conflicts, construction of a housing complex for Palestinian families who had to leave their homes, installation of solar panels, and creation of water treatment stations (TIKA 2018, 2019*a*). Finally, activities, such as material support to a soccer club that was founded by Palestinians and cultural panels on Turkey-Palestine relations in Chile, along with events related to July 15th commemorations aimed to both enhance cultural ties and Turkish presence (TIKA 2017). TIKA’s activities in Kazakhstan mainly concentrated on the health field; enhancing emergency medicine capacity, and promoting maternal and infant health were the main areas

of focus (TIKA 2017, 2018). Kazakhstan was also among the countries under the “International Police Training Cooperation Project” although no tangible activities are reported by TIKA recently (TIKA 2019*a*).

### **3.2.2 Figures on Turkey’s Foreign Aid**

Turkey’s first noteworthy engagement as a donor occurred in the mid-1980s when it sent \$10 million in humanitarian assistance against drought (Altunışık 2014). In the more recent periods, particularly starting around 2005, Turkey’s foreign aid volume and activities increased considerably. For instance, Turkey was the top bilateral ODA donor in the world in 2018 (OECD 2020). At the same time, like other emerging donors, it continues to receive ODA. Figure 3.2 shows the volumes of ODA received and ODA allocated through bilateral commitments. It shows that the volume of ODA received has fluctuated over time: after a decrease from \$1,347 M in 2010, it increased following the Syrian civil war, peaked in 2016 at \$5,502 M, and decreased again to \$2,861 M in 2019, and \$2,871 M in 2020 (OECD 2023*a*). In contrast to fluctuations in the volume of ODA received over time, ODA allocated to other countries by Turkey shows an upward trend. While Turkey’s ODA remained relatively stable until 2011, the volume starts increasing from that point, where the increase in ODA volume between 2015 and 2018 was considerably sharper than the increase between the 2011 – 2015 period. Although the increase in ODA volumes started around 2011, Turkey’s ODA allocation remained below the levels of the ODA that the country received until 2015. Starting in 2016, the gap between ODA received and allocated abroad widened where the total ODA from Turkey equaled approximately \$9,805 M in 2018, \$10,158 M in 2019, and \$10,358 M in 2020 (OECD 2023*a*).

Figure 3.2 Comparison of ODA received by Turkey and ODA allocated by Turkey

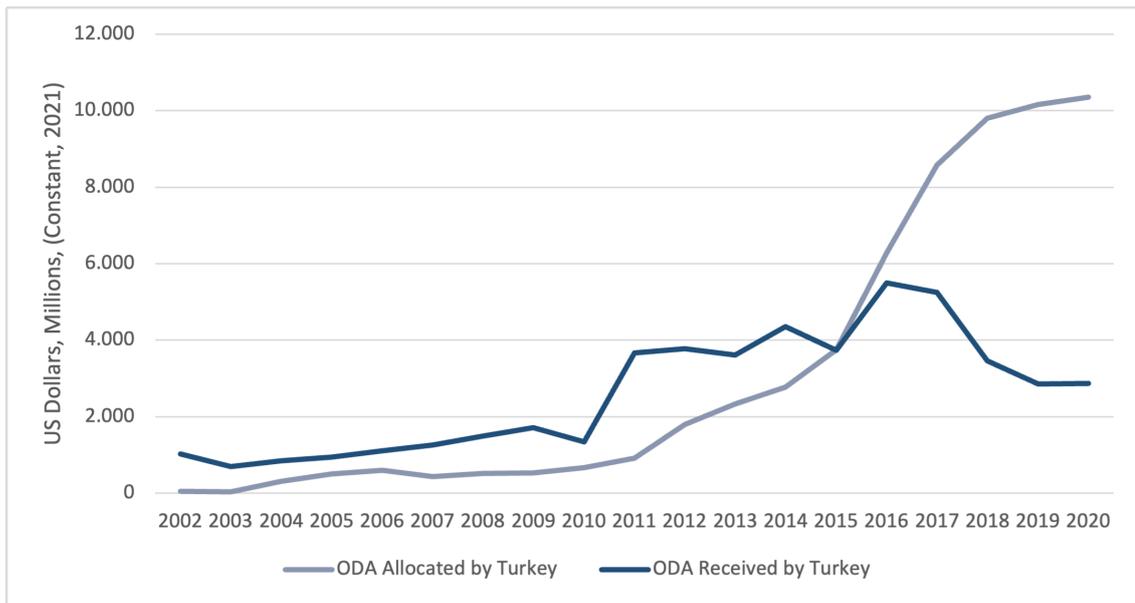
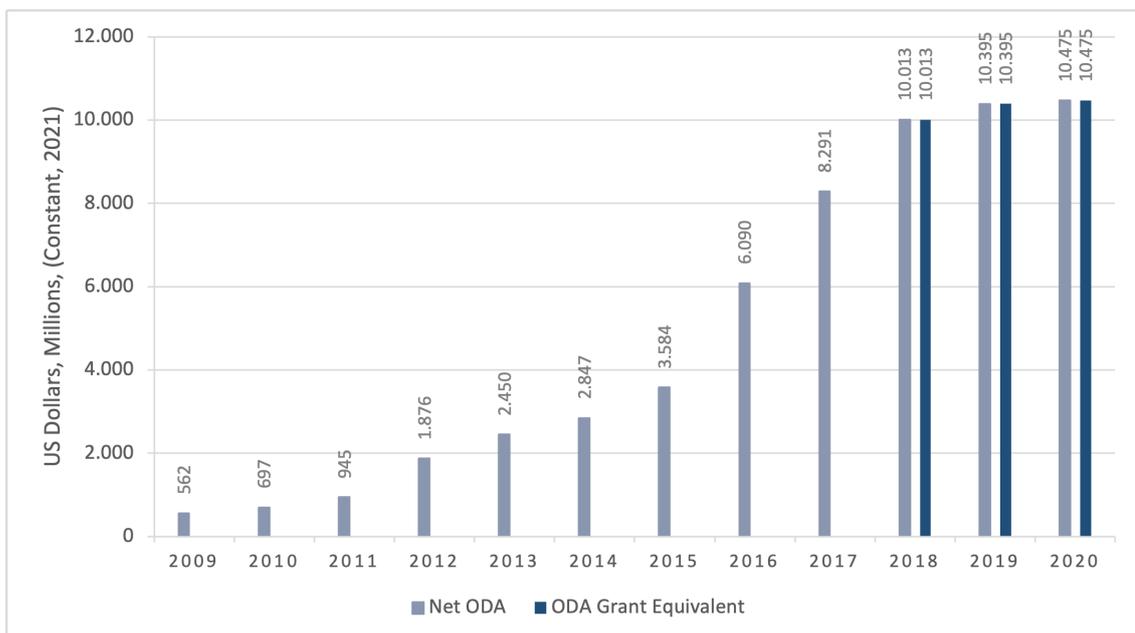


Figure 3.3 shows the volume of net Turkish ODA, including economic and humanitarian aid. The increasing trend since 2009 is again visible in this figure. Turkey prides itself in being among the top ODA donors in the world concerning ODA as a share of GNI, as well as the amount of humanitarian aid (TIKA 2016, 2019b, 2020). Net ODA flows as a percentage of GNI indeed increased from 0.11% in 2008, to 0.16% in 2011, 0.50% in 2015, 0.95% in 2017, and 1.14% in 2020 (OECD 2023b). These increases also roughly coincide with the Arab Spring as well as the progression of the Syrian civil war.

Figure 3.3 Turkey's net ODA by years



Initially pointed out by Kavaklı (2018), Figure 3.4 it shows the amount of Turkish aid by type. The figure indicates that the Turkish economic aid has surpassed humanitarian aid between the mid-1990s until 2012-2013. It shows that the volumes of economic and humanitarian aid have increased following the AKP’s election to office in 2002. There has been a consistent increase in economic aid and a steeper increase in humanitarian aid since then. The figure shows that the volume of humanitarian aid is much lower when humanitarian aid to Syria is excluded and is relatively consistent over time. Development organizations further corroborate this. Initiatives (2020) report Turkey among the top donors of humanitarian aid, but caution that the majority of Turkey’s humanitarian aid is allocated for expenditures on hosting Syrian refugees, and thus its humanitarian aid is not comparable to other reporting countries.

Figure 3.4 Comparison of Turkey’s humanitarian aid and ODA

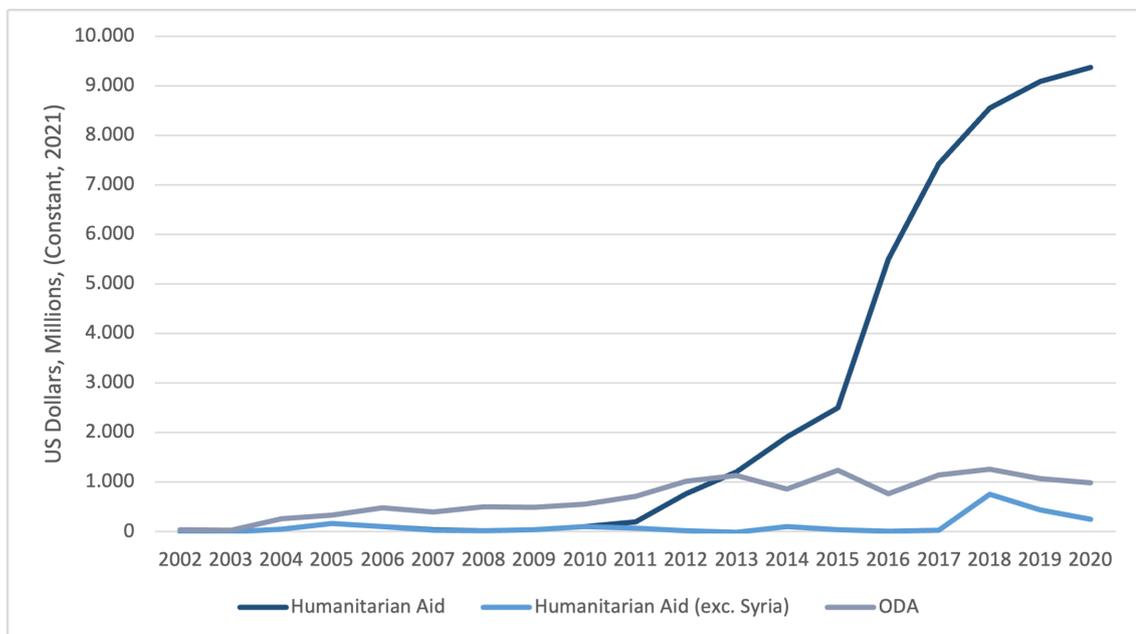
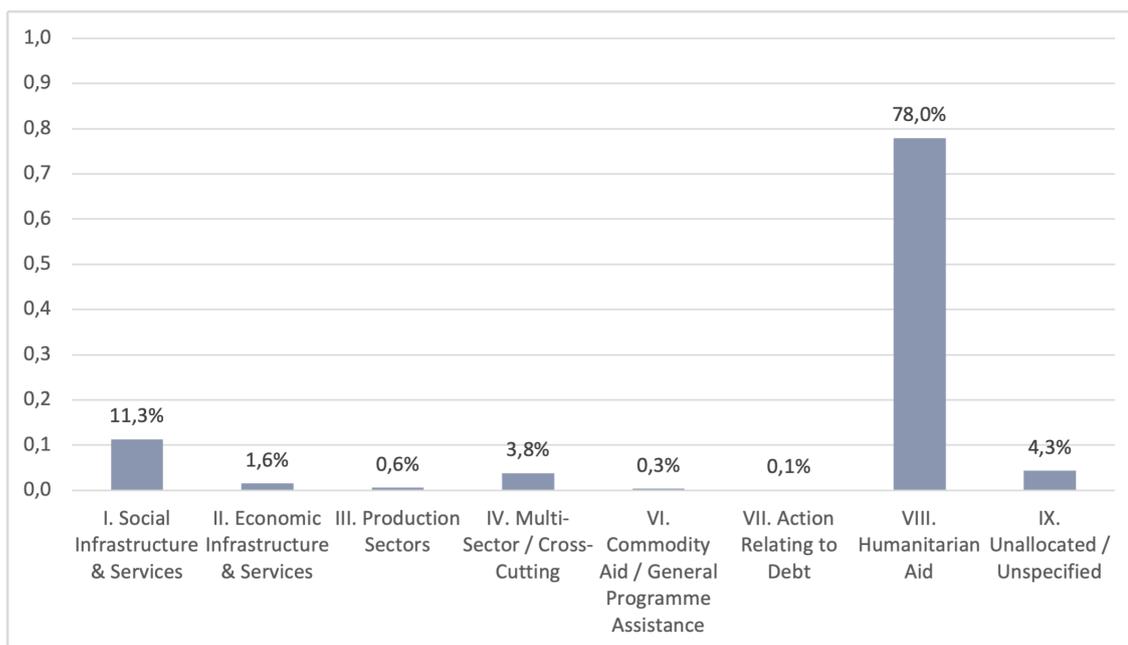


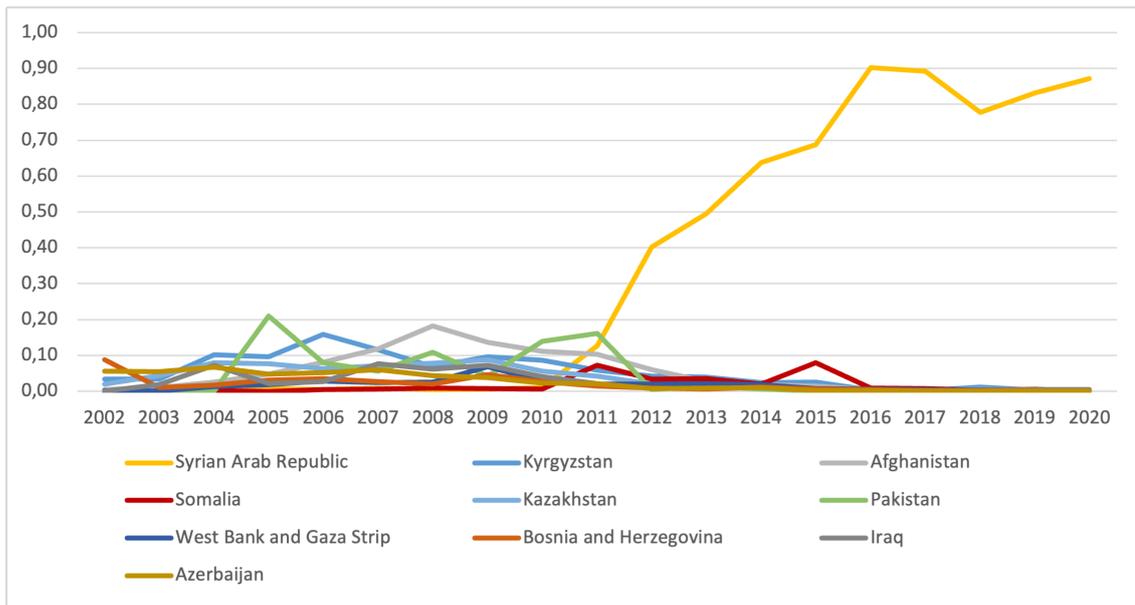
Figure 3.5 shows the percentages for the cumulative share of the sectors that comprise the Turkish ODA since 2002. Supporting the discussion above, humanitarian aid makes up 78.0% of the Turkish ODA, followed by social infrastructure and services (11.3%), the unallocated/unspecified category (4.3%), and aid to multi-sector / cross-cutting initiatives (3.8%).

Figure 3.5 Turkish ODA by sectors



In addition to the sectoral breakdown, the breakdown of the bilateral Turkish ODA by recipient country also corroborates the literature. The top 10 recipients of Turkish ODA since 2002 are located in sub-Saharan Africa, Caucasus and Central Asia, the Middle East, and the Balkans. Specifically, Syria, Kyrgyzstan, Afghanistan, Somalia, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, West Bank and Gaza Strip, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iraq, and Azerbaijan are the top 10 cumulative recipients of Turkish ODA. Syria is consistently the top receiver of the Turkish ODA since 2011, with \$120.3 M in 2011, \$2,463.5 M in 2015, \$7,398,8 M in 2017, and \$9,127.4 M in 2020 (OECD 2023a). Figure 3.6 shows the ratio of the ODA received by each recipient.

Figure 3.6 Share of Turkish foreign aid received by the top 10 recipients



### 3.3 Narratives in Turkish Foreign Aid Across Different Periods

#### 3.3.1 2002 - 2008: Timid Steps Towards Building an Image

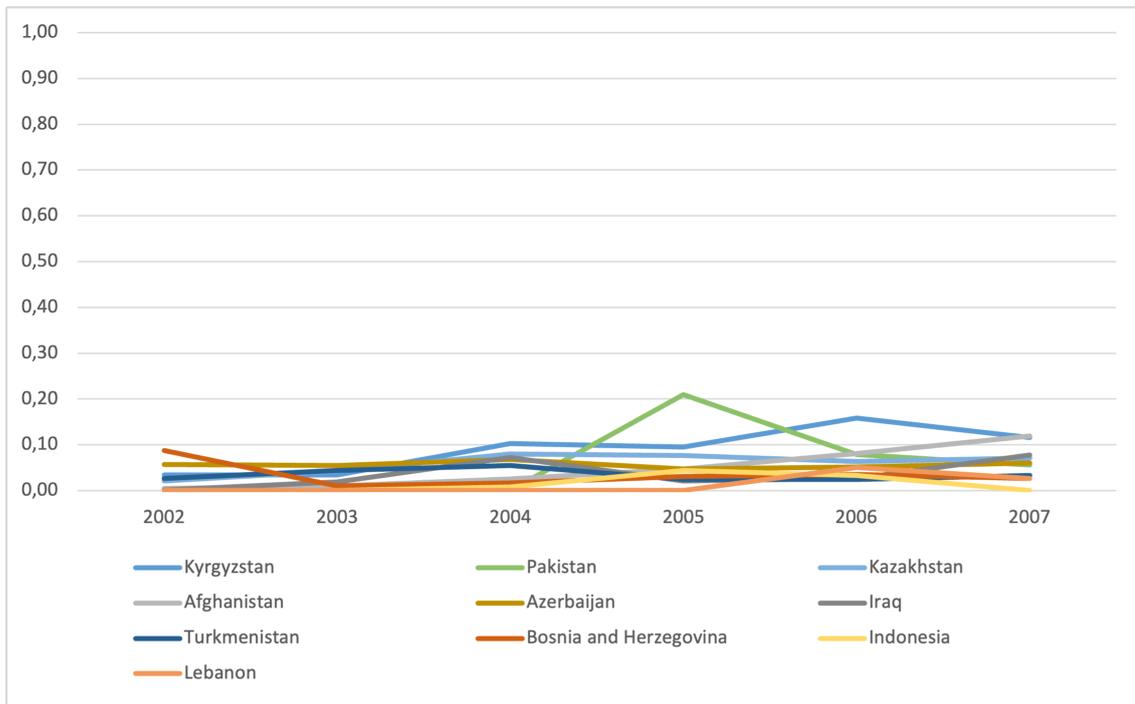
The concurrent transformations in the domestic political and economic spheres also attracted international attention. Turkey started to be considered as a role model in the MENA region “as the only democratic-Muslim country with a functioning market economy” (Öniş and Kutlay 2017, 171-172). Put differently, Turkey was seen as the embodiment of the possibility that Islam, democratic principles, and liberal economic practices can co-exist. The Turkish government also seized the opportunity to elevate its reputation and increase its influence internationally. Balta (2018) characterizes Turkish foreign policy between 2002 and 2007 as “liberal internationalism”. Similarly, many studies point to Turkey’s increased foreign policy activism in this period (Haugom 2019; Keyman 2016; Kubicek 2022; Kutlay and Öniş 2021*a,b*; Öniş and Kutlay 2017).

The interplay of domestic and international developments also reflected in Turkey’s foreign aid policies. Figure 3.7 shows the top 10 recipients of Turkish foreign aid with respect to the cumulative aid received between 2002 and 2007. According to the figure, the top 10 aid recipients for this period are Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Iraq, Turkmenistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Indonesia, and Lebanon, in order of decreasing volume. In the figure, the amount

of the aid received by those countries are shown as transformed into percentages by using the total volume of Turkish foreign aid allocated each year. I preferred this approach over using the actual aid volumes because it allows us to compare the priority of a particular state for Turkish foreign aid policy in a given year. Figure 3.7 shows a relatively homogeneous attention given to the top 10 recipients over the years.

At the same time, it is also possible to spot certain tendencies. For instance, aid to Pakistan appears to peak in 2005, where it received slightly more than 20% of Turkish aid allocated that year. Pakistan experienced a devastating earthquake in the Kashmir region in 2005. The sharp increase in foreign aid allocated to Pakistan shows Turkey's reaction to the natural disaster. Turkey's aid to Pakistan also appears to be an immediate response and not a priority agenda item in Turkish foreign aid policy, as Pakistan's share in Turkish foreign aid decreases considerably in 2006 and continues its decline in the following years. Aside from Pakistan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan appear to have received higher shares of Turkish aid compared to the other countries, which is also the case with respect to the cumulative amount of aid that they received during this period. This is not surprising given Turkey's focus on the Turkic countries that were formed after the Cold War. A third implication concerns Afghanistan. The figure shows that, after the US invasion in 2003, the share of foreign aid to Afghanistan started slowly but gradually increasing, where Afghanistan tied with Kyrgyzstan as one of the top recipients of Turkish aid with 12% in 2007.

Figure 3.7 Share of Turkish foreign aid received by the top 10 recipients (2002 – 2007)



### 3.3.2 2008 - 2015: A Period Defined by Ambitious Expansion Attempts

As part of its foreign policy activism, Turkey re-activated its involvement in Iraq in 2008, after a hiatus following a series of unsuccessful attempts in the earlier periods (Altunışık 2023) and became a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for the 2009-2010 term (Kutlay and Öniş 2021a). Furthermore, in its self-claimed role as a mediator and order provider in its region, Turkey mediated indirect talks between Israel and Syria in 2008, brought Serbia and Bosnia to join the Trilateral Balkan Summit in 2010, and initiated the Istanbul Process targeting the reconstruction of Afghanistan in 2011 and invited the neighboring countries (Kutlay and Öniş 2021a; Öniş and Kutlay 2017). Moreover, in line with the increased prevalence of the humanitarianism discourse in foreign policy, Turkey started what it called as “humanitarian diplomacy” with Somalia and hosted a special meeting in Istanbul on Somalia with the member states of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in 2011 (Altunışık 2022).

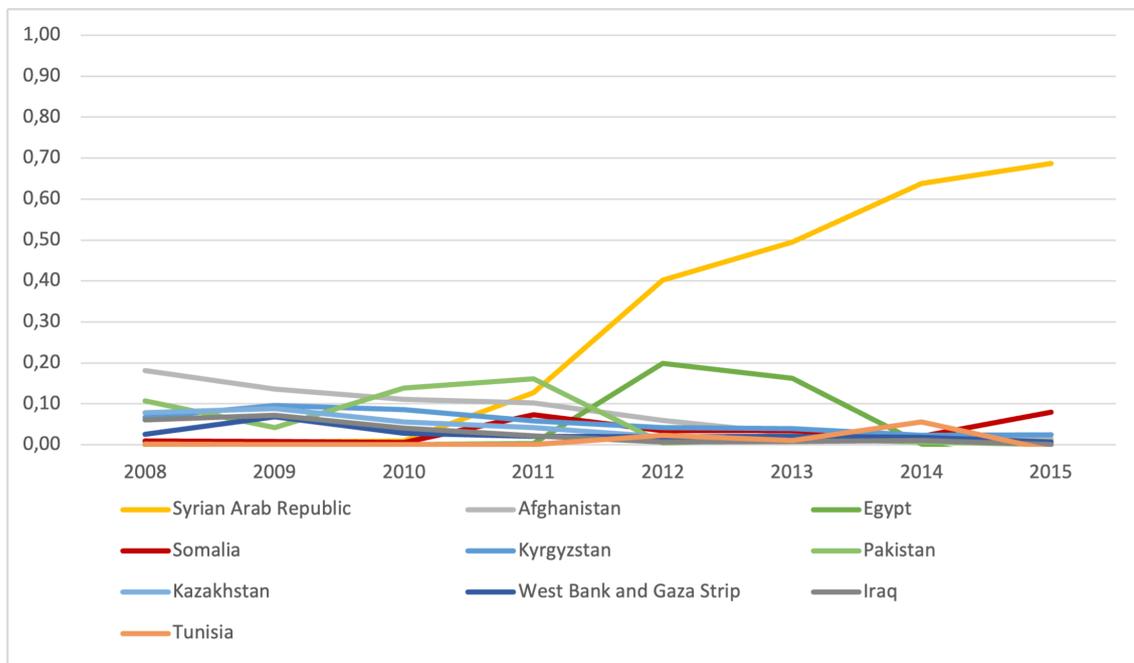
Turkey’s regional involvement during the Arab Spring ranged from voicing support for specific parties involved in conflict to providing material resources. For instance, Turkey established ties with the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt in the earlier periods suggesting that its involvement would contribute to establishing stability. The coup

against the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt in 2013 particularly undermined Turkey's regional position (Balta 2018). As a result, both the mismatch between its capacity and ambitions, and Turkey's diminishing image led its regional economic strategy and integration plans to come to an end (Köstem 2018; Wastnidge 2019; Öniş and Kutlay 2017).

Figure 3.8 shows the top 10 recipients of Turkish foreign aid with respect to the cumulative aid volume received between 2008 and 2015. According to the figure, the top 10 aid recipients for this period are Syria, Afghanistan, Egypt, Somalia, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Kazakhstan, West Bank and Gaza Strip, Iraq, and Tunisia in order of decreasing aid volume. It is possible to see Turkey's shifting focus and increased attention to the MENA region, as well as the impact of the Arab Spring in its foreign aid allocations. The first implication from the figure concerns the drastic increase in the share of Syria in Turkish foreign aid starting from 2011. Syria received 13% of aid allocated by Turkey in 2011. Its share of aid increased to 40% in 2012, also constituting a case where a country's share in Turkish foreign aid increased to such high levels for the first time, and continued to increase in the following years, approaching nearly 70% in 2015. Second, although Afghanistan ranks second considering the cumulative aid it received by Turkey during this period, the share of aid to Afghanistan appears to gradually decrease over time. Afghanistan received nearly 20% of Turkey's foreign aid in 2008 where it was also the top recipient, but the country's share decreased to 10% by 2011. Third, two spikes in the share of Pakistan and Egypt attract attention. Pakistan appears to be the top aid recipient from Turkey in 2010 and 2011, followed by a decrease. Given that Pakistan is not in Turkey's immediate region, the increase in Turkish foreign aid attention to the country seems strange at first. However, Pakistan experienced a series of natural disasters in 2010 and 2011, where heavy monsoon rains caused extensive damage to the country and immediate humanitarian need (Immigration and of Canada 2011). The share of Egypt in Turkish foreign aid also shows an interesting trend where it jumped from 0% in 2011 to 20% in 2012, and to 16% in 2013, making it the second top recipient of Turkish aid in those years. As discussed in detail above, Turkey's reproachment to Egypt and attempts to strengthen ties with the Muslim Brotherhood are manifested in its foreign aid policies during these years. On the other hand, the coup against Muslim Brotherhood in 2013, and the proceeding fall out between Turkey and Egypt shows an immediate effect. Turkey not only ceased aid provision to Egypt, but also foreign aid to the country fell to \$182.8 M in 2014, which represents repayment of interests or loans to the donor country according to OECD's calculations (OECD 2023a). Fourth, although not as drastic as the trends discussed in relation to Pakistan and Egypt, Tunisia appears to receive an increased

share of Turkish aid in 2014 with 6%, which was still high enough of a ratio for placing it the second country with respect to aid receipt.

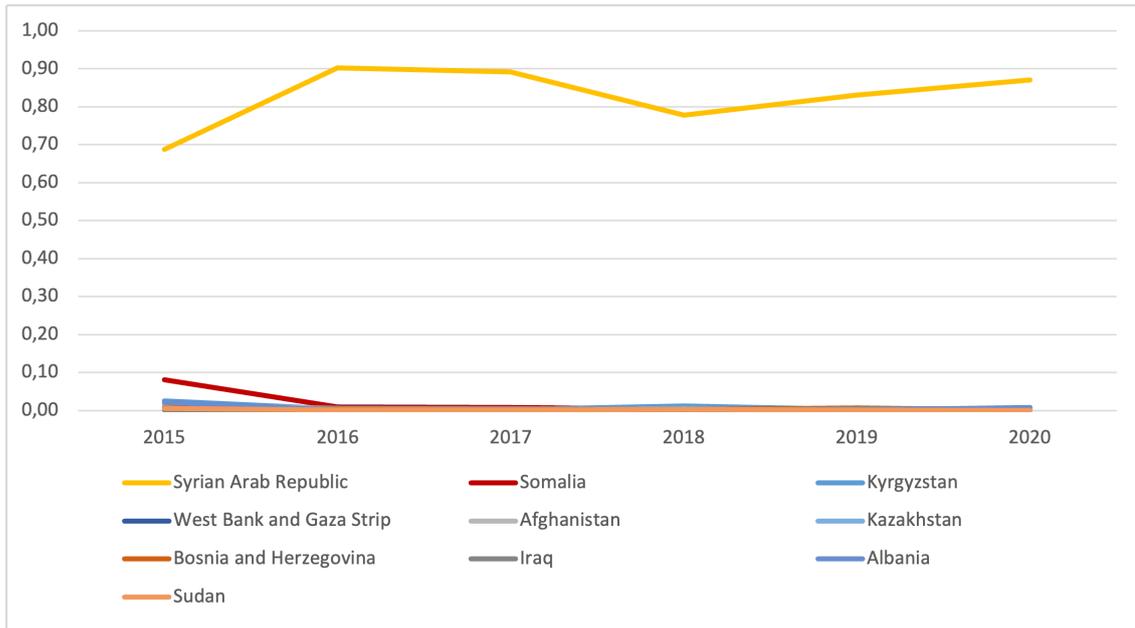
Figure 3.8 Share of Turkish foreign aid received by the top 10 recipients (2008-2015)



### 3.3.3 2015 - 2020: Shaken Hard by Turbulence in All Directions

Turkey's multiplying problems with its neighbors and major powers, the related increase in its international isolation, along with the domestic political and economic turmoil also reflected on Turkish foreign aid policy. Figure 3.9 shows the top 10 recipients of Turkish foreign aid with respect to the cumulative aid volume received after 2015. According to the figure, the top 10 aid recipients for this period are Syria, Somalia, Kyrgyzstan, West Bank and Gaza Strip, Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iraq, Albania, and Sudan in order of decreasing aid volume. However, compared to the share of Syria and when excluding Turkey's contributions to multilateral organizations are taken out, the aid allocated to the remaining countries in this period is minuscule around 0%. In that regard, Turkey's increased isolation can be argued to transform its foreign aid policies to be rather unidimensional and narrow-focused.

Figure 3.9 Share of Turkish foreign aid received by the top 10 recipients (2015 – 2020)



### 3.4 Discussion of Findings and Conclusion

In this chapter, I provided an overview of TIKA’s activities as Turkey’s official development agency and laid out the trends and changes in Turkish foreign aid in distinct time periods. Although even a descriptive approach can provide much insight into variations in Turkey’s foreign aid policy over time, a more systematic interpretation of the findings would help to create the ground for causal examination.

Drawing from the constructivist theory and the literature on middle powers, the trends in Turkey’s foreign aid allocations can be argued to be shaped by both domestic and international factors. On the one hand, various key events in the international arena delineated the focus of Turkey’s foreign aid endeavors. On the other hand, domestic dynamics shaped the ideological and rhetorical framework for Turkey’s foreign aid efforts and determined their intensity. Multiple scholars point to vagueness, inconsistency, and in-betweenness in evaluating Turkey as a middle power.

For instance, Öniş and Kutlay (2017) present four critical conditions for emerging middle powers to be more productive and influential. The first is the ability to be a role-model within their area, which is evaluated with respect to their developmental and democratic credibility. The second condition concerns their capacity

to build coalitions that are both functional and guided by a “consistent set of normative principles” (Öniş and Kutlay 2017, 166). The third concerns an awareness of the governance capacity and its realization through the alignment of ambitions and capabilities, informed by the limitations on middle power influence. The final condition is the ability and capacity to determine niche areas that allow for differentiated and unique value-add. The authors note that although these four conditions are necessary for emerging middle powers to be effective, different conditions can have differing weight and importance for different countries; these conditions interact with each other and are mutually inclusive. Evaluating Turkey’s case, Öniş and Kutlay (2017) argue that its role-model capacity is the dominant factor that also influenced the other conditions.

In a different approach, Altunışık (2023) presents three characteristics that modifies Turkey’s “middlepowerness.” The first characteristic concerns challenges faced in the international scene due to the country’s historical legacy. Altunışık (2023) argues that Turkey’s Ottoman legacy led to two distinct issues that are carried over to modern Turkey’s foreign policies. These are the ambivalent relationship to the Western countries, where Turkey both struggled to keep a distance to preserve its sphere and endeavored to become a part of them. Also, the unfolding of the Ottoman Empire and struggles during Turkey’s founding led to “an intense sensitivity on the issues of territoriality, sovereignty, and international status” (Altunışık 2023, 3). The second characteristic is shaped by Turkey’s “pivotal geographic position.” Turkey’s location helped it to play a pivotal role in various international periods and issues, such as during the Cold War, in the early 2000s with interventions in the Middle East, as a hub for trade and energy transactions, and during the Syrian civil war, which increased its bargaining power (Balta 2018; Haugom 2019; Kubicek 2022; Kutlay and Öniş 2021a). Third, ambiguity in the country’s political and ideational outlook contributed to its modified middlepowerness as they provide a space for policy maneuver in changing contexts. Altunışık (2023) highlights Turkey’s position between Europe and the Middle East, in addition to its unique ideational composition which is influenced both by Western and Islamic traditions as factors that created such an ambiguous character.

Köstem (2018) stresses “directionality” as a key element of national identities. The construction of national identity by the state elite can foster or hinder cooperation with other states depending on how they are perceived within the dominant national identity perception. Accordingly, relational comparisons, or Self-Other dynamics, are highlighted as a particularly important element of national identity construction. For Turkey, he argues that the relational comparisons that guided its foreign economic policy was informed by Turkey’s history, particularly its Ottoman past,

and its perceived “responsibility to play a facilitating role among the ‘brotherly’ nations of the Middle East, who were forcibly distanced from each other by Western colonial powers” (Köstem 2018, 731). Referring to Hopf’s (2002) study, the author explains that “identities are shaped with relation to not only external others, but also internal ones; a state’s hierarchical view of international politics is a product of the domestic struggle between political elites, who define the content of national identity differently” (Köstem 2018, 731). As the final key element of national identity conception, Köstem (2018) points to domestic power consolidation as a critical juncture that provides the basis for eliminating alternative discourses domestically and shaping the course of foreign policy in line with the dominant narrative.

Domestically, the political elite played on the social, political, and cultural cleavages that have been long entrenched in the Turkish society, or *kulturkampf*, among which the most prevalent cleavage was along the secular-Islamist worldviews (Mardin 1973; Taşkın 2012; Çarkoğlu and Kalaycıoğlu 2009, 2021). Going back to the first instances of the multi-party system, Aytaç and Elçi (2019) present the center-periphery struggle in Turkey as shaped along the division between the conservative and pious majority, and the secular elites with Western orientations who also occupy key institutions. The pious majority, which is at the periphery and unable to exert political agency, constitute “the people,” whereas the secular elites are situated at the center both in socio-economic and political terms. In such context, parties that represent the periphery adopted and advocated for ideologies such as nationalist conservatism, nativism, and Islamism. Furthermore, frequent electioneering and campaigning provided the opportunity needed for spreading their views, which resulted in an increasingly polarized political and social scene. Consequently, Turkey became one of the most polarized countries in the world (Kalaycıoğlu 2019, 2020). In a recent study, Moral and Best (2022) explore the relationship between political party polarization and polarization among the voters. They find that in extremely polarized countries, political parties drive the discourse and agenda, and the voters respond to political parties. Studies on the Turkish voters’ ideological orientations also corroborate their findings. For instance, Kalaycıoğlu and Çarkoğlu show that the ideological orientation of the median-voter shifted towards right, to a more conservative and religious position, since the AKP came to power in 2022 (Kalaycıoğlu 2020; Çarkoğlu and Kalaycıoğlu 2009, 2021).

Altunışık (2023) asserts that Turkey’s in-betweenness gradually disappeared since the 2010s. The AKP elites’ project to redefine Turkey’s identity both domestically and in the international arena took place around the Islamist tradition which the founders saw themselves as the representatives. Hintz (2015) argues that the elites utilized foreign policy through various instruments to “take their national identity

contests out [...] when identity gambits at the domestic level are blocked” (Hintz 2015, 335). This move to take “its pursuit of hegemony for Ottoman Islamism ‘outside’ through aggressive European Union accession measures” allowed the AKP to “weaken domestic challengers supporting a competing, Republican Nationalist proposal for identity, and broaden support for Ottoman Islamism at home” (Hintz 2015, 335). Building on Hintz’s argument, Altunışık (2023) argues that the party’s steps towards consolidating power, along with its weakening of institutions and ideologies, which were perceived as obstacles, started providing results in the 2010s. This also allowed the elites to more comfortably adopt policy stances and display preferences in line with their Islamist outlook, but at the same time eroded Turkey’s middlepowerness.

Looking at Turkish foreign policy within the three distinct periods provides a helpful guide in evaluating its transformation. During the first period between 2002 and 2007, considering the order of the aid volume received by the 10 countries, it is possible to say that Turkey’s foreign aid policies and its geographical focus displayed a similar orientation to its policies in the 1990s: Turkic countries remained at the focus of Turkish foreign aid, neighboring countries were prioritized in aid allocations as the second layer of focus, and Turkey had a more reactionary foreign aid policy as opposed to a more institutionalized one. The reactionary approach in Turkey’s foreign aid policy can be seen both in its response to the natural disaster in Pakistan, and its increased prioritization of Afghanistan as a neighboring country with troubling political instability, serious security issues, and dire humanitarian need. Increasing share of Turkish foreign aid to Afghanistan also points to Turkey’s concerns over regional security and its earlier attempts at playing a role in facilitating stability.

During the second period between 2008 and 2015, the trends in the shares of the top 10 aid recipients in Turkish foreign aid can be argued to corroborate the literature. Turkey’s increased foreign aid policy attention to the MENA region with the Arab Spring, while at remaining attentive to humanitarian disasters that happen in relatively distant countries support the arguments on Turkey’s increased foreign policy activism and ambitions to expand its geographical reach. Nevertheless, the Syrian civil war and the consequent migration crisis appear to start pushing Turkey to reach its foreign aid limits. In addition, the AKP government’s selective and strategic use of discourse manifested its first instances.

A key development whose effect carried out to the post-2015 period was the outbreak of the Syrian civil war in 2011 where hundreds of thousands of Syrians fled home to escape violence and crossed the border to Turkey in a relatively short period.

The refugee influx from Syria to Turkey since 2011 has led the country to be the leading host country within a few years: Turkey is the top hosting country in the world since 2014 (UNHCR 2020). The total number of Syrians in Turkey displayed a sharp increase between 2012 and 2015, continued to increase until 2018, and except for 2019, appears to have been stabilized around 3,6 million since 2018. This number of refugees hosted increases to 4 million when the unofficial numbers for refugees from Iraq, Afghanistan, and various countries in Africa are considered. The Turkish government declared an open-door policy soon after the civil war broke out in 2011. It was also apparent that the government did not have an emergency response plan when the civil war first broke out in 2011 and when the consequent mass movements to Turkey started: many officials assumed the civil war to be short-lived and they could not foresee the possible future scenarios (Akçapar and Şimşek 2018; İçduygu and Sert 2019; Şimşek 2020). Furthermore, despite some instances of anti-refugee reactions, the mass movement did not lead to public upheaval which happened to be the case in some other countries.

Public opinion surveys show that the majority of the society has an anti-immigration attitude, most believe that social cohesion and living together is not possible, and a considerable portion ascribe issues concerning unemployment and economic problems to the refugees (Erdoğan 2020). This policy and relevant lack of contention over refugees was addressed by many scholars. Some scholars focused on the effect of the European Union's externalization policies and Turkey's relations with the EU (Demiryontar 2021; Üstübici 2019; İçduygu and Sert 2019); some examined the effects of Turkish foreign policy on responses to instances of migration at different times (Altiok and Tosun 2020); some highlighted the enhanced ties between the government and Syrians through investment deals and citizenship (Akçapar and Şimşek 2018; Şimşek 2020); and many scholars set to explain the domestic political environment and the changing discourse utilized either by the government or by the governing AKP (Gürsoy 2021; Kaya, Robert, and Tecmen 2020; Yanaşmayan, Üstübici, and Kaşlı 2019; Özçürümez, Hoxha, and İçduygu 2020; İçduygu and Sert 2019). For instance, there were attempts to point to the Syrian refugees as a point of contention during the general elections in 2014 and 2018. However, those attempts were largely unsuccessful (Yanaşmayan, Üstübici, and Kaşlı 2019). An important reason behind this was the AKP's discourse following the Syrian civil war and the forced displacement of Syrians into Turkey. The government officials and AKP politicians heavily emphasized humanitarianism and responsibility towards those vulnerable, which lead to effectively silencing the opposition since they would not want to situate themselves as antagonistic actors concerning such a situation (Yanaşmayan, Üstübici, and Kaşlı 2019).

Kaya, Robert, and Tecmen (2020) argue that the AKP's framing of "'civilization' is based on religion, faith and the ummah", and differs from the previous understanding of the term (Kaya, Robert, and Tecmen 2020, 365). His version of civilizationist discourse is nostalgic, and it appeals to the Ottoman legacy, along with a brotherhood based on a shared religion, in an attempt to evoke feelings of unity and appease various grievances that exist among the population (Kaya, Robert, and Tecmen 2020). AKP's civilizationist discourse also extends the in-group by including religious commonality as another criterion in defining who will be considered as a part of "the people." This civilizationist discourse appears to be the initial reason for the government's willingness to pursue an open-door policy when the civil war broke out in 2011. The religious undertones of AKP's civilizational discourse worked in two ways. On the one hand, it provided a basis for international engagement (Altunışık 2022; Davutoğlu 2013; Guo 2020; Haugom 2019; Hintz 2015; Kutlay and Öniş 2021*b*; Sazak 2018; Wastnidge 2019), on the other hand, it was used to effectively silence political opposition at home (Yanaşmayan, Üstübici, and Kaşlı 2019).

During the third period between 2015 and 2020, the cases of aid recipient countries reflect the framing of Turkey's motivations through appeal to cultural ties and religion. They also allow further differentiation of Turkey's motivations vis-à-vis the recipients. The fact that these countries consecutively received ODA from Turkey shows that they were all significant in Turkey's foreign aid policies. However, the variety and type of engagement, as well as the presentation of their rationale and aim changed. In Somalia, state-building humanitarian efforts to alleviate the effects of terror appear as the main theme. In Kyrgyzstan, reinforcing relationships both through economic and cultural engagement is highlighted. Efforts in Afghanistan, also center around state-building and humanitarian efforts in the face of terror, but with a focus on women's health and empowerment. Engagement in Palestine entails providing housing and infrastructure to Palestinians who were hurt by the armed conflicts, and efforts to amplify the Turkish cultural presence and influence concerning Palestine. Activities in Bosnia mostly have economic features or are geared towards strengthening Turkish cultural influence with prestige projects and through appeals to shared religion and cultural legacies. In Kazakhstan, efforts concerning health services, especially to improve maternal health and increase emergency medicine capacity, form the body of TIKA's engagement. Nevertheless, despite the nature of activities undertaken in different countries and their presentation by TIKA's, it would be crucial to keep in mind the prevalence of the Syrian case for Turkish foreign aid and the size of the aid volumes received by the other countries in comparison.

İpek (2015) argues that normative values which are rooted in Turkey's history and its connection to the region provide the ideational basis the foreign policy elites. Furthermore, the creation of a discourse around mutual benefit, as manifested in Turkey's "trading state" approach, constituted the material basis for policy change. İpek's (2015) findings indicate that although Turkey displayed similar foreign policy approaches in the 1990s and early 2000s, yet 2010s constituted a departure from the earlier trends. For instance, while Turkish foreign policy was similarly geared towards expanding export markets and elevating its status as a regional power in the earlier periods, the significant increase in TİKA's activities starting with the 2010s needed an explanation. The author attributes this change to both ideational and material factors and highlights the expanded reimagination of foreign policy instruments by the elites as the turning point. The difference in the later period lied in the reimagination that brought together "strategies to advance material interests and normative ideas in determining the criteria for constituting soft power as an instrument of foreign policy" (İpek 2015, 190). Given the Turkish case, the author concludes that two contingent conditions need to be satisfied for ideas to penetrate foreign policymaking. First, there needs to be a convergence around the normative beliefs among the recognized foreign policy elite. Second, there needs to be an "enabling political environment" where appointments to crucial offices and introduction of policies in line with the said normative values are enabled by a majority government.

In *Veto Players*, Tsebelis (2002) focuses on veto players and examines stability and equilibrium dynamics through formal modeling. He argues that when there are high number of veto players with distinguishable distance on policy positions, stability is increases due to negotiations. On the other hand, fewer veto players in a system would have higher agenda setting ability. Given the direction of political and legislative changes in Turkey, we can observe that the Turkish case appears to confirm Tsebelis's argument concerning the number of veto players and stability.

Turkey's foreign aid approach was also characterized by its heavy reliance on non-state actors, such as Islamically oriented humanitarian non-governmental organizations (HNGOs) and public-private partnerships. The collaboration between the Turkish state and civil society organizations can be traced back to the AKP's first term in office, where humanitarian NGOs, and a multitude of other state agencies were involved in aid activities in an uncoordinated manner. In the earlier periods of its institutionalization, TİKA relied on its cooperation with NGOs for aid allocations (Altunışık 2014; Apaydın 2012; Turhan 2021; Çelik and İşeri 2016; Özkan and Demirtepe 2012). The cooperation between TİKA and humanitarian NGOs continued following TİKA's institutionalization, and even deepened through the or-

ganization's increased agency and effectiveness over the years. In the earlier years of Turkish foreign aid policy transformations, the NGOs that have been actively involved in international aid and humanitarian relief delivery mainly come from an Islamist tradition, claiming to act in line with the directives of Islam on zakat and brotherly solidarity (Özkan and Demirtepe 2012). In the later periods, multiplying opportunities to engage in activities abroad, along with the prospect of increasing material gains and influence, deepened the relationship between the Turkish state and Islamically oriented humanitarian NGOs. Furthermore, Özkan and Demirtepe (2012) explain that those NGOs also felt an ideational bond with the Turkish state under the AKP government:

“With the coming to power of the AKP, changes in the legal framework have boosted donations, giving Turkish HNGOs increased resources; this has enlarged the geographical scope of their activities and made them representatives of Turkey abroad while also contributing to its soft power. In other words, the domestic transformation in Turkey, the more hospitable approach by the government bureaucracy and modifications to the legal framework have paved the way for the successes of Turkish HNGOs. Interviews conducted with HNGO staffers showed strong parallels between their perceptions of self and other and their ideational values, and those of the state. Emphasizing Islam and the Ottoman past, they feel obliged to fulfill the nation's historical role as the protector of the ummah, since the Republic of Turkey is regarded as the successor of the Ottoman Empire. Naturally, sharing the same ideational values, serving the same cause and propagating the same discourse make their relations with government elites easier. In this way they are able to receive government support and encouragement. As shown through the interviews, the changing attitudes of the authorities and embassies prove the importance of identity-related factors to this outcome. This is also quite natural when one takes into account that both the AKP and Turkish HNGOs emerged from the same tradition, the National Outlook” (439).

In sum, the findings presented in this chapter support the literature on the normative and ideational bases of Turkish foreign aid policy. In addition, building on the historical overview of Turkey's domestic and foreign policy trajectory explained in Chapter 2, the findings presented in this chapter also indicate a dynamic interaction of domestic and international factors in shaping Turkey's foreign policy and, by extension, its foreign aid policy.

On the other hand, although the abovementioned approaches present valuable insights, there still remains a gap in holistically explaining the trends and changes in

Turkey's foreign aid policy, especially within a broader time period. My argument aims to address this gap. To reassert, I argue that Turkey's foreign aid policy was influenced both by domestic political and economic developments and by international forces. On the other hand, I argue that the extent and direction of these factors' influence were modified by a normative framework based on an Islamist worldview.

Referring back to the argument proposed by Tsebelis (2002), it can be argued that Turkey, the number of veto players, or indeed any mechanism for checks and balances, decreased over time, which enabled the ruling party/the president to have a higher agenda setting and policy making ability. However, it also meant a more volatile environment for policy making, where economic actors gradually lost confidence in the face of unsuccessful policy decisions. The AKP can be argued to have mediated the entry of new social forces into politics. Throughout, the founders of the party frequently asserted that they were outside of the political and economic establishment, which they used to attract the support of the marginalized voters that are ideologically close to them as well as the votes of those who have felt that no political parties were representing their demands. Furthermore, the AKP was a split from earlier right-wing parties whose presence in the national assembly was curtailed but they nevertheless had some exposure to the legislative processes (Aytaç and Elçi 2019). Both the base and the ranks of the AKP have increased since its founding: the party created patterns of clientelist relations which involved selective allocation of resources and led to the creation of new social forces.

Moreover, increasing inequality and decreasing well-being of the lower and middle classes placed them in a precarious position with increased dependency on the ad hoc economic supports. Additionally, Erdoğan repeatedly referred to party's electoral victories to assert legitimacy based on popular will and national sovereignty. Relatively decreasing support for the party as seen in the referendum and elections, coupled with the currency crises, posed a challenge to its political confidence, and led to increased authoritarian tendencies which also entailed increased control over the market. Especially after the transition to the presidential system that led the state and party to merge, the organizational complexity of the party and the number of social forces that try to enter politics increased. The AKP had to facilitate the interactions between more groups, albeit unsuccessfully. Esen and Gümüşçü (2020) also point to the AKP government's use of partisan reallocation of resources among the urban poor and the economic elite to increase their dependency and their cost for toleration of increasing autocratic tendencies.

To divert focus from the domestic economic and political situation, the AKP drew attention to foreign actors with an increasingly populist rhetoric. As the conven-

tional groups, upon which the populist “us vs. them” rhetoric is constructed, started losing relevance, a pressing need to designate other centers of exclusion and alienation arose. In this new dynamic, the main opposition party (Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi, CHP), academics, intellectuals, journalists who are critical of the government, and “some vague actors that are imagined plotting against Turkey” became “the elite” in a pragmatic fashion where Erdoğan strategically targeted each (or a group of them) depending on the context (Aytaç and Elçi 2019, 99). As Erdoğan gained power against his domestic rivals, he turned to the international actors in an attempt to “broaden his imagined antagonistic front against ‘the people,’” especially following the failed coup attempt in 2016 (Aytaç and Elçi 2019, 99). Rogenhofer and Panievsky (2020) point to selective and strategic steps employed by Erdoğan in directing economic resources and creating or dissipating social safety nets selectively. The authors highlight the Turkish case as one where religion used in creating in-groups and out-groups within the society to bolster their claim to represent “the people,” and framing the news media as “the enemy of the people”.

A parallel argument can also be made for the relationship between the Turkish state and the humanitarian NGOs. In the earlier years of Turkish foreign aid policy transformations, the NGOs that have been actively involved in international aid and humanitarian relief delivery mainly come from an Islamist tradition, In the later periods, multiplying opportunities to engage in activities abroad along with the prospect of increasing material gains and influence deepened the relationship between the Turkish state and Islamically oriented humanitarian NGOs.

From one perspective, the transformation in Turkish foreign aid policy and its increasing Islamist undertones can be argued to shape the role conception and directionality, related to the argument presented by Köstem (2018). The dynamics on Turkey’s national identity construction worked both at the international and domestic level. At the international level, it helped Turkey to claim responsibility as the protector of the “ummah”. AKP’s initial framing of the issue carried moral and humanitarian undertones that benefit it at home and abroad (Gürsoy 2021; Yanaşmayan, Üstübici, and Kaşlı 2019). It was able to establish a moral high ground against the secular West, which Erdoğan has frequently been targeting as the evil other, through welcoming and accepting the members of the ummah who are depicted as the underdog in Europe. It also helped strengthen Erdoğan’s hand in the international arena. He was able to use the refugee crisis as leverage against Europe in the West (Demiryontar 2021), as well as a security strategy to exert influence over the south-east border near Syria (Altıok and Tosun 2020).

At the domestic level, it worked in two ways. First, to create an in-group within

the niche policy area concerning foreign aid, where both ideational and material factors brought Islamically oriented NGOs and the government closer (Altunışık 2014; Köstem 2018; Özkan and Demirtepe 2012). Second, the AKP's discourse following the Syrian civil war and the forced displacement of Syrians into Turkey emphasized humanitarianism and responsibility towards those vulnerable and effectively silenced the opposition.

The argument presented in this chapter is informed by a descriptive overview of Turkey's foreign aid flows, analysis of primary sources published by TİKA, and a survey of the copious literature on Turkey's foreign and foreign aid policies. In this chapter, I endeavored to lay out my argument by building on these sources and attempted to offer a mechanism that brought together material and nonmaterial factors to explain the trends in Turkey's foreign aid. Although qualitative methods allow us to lay out the "how" of a phenomenon of interest, an empirical analysis is necessary to test causality. The following chapter presents a quantitative assessment of my argument.

## **4. QUANTITATIVE ASSESSMENT OF TURKEY'S FOREIGN AID DRIVERS**

### **4.1 Introduction**

While the literature on Turkish foreign aid is quite rich, the topic is still ripe for further exploration. Building on previous studies, this chapter aims to elaborate on the drivers of Turkey's foreign aid and whether their effect changes over time. In line with the literature on Turkey's foreign aid, as elaborated in Chapter 2, I include variables on cultural similarity, recipient need, recipient merit, donor's strategic interest, and donor's aid-giving ability in the model. I include Common Language as an indicator of cultural similarity; Recipient Infant Mortality, Recipient per capita GDP, and a Recipient's number of Disaster Victims to approximate the recipient need; Democracy and Political Terror Scale (PTS) to measure the recipient's merit; Trade Flows and UN Voting Similarity to indicate donor's strategic interest; TR GDP per capita, TR Victims of Disaster and TR PTS to account for Turkey's aid-giving ability; and finally, I include Recipient Population, and Distance between Turkey and the recipient state as the control variables commonly employed in the literature.

### **4.2 Literature Review and Theoretical Framework**

First, I examine the drivers of Turkey's foreign aid by disaggregating Turkey's aid into sub-categories; namely, Official Development Assistance (ODA) and humanitarian aid. Given various arguments put forward by scholars on Turkey's motivations, I expect the drivers of aid to change for different aid types, leading to my first hypothesis.

**H<sub>1a</sub>:** Cultural similarity, trade relationship, and geographic proximity have positive effect on Turkey’s ODA allocations.

**H<sub>1b</sub>:** Cultural similarity and recipient need have positive effect on Turkey’s humanitarian aid allocations.

Second, Kavaklı (2018) shows that Turkey’s motivations for aid allocation vary in different contexts, specifically comparing two periods, before and after the AKP’s coming to power. During the AKP’s first two terms, Turkey’s foreign aid allocations were framed with respect to humanitarian and developmental concerns as well as solidarity with other developing nations; around 2015-onwards, a more isolationist and security oriented approach occupied Turkey’s foreign policy and aid agenda (Alpan and Öztürk 2022; Balta 2018; Fidan 2013; Fidan and Nurdun 2008; Keyman 2016; Kutlay and Öniş 2021*a,b*; Köstem 2018; İpek 2015). Connecting Kavaklı’s (2018) findings and the literature on aid heterogeneity and time-variant factors (Addison and Tarp 2015; Arndt, Jones, and Tarp 2015; Brück and Xu 2012; Dabla-Norris, Minoiu, and Zanna 2015; Jones 2015; Qian 2015; Wright and Winters 2011), I expect the effect of different drivers of aid to vary over time.

**H<sub>2a</sub>:** The effect of cultural similarity on Turkey’s ODA decreases over time.

**H<sub>2b</sub>:** The effect of trade relationship on Turkey’s ODA first increases and then decreases over time.

**H<sub>2c</sub>:** The effect of geographical proximity on Turkey’s ODA increases over time.

**H<sub>2d</sub>:** The effect of cultural similarity on Turkey’s humanitarian aid increases over time.

**H<sub>2e</sub>:** The effect of recipient need on Turkey’s humanitarian need does not vary over time.

Third, domestic factors are widely discussed with regards to the supply-side of foreign aid. While some exogenous factors such as natural disasters and wars in its neighboring countries might have an immediate effect on a donor’s short-term allocations, some other factors such as the donor’s mid- and long-term strategic goals, policy priorities, ideological or cultural affinity, or elites’ orientation can have an impact on states’ foreign aid allocations that may only be evaluated over time.

The AKP came to power as a center-right political party in 2002. Although the AKP and its ruling elites followed a relatively liberal domestic and foreign policy during their first term, the party’s rule became increasingly illiberal and authoritarian over time (Alizada et al. 2021; Aytaç and Elçi 2019; Esen and Gümüşçü 2016,

2020; Kalaycıoğlu 2017, 2018, 2023; Kutlay and Öniş 2021*a,b*; Köstem 2018). As discussed in the previous chapter, Turkey’s domestic politics became increasingly polarized over time (Kalaycıoğlu 2019, 2020). The increased distance between the parts of the Turkish society that identified with either the secular or Islamist tradition constituted one of the strongest manifestations of the polarization in Turkey. The domestic political environment allowed the political elites to drive the discourse around issue-areas and rally masses in an overly partisan context (Moral and Best 2022). The influence of the political elite, more specifically the foreign policy elite, also extended to foreign policymaking, where their ideational convergence around humanitarian and Islamist norms, and Turkey’s historical responsibility based on its Ottoman past influenced Turkey’s foreign policy orientation (İpek 2015). Given the literature on the relationship between domestic factors and foreign aid giving, the agenda-setting ability of the political elite in a highly polarized context and the increasing prevalence of religion as a result, I expect the effect of religious similarity on Turkey’s foreign aid allocations to increase over time.

**H<sub>3</sub>:** The effect of religious similarity on Turkey’s ODA and humanitarian aid increases over time.

### 4.3 Data and Research Design

The dataset contains time-series cross-sectional data on foreign aid. I created the dataset by combining data from multiple sources. Given that my focus is on the changing effects of various factors on the amount of Turkey’s foreign aid, instead of country dyads, the unit of analysis is a country-year. The data for foreign aid come from the OECD Development Statistics Database and include the ODA distribution and humanitarian aid (OECD 2023a). The main independent variable of interest, Common Religion, comes from Kavaklı’s (2018) dataset. The data for the control variables were also compiled by using multiple datasets. Data for Common Language and Distance variables also come from Kavaklı’s (2018) work. Data for Recipient Infant Mortality, Recipient GDP per capita, TR GDP per capita, and Recipient Population come from World Bank (Bank 2023). Data for Recipient Disaster Victims and TR Victims of Disaster come from the Emergency Events Database (EM-DAT) (Guha-Sapir, Below, and Hoyois 2021). Data for the Imports by Recipient variable (flow1) coded from the Correlates of War Project Trade Dataset version 4.0 (Barbieri and Keshk 2016). Data for UN Voting Similarity (idealpointdistance) in the UN General Assembly come from the United Nations General Assembly Voting Data

(Bailey, Strezhnev, and Voeten 2017). Data for Democracy (Polity2) come from the Polity5 dataset (Marshall and Gurr 2020). Finally, data for Recipient Political Terror Scale (PTS) and TR Political Terror Scale come from the Political Terror Scale 1976-2020 dataset (Gibney et al. 2022). The explanation of the variables and details are provided below.

### 4.3.1 Dependent Variables

This study focuses on the determinants of Turkey’s foreign aid. Following the literature on aid heterogeneity and empirical research on Turkey’s foreign aid, the focus in the empirical investigation is two-fold. Turkey’s foreign aid is examined with respect to two variables: Turkey’s Official Development Aid (ODA) and humanitarian aid, in constant US dollars as of 2021, covering the period between 1990 and 2020. Data for the variables come from OECD’s development statistics database. The distribution of data for both the humanitarian aid and ODA variables are censored and skewed to the right. Following Kavaklı’s (2018) operationalization, I multiplied each aid variable by 100, added one, and took the natural logarithm of the resulting values. There are several reasons for such an operationalization. First, the data for foreign aid are highly skewed. While there are some observations with quite large values, there are also many observations that are equal or close to zero. This is caused by Turkey’s foreign aid allocation preferences, as the country is selective in its aid distribution. A natural logarithmic transformation allows us to have a more symmetric distribution and address the skewness in data. Second, there can be considerable differences between the aid amounts given to different countries due to many reasons as explained in Chapter 2. Taking the natural logarithm also helps decrease the variance of the dependent variable and mitigate the heteroskedasticity due to temporal variations. Third, since there are many observations that slope zero and the natural logarithm of zero is undefined, I added a small constant, one in this case, to ensure that all observations can be transformed logarithmically.

Regarding sample selection, I am interested in the varying effect of different variables on Turkey’s foreign aid. In other words, the donation stage (i.e., the stage where aid allocation takes place), rather than the selection stage (i.e., the stage where a country decides whether to allocate aid to another country or not) is the main focus of this study. Since some countries are highly developed and do not need any development assistance, some countries are too small, or some are too far away for Turkey to develop any relationship and send foreign aid, there are some countries where Turkey has never sent any type of foreign aid. These are thus the “impossible

zeroes” in the dataset. To prevent such observations from affecting the findings, I dropped the countries that have never received humanitarian aid or ODA from Turkey within the observed 30-year period. This caused the number of observations to drop from 7409 to 4328.

### **4.3.2 Independent Variable and Control Variables**

My main independent variable of interest is Common Religion, which is also one of the indicators for cultural similarity between Turkey and the recipient country. The data for this variable come from Kavaklı’s (2018) work building on (Barro and McCleary 2003) and is measured as the “percentage of Muslim people in a recipient country” (Kavaklı 2018, 619).

As the first group of controls, I use Infant Mortality, recipients’ GDP per capita, and Recipient Victims of Disaster as distinct indicators of recipient need. Infant mortality is defined as the number of infants dying before reaching one year of age (in every 1,000 live births), and the data come from World Bank (Bank 2023). The infant mortality variable was lagged by one year to avoid endogeneity and to correctly establish the direction of causality. I use recipients’ GDP per capita (Bank 2023) in addition to the infant mortality rate variable, because although infant mortality rate is widely accepted as an indicator of abject poverty, there is an overall improvement in the infant mortality rates world-wide. On the other hand, there is still heterogeneity with respect to recipient countries’ wealth. I use a third control variable that approximates recipient need but in a more direct manner. Recipient Victims of Disaster indicates the impact of disasters on a recipient country’s population in a given year. The data for disaster victims come from the Emergency Events Database (EM-DAT) which contains core data on the occurrence and effects of disasters in the world (Guha-Sapir, Below, and Hoyois 2021). I generated a new variable by operationalizing two variables in the dataset. In order to see the relative effect of disasters on a country in a given year, I summed the number of people who were affected by disasters and the number of people dead. Then, I divided the sum by the country population. Adding the number of people affected and number of people who died gives a fuller picture of the extent of the disaster, and dividing the sum by the country’s population provides a more accurate interpretation of the impact of the disaster on a country’s population. The absolute numbers for disaster victims might be misleading as the same number in absolute terms might correspond to different portions of the overall population in different countries. By dividing the number of victims by the country population, we have a variable that can better

represent the impact of disasters on a country in a given year. This variable is also logged.

The second control group is related to recipients' strategic importance. I use Trade Flows and UN Voting Similarity to indicate economic importance and political importance, respectively. The data for the Trade Flows variable come from the Correlates of War Project Trade Dataset version 4.0 (Barbieri and Keshk 2016) and covers the period between 1990 and 2014. I used the dyadic trade dataset to retrieve trade data between Turkey and other countries. Specifically, I used the flow1 variable which represented the imports of all the countries from Turkey. I logged and lagged the variable by one year. Secondly, political alignment in the international arena, as manifested in states' voting behavior within inter-governmental organizations, is another indicator for states' aid-giving motivations. I use UN Voting Similarity in the UN General Assembly ("idealpointdistance") as an indicator of political strategic importance (Bailey, Strezhnev, and Voeten 2017). The ideal point distance approach takes into account the state's votes in the UN General Assembly (i.e., yes, no, abstain) and uses "statistical models to estimate one-dimensional preferences that are comparable over time based on votes in the UN" (Bailey, Strezhnev, and Voeten 2017, 435). This approach provides us with a better picture for the overall policy stances of the recipients with respect to Turkey, as opposed to averaging the instances where Turkey and the recipient country agreed or disagreed on the issues. The data for the voting similarity variable come from United Nations General Assembly Voting Data and covers the period between 1990 and 2014. A note about the year variable in the dataset should be made here that it corresponds to sessions, rather than calendar years (Bailey, Strezhnev, and Voeten 2017). However, most of the votes occurred in the same calendar year as the session year. Since the distribution of data does not change when calendar year is taken as reference, I did not regroup the observations by calendar year. Finally, the voting similarity variable is lagged by one year to correctly account for the effect of the recipient's political similarity on Turkey's foreign aid allocations.

Third, I control for Language Similarity, as another indicator of cultural similarity. The data for this variable come from Kavaklı's (2018) work, building on Fearon (2003), and indicate the "percentage recipient population that speaks a Turkic language" (Kavaklı 2018, 619).

In the fourth set of control variables, I use Democracy and Political Terror Scale (PTS) to measure recipient merit. I use Democracy to approximate good governance practices in a recipient country. The democracy variable measures a country's democracy index score in a given year and ranges between -10 and 10. The data

for the democracy variable come from the Polity2 variable in the Polity5 dataset and cover the period between 1990 and 2018 (Marshall and Gurr 2020). I lag the democracy variable by one year. I also control for the Political Terror Scale (PTS) of the recipient (Gibney et al. 2022). The data for the PTS variable come from the Political Terror Scale 1976-2020 dataset, range between 0 and 5, and cover the period between 1990 and 2020. Political terror is defined as “violations of basic human rights to the physical integrity of the person by agents of the state” within the said state’s borders (Gibney et al. 2022, 1). The dataset includes three separate variables, created using different sources. The variables are coded based on reports of the Amnesty International (PTS\_A), Human Rights Watch (PTS\_H), and the US’ Department of State (PTS\_S). I operationalize the PTS variable by combining the PTS scores reported by the three sources and taking their average, so that the resulting variable still ranges between 0 and 5 but there are less missing country-year data. The PTS variable is also lagged by one year. Control variables that indicate Turkey’s aid-giving ability include TR GDP per capita, in logged form (Bank 2023). The data for TR Victims of Disaster (Guha-Sapir, Below, and Hoyois 2021) variable come from the EM-DAT dataset and were operationalized similarly to the Recipient Victims of Disaster variable. Since natural disasters can create an exogenous shock and an urgent need to divert or re-focus financial allocations for a donor country, I included this variable to account for such exogenous shocks. Last in the group of indicators for Turkey’s aid-giving ability, is the TR PTS variable, I introduce to control for the effect of within-border disruptions in or interference with good governance. The TR PTS variable was coded from the PTS dataset (Gibney et al. 2022) and operationalized the same way as the recipient PTS variable. Finally, other control variables include Recipient Population (Bank 2023), which is both logged and lagged, and Distance (km) between Turkey and the recipient (Kavaklı 2018), also logged.

### 4.3.3 Model

Kavaklı (2018) argues that the Turkish foreign aid policy, as an extension of foreign policy, is affected by a variety of issues, including those that are donor- and recipient-related. As a relatively new actor in the foreign aid area, Turkey’s aid is both selective in terms of the issues that it responds to and unevenly distributed in regard to different types of aid. Aid heterogeneity is an established research area, as many scholars argue that different types of aid can be utilized to respond to different situations (Kavaklı 2018). In line with this literature, Kavaklı (2018) examines Turkish foreign aid by disaggregating it into humanitarian and economic sectors.

The distribution of aid allocation is highly skewed, inflated with many zeroes. Further, at the time when Kavaklı conducted this study, the OECD’s aid calculations did not allow the aid amounts to be negative. In cases where the data are not negative, Tobit estimator is preferred (Dreher and Jensen 2013; Dreher, Nunnenkamp, and Thiele 2011; Kavaklı 2018). Kavaklı (2018) also employs a Tobit estimator to estimate if a recipient receives aid and, if so, by how much. This thesis, on the other hand, focuses on the second part of this process, the aid amount.

The fit between the data and estimator is crucial. Another crucial issue is the fit between the model and theory. The dependent variables (i.e., total, humanitarian, and economic aid) vary over time. Some of the control variables, such as those indicating recipient need, economic importance, political relations, and good governance, also do so. On the other hand, some variables such as those that indicate cultural similarity are not time-variant. Considering Jones’ (2015) argument on correctly estimating the effects of variables over time, it can be argued that a model that does not take into account “time” can run the risk of making misleading inferences.

In this thesis, I use generalized linear regression with robust standard errors clustered by recipient country. Since I am interested in the varying effect of religious similarity with the recipient country on the amount of Turkey’s foreign aid, I include a cubic time polynomial in the model and interact it with the main variable of interest. Although different scholars prefer different estimators as the most appropriate, including the time variable in cubic form allows us to observe the variations in the effect of the main independent variable over time. I also add country-fixed effects to control for the omitted factors. Consequently, the general formula for the model can be given as:

$$DV = \beta_0 + \beta_1(\textit{Common Religion} \times \textit{Year} \times \textit{Year} \times \textit{Year}) + \beta_k X_k + \varepsilon$$

Following the literature on the drivers of Turkey’s foreign aid allocations, I include variables on cultural similarity, recipient need, recipient merit, donor’s strategic interest, and donor’s aid-giving ability in the model. I examine the effect of my main variable of interest, religious similarity, with respect to Turkey’s ODA and humanitarian aid. Taking the ODA variable as a representative example, the model equation is as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} \textit{Turkish Aid} = & \beta_0 + \beta_1(\textit{Common Religion} \times \textit{Year} \times \textit{Year} \times \textit{Year}) + \\ & \beta_2(\textit{Recip. Infant Mortality})_{(t-1)} + \beta_3(\textit{Recip. GDPpc})_{(t-1)} + \\ & \beta_4(\textit{Recip. Disaster Victims}) + \beta_5(\textit{Imports to Recipient})_{(t-1)} + \\ & \beta_6(\textit{UN Agreement})_{(t-1)} + \beta_7(\textit{Common Language}) + \beta_8(\textit{Recip. Democracy})_{(t-1)} + \\ & \beta_9(\textit{Recip. Political Terror})_{(t-1)} + \beta_{10}(\textit{Recip. Population})_{(t-1)} + \beta_{11}(\textit{Distance}) + \end{aligned}$$

$$\beta_{12}(TR\ GDPpc) + \beta_{13}(TR\ Disaster\ Victims) + \beta_{14}(TR\ Political\ Terror) + \varepsilon$$

#### 4.4 Empirical Findings and Discussion

Table 4.1 shows the GLS regression estimates of Turkey's ODA and humanitarian aid. The models are all additive, with robust standard errors clustered by countries. The estimates presented in the table provide a picture for the determinants of Turkish aid. Accordingly, religious similarity, the level of political terror in the recipient country, distance between Turkey and the recipient, Turkey's GDP per capita, Turkey's political terror scale, and Turkey's experience of disasters appear to affect both types of aid. For ODA, recipients' infant mortality rates, their position at the UNGA, whether they have a democratic rule, their population, and Turkey's GDP growth rate appear to have statistically significant effects, in addition to the abovementioned factors. For humanitarian aid, recipients' experience of disasters appears to have statistically significant effect on Turkey's disbursements.

Religious similarity with the recipient has a statistically significant and positive effect on all types of aid. The effect of religious similarity is higher for Turkey's ODA and than its humanitarian aid. This finding is in line with the literature as Turkey's foreign aid policies are widely argued to be influenced by religious similarity. Recipient infant mortality has a negative and significant effect for ODA, whereas it does not have a significant effect on Turkey's humanitarian aid. Infant mortality is included as an indicator of recipients' development status and need. The findings show that higher infant mortality rates in the recipient countries decrease the amount of ODA given by Turkey. This indicates Turkey's avoidance from the least developed countries in distributing development aid. On the other hand, recipient GDP per capita, another indicator of development, appears to have no statistically significant effect on Turkey's aid allocations. The weighted measure of victims of disaster in the recipient has a positive and statistically significant effect only on Turkey's humanitarian aid. This finding is in line with our expectations as emergency and disaster relief constitute an important part of Turkey's humanitarian discourse.

The issue position taken by recipients at the UN General Assembly has a negative and significant effect on Turkey's ODA. As the positional distance between Turkey and the recipient on the UN General Assembly increases, Turkey's ODA to recipient decreases. This finding corroborates the arguments concerning the effect of strategic drivers on emerging donors' aid allocation preferences. However, the variable's null effect on Turkey's humanitarian aid indicates that humanitarian aid is not utilized

as a means to exert political influence on the recipients. Democracy level of the recipients also appears positive and statistically significant for Turkey's ODA, albeit with a small coefficient. Nevertheless, the finding indicates a preference towards engaging with democratic countries when development aid is concerned. Similar to the previous variable, the effect of recipients' democracy on Turkey's humanitarian aid is null, indicating that issues related to governance and merit are not prioritized in Turkey's humanitarian aid allocations.

The level of political terror has a positive and statistically significant effect for all types of aid. As the level of political terror within the recipient country increases, Turkey provides more aid. This can be interpreted in two ways; first, an increase in political terror within a country also increases Turkey's ODA to that country. Turkey's concern for security and stability, and the political elites' attempt to mitigate the situation by providing development aid may be the underlying factor for this relationship. Second, political terror within a country also affects the overall population in the country and may cause humanitarian emergencies depending on its severity. Further, in cases where the recipient is geographically closer, disorder in the recipient country might have spillover effect on Turkey, such as increased migration and asylum applications. In that case, it is also not surprising that increasing levels of political terror also leads to an increase in Turkey's humanitarian aid. The results corroborate arguments related to securitization of aid, and both interpretations support the literature on the prevalence of security concerns on Turkey's aid allocations. Also, in line with the securitization argument, the political terror variable for Turkey appears positive and statistically significant for both types of aid. Many of Turkey's security-related issues take place in the south-east border and are affected by regional dynamics. Given that, it may be argued that the Turkish state employs foreign aid as one of the instruments to address instability not only in the region but also within its borders.

Among other control variables, distance between Turkey and the recipient has a negative and statistically significant effect on Turkish foreign aid, regardless of the type, with the caveat that the effect of distance on humanitarian aid is smaller than that for ODA. These findings indicate that Turkey allocates more development aid to countries that are geographically close, while being less hesitant to deliver aid to countries that are farther away when it comes to humanitarian aid. Other variables that indicate Turkey's aid-giving ability, such as GDP per capita and experiencing disasters, affect Turkey's aid in line with the expectations. Turkey appears to distribute more aid when its economy performs well.

Table 4.1 GLS Regression Estimates on Turkey's Foreign Aid

	ODA	Humanitarian Aid	ODA	Humanitarian Aid
Common Religion	1.982*** (0.283)	0.858*** (0.218)	0.748 (0.440)	0.030 (0.359)
Recip. Infant Mortality	-0.521** (0.166)	0.089 (0.073)	-0.396* (0.189)	0.101 (0.084)
Recip. GDPpc <sub>(t-1)</sub>	0.031 (0.047)	0.013 (0.022)	0.038 (0.042)	0.017 (0.019)
Recip. Disaster Victims	0.038 (0.032)	0.116*** (0.027)	0.028 (0.028)	0.111*** (0.028)
Imports from Donor <sub>(t-1)</sub>	-0.015 (0.016)	-0.008 (0.013)	0.011 (0.016)	-0.000 (0.011)
UN Agreement <sub>(t-1)</sub>	-0.328* (0.139)	-0.128 (0.101)	-0.174 (0.110)	-0.056 (0.103)
Common Language	5.896 (5.836)	1.868 (2.759)	6.039 (5.932)	1.787 (2.856)
Recip. Democracy <sub>(t-1)</sub>	0.039** (0.014)	0.016 (0.011)	0.023 (0.014)	0.008 (0.010)
Recip. Political Terror <sub>(t-1)</sub>	0.198* (0.083)	0.178* (0.072)	0.195** (0.074)	0.168* (0.066)
Recip. Population <sub>(t-1)</sub>	0.339*** (0.066)	0.013 (0.026)	0.259*** (0.072)	-0.001 (0.033)
Distance	-0.279*** (0.050)	-0.088*** (0.023)	-0.280*** (0.048)	-0.090*** (0.023)
TR GDPpc	1.744*** (0.159)	0.331*** (0.098)	1.653*** (0.177)	0.610*** (0.136)
TR GDP Growth	-0.011*** (0.003)	0.001 (0.003)	-0.015*** (0.004)	-0.001 (0.004)
TR Disaster Victims	-0.264*** (0.051)	-0.058 (0.032)	-0.175** (0.064)	-0.125** (0.048)
TR Political Terror	0.340*** (0.071)	0.080* (0.039)	0.201*** (0.058)	0.127** (0.039)
Year			-0.076 (0.044)	0.062* (0.031)
Common Religion × Year			-0.272* (0.107)	-0.035 (0.109)
Year × Year			0.000	-0.007*

			(0.004)	(0.003)
Common Religion			0.031***	0.007
× Year × Year			(0.008)	(0.008)
Year × Year			0.000	0.000*
× Year			(0.000)	(0.000)
Common Religion			-0.001***	-0.000
× Year × Year × Year			(0.000)	(0.000)
Constant	-24.334***	-5.365***	-21.516***	-8.926***
	(2.732)	(1.593)	(2.591)	(1.823)
N	4328	4328	4328	4328
$R^2$				

Standard errors in parentheses. Two-tailed tests.

\*  $p < 0.1$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$

Despite the initial picture seen in the Table 4.1, we should be careful about interpreting the results. First, the models show the average marginal effects of the variables for the period between 1990 and 2020. It is already established in the literature that Turkey's foreign aid policies and priorities change over time, and the additive approach fails to provide information on the changing effect of the variables. Second, due to the nature of our dependent variables, an additive GLS model may not provide the best fit. Introducing a polynomial time variable and an interaction term where the independent variable(s) are interacted with the cubic time variable would allow us to observe both positive and negative trends for the effect of the variable on Turkey's aid over time, while accounting for the effects of the other variables.

The analyses and findings presented in the remaining parts of this chapter, thus, take into account the variation of the effects of the variables of interests over time. A further note on methodology should be added on sample selection. The data sample used for the analysis presented below includes Syria, as well. However, I run the same analysis on a sample that does not include Syria and obtained similar findings. The findings for the sample that does not include Syria are included in the appendix.

Figures 4.1 and 4.2 show the marginal effect estimates for various variables on Turkey's ODA and humanitarian aid over the years. In contrast to the previously discussed additive model, the findings here come from an interactive model where each variable of interest was interacted with the polynomial time variable to reflect the changes in their marginal effects over time, holding all else constant. The results for the effects of various variables on Turkey's aid present a different picture

when their effects' over time variation is taken into account. Figure 4.1 shows the marginal effect estimates of various variables on Turkey's ODA. Among the variables that represent recipient need, only infant mortality appears to have a significant effect and only until 2008. Turkey's ODA is seen to decrease as the infant mortality rate of the recipients increase before 2008, and the effect of infant mortality becomes statistically indistinguishable from zero in the following years. This shows a relative selectivity in Turkey's ODA allocations concerning the development status of the recipient where Turkey appears to prefer giving aid to countries that are not most in need. On the other hand, recipients' GDP per capita or whether they experience a natural disaster do not have any statistically significant effect on Turkey's ODA allocations.

Concerning recipients' strategic importance for Turkey, economic and political factors appear to have different effects. Interestingly, Turkey gives less aid to its importers in the 1990s. The marginal effect estimate of imports by recipient becomes null in the first half of 2000s and turns positive during the period between 2007 and 2016. What is more, the positive effect of imports by the recipients from Turkey shows an increasing trend and then decreases after reaching its peak in 2013. 2016-2017 appears as another period where the effect of trade on Turkey's ODA shortly becomes null before having an increasingly negative effect afterwards. The changing trend in this variable corroborates the arguments in the literature, where Turkey is presented as a "trading state" starting from AKP's second term in 2007. On the other hand, the turning of the tables in the post-2016 era appears to be reflected in Turkey's aid allocations to its trade partners. Another indicator of recipients' strategic importance for Turkey is their alignment at the UN. It appears that the Turkish state paid attention to whether aid recipients were also allies in the international arena until the early 2000s. However, the marginal effect estimate of the UN agreement variable becomes statistically indistinguishable from zero starting from the early 2000s. It can be said that while Turkey allocated less aid to recipients that were positioned further with respect to their votes in the UN General Assembly before the AKP came to power in 2002, political alignment at the UN lost its prevalence in Turkey's foreign aid policy agenda. There may be several reasons for such findings. For one, the UN might have lost importance in the eyes of the AKP elites. Instead, other regional platforms or bilateral relationships might have been prioritized. Another possibility might relate to the conceptual and practical divorcing of recipients' political alignment and foreign aid for the Turkish state elites where political matters and development are considered independently.

As an indicator of cultural similarity, common language only appears to have a statistically significant effect on Turkey's ODA in the early 1990s. Turkey's official

aid development agency, TIKA, was founded with the primary aim to assist newly founded Turkic states in 1992, following the end of the Cold War. Over time, the region started stabilizing and TIKA's geographical focus expanded. Although cultural connections continue to be frequently referenced in TIKA's discourse, the null effect found for language similarity starting from mid 1990s is not surprising as other factors might have taken priority in Turkey's development agenda. Next, recipient's democratic status and political terror scale scores are another group of variables indicating good governance. The marginal effect estimate of recipients' democracy on Turkey's ODA appears null in the post-2002 period. On the other hand, recipients' experience of political terror is shown to have a positive and increasing effect on Turkey's ODA. While both variables are discussed as indicators of good governance in the literature, the discrepancy between their marginal effect estimates evokes interest. It is possible to argue that the finding that level of democracy does not have a meaningful effect on Turkey's development aid since 2002 reflects the indifference of the state elite towards democracy. Contrasting finding for the increased marginal effect of political terror, on the other hand, can be understood in relation to the securitization of foreign aid.

Regarding the control variables, recipient population appears to have a meaningful and positive effect on Turkey's ODA starting from early 2000s. While this finding, by itself, cannot provide a base for an argument concerning a specific policy position, it could be argued that Turkey might have aimed to increase its influence or visibility in the development sector. Distance between Turkey and the recipients is shown to have negative and statistically meaningful effect on Turkey's ODA throughout the period examined in this study. On the other hand, the negative marginal effect of distance on Turkey's ODA varies over time; it becomes stronger over time, reaches its peak around 2008, and gradually decreases afterwards. This trend can be related to Turkey's changing geographical focus and prioritization in ODA distribution, where countries closer to Turkey were prioritized more between mid-2000s and mid-2010s. The marginal effect of Turkey's GDP per capita has a positive and statistically significant effect on Turkey's development aid starting from mid-1990s. This finding is not surprising as increasing domestic economic situation would also allow the donor to increase its aid-giving. A rather intriguing finding concerns the effect of natural disasters on Turkey's ODA. Experience of disasters appears to have a positive and increasingly substantial effect on Turkey's aid with a relatively steeper slope starting from 2015. This finding arguably presents a strong invitation for deeper examination of the relationship between the domestic dynamics, specifically natural disasters, and Turkey's ODA allocations. Finally, Turkey's political terror experience appears to have a positive but decreasing effect on ODA until 2002, after

which it becomes null.

Figure 4.1 Marginal effect estimates of different variables on Turkey's ODA, as conditional on time

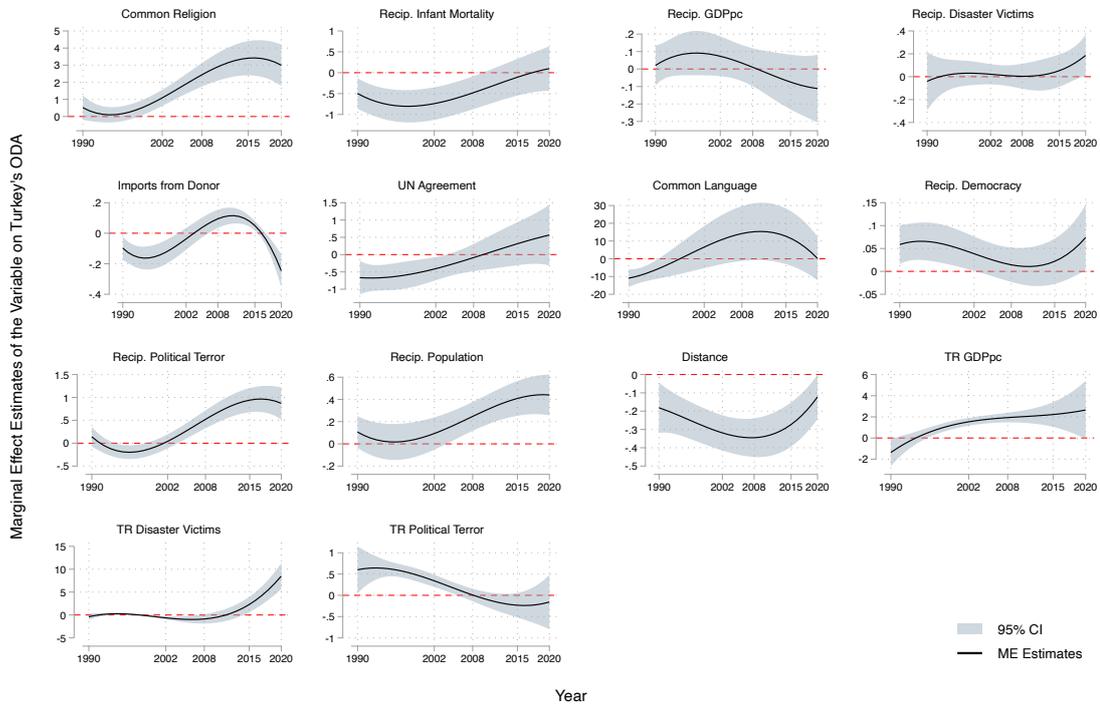


Figure 4.2 shows the marginal effect estimates of different variables on Turkey's humanitarian aid. Accordingly, recipients' infant mortality, GDP per capita, level of democracy, population, and language similarity between Turkey and the recipients appear to have no meaningful effect on Turkey's humanitarian aid. On the other hand, while long-term indicators of recipient need such as infant mortality and GDP per capita do not have statistically significant effects, the effect of natural disasters, which require an immediate response, is positive and statistically significant between mid-1990s and late 2010s. Furthermore, recipients' trade relationship with Turkey, specifically whether a recipient imports goods from Turkey or not, appears to have no effect on Turkey's humanitarian aid allocations until the second half of 2010. Importing goods from Turkey starts to have a negative effect on Turkey's humanitarian aid allocations in 2016. Agreement between the recipient and Turkey on the UN General Assembly also appears to have no effect on humanitarian aid for the most part of the examined period, except for the early 1990s. However, even in this period where there seems to be a statistically significant negative effect, the marginal effect's coefficient is close to zero. Recipients' experience of political terror is shown to have a positive and meaningful effect on Turkey's humanitarian aid starting from the 2000s. Again, compared to the same variable's effect on Turkey's

ODA, the effect on humanitarian aid appears to be weaker. The marginal effect of distance on humanitarian aid is negative and statistically significant but weaker compared to its effect on ODA. Interestingly, Turkey's economic performance, represented as its GDP per capita, appears negative and significant starting from 2013. Furthermore, the negative effect of GDP per capita on Turkey's humanitarian aid becomes stronger over time. Turkey's disaster experience appears to be another factor that has a positive meaningful effect on its humanitarian aid. Differently from the pattern observed for ODA, disaster experience become a significant factor affecting Turkey's humanitarian aid at the earlier period, starting from mid-2000s. Finally, political terror within the borders does not have any meaningful effect on Turkey's humanitarian aid allocations during the AKP era.

Figure 4.2 Marginal effect estimates of different variables on Turkey's humanitarian aid, as conditional on time

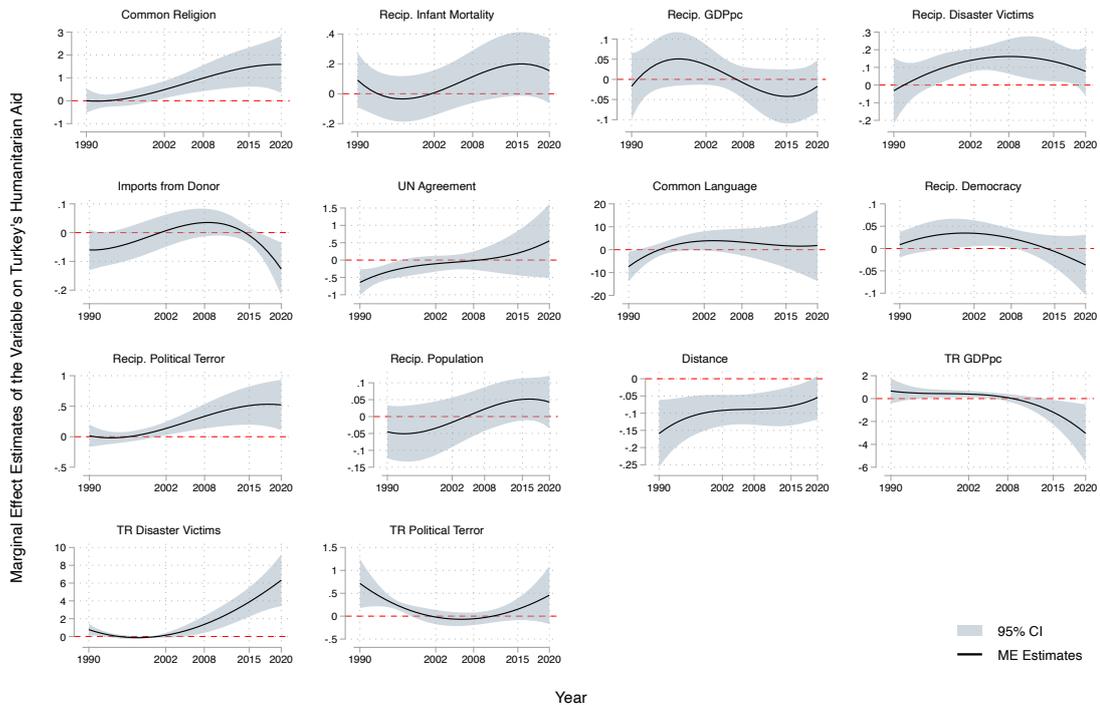


Figure 4.3 shows the marginal effect estimates of Religious Similarity on Turkey's ODA and humanitarian aid over the years. This figure is illuminating for many reasons. It allows us to visualize the marginal effect estimate of the variable of interest on different types of aid, and more importantly, to see the variation in our marginal effect estimates over time. The literature on aid heterogeneity points to the importance of method and approach with regards to the outcome. Here, disaggregating aid into its sub-categories enables us to see the marginal effect of the same variable on different types of aid. For instance, the marginal effect estimates of religious sim-

ilarity as conditional on time is statistically significant and positive starting from the late 1990s. With that said, the trend in the marginal effect estimates appears different for our two aid categories. For ODA, the marginal effect estimate of common religion shows a sharp increase in substantive terms until 2016 and then starts to decrease but still remains positive. For humanitarian aid, common religion has a positive and statistically significant effect starting around 2000. Over the years, the marginal effect estimate of common religion on humanitarian aid also increases. However, the effect on humanitarian aid neither shows an increasing trend as steep as that on ODA, nor reaches a level as high.

Figure 4.3 Marginal effect estimates of religious similarity on Turkey’s foreign aid, as conditional on time

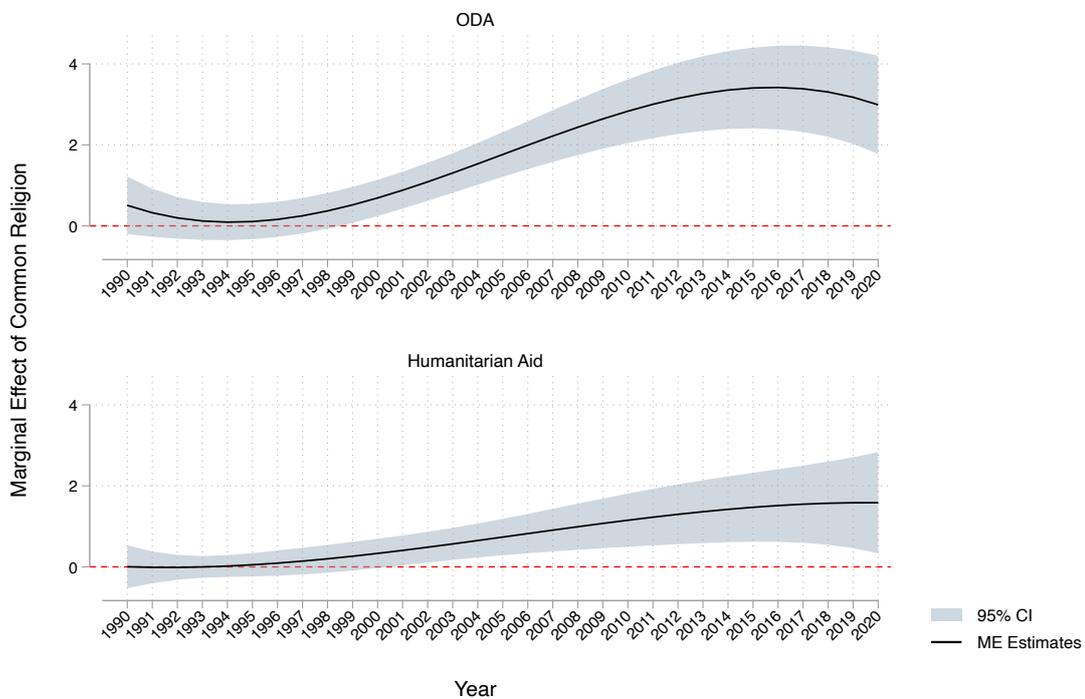
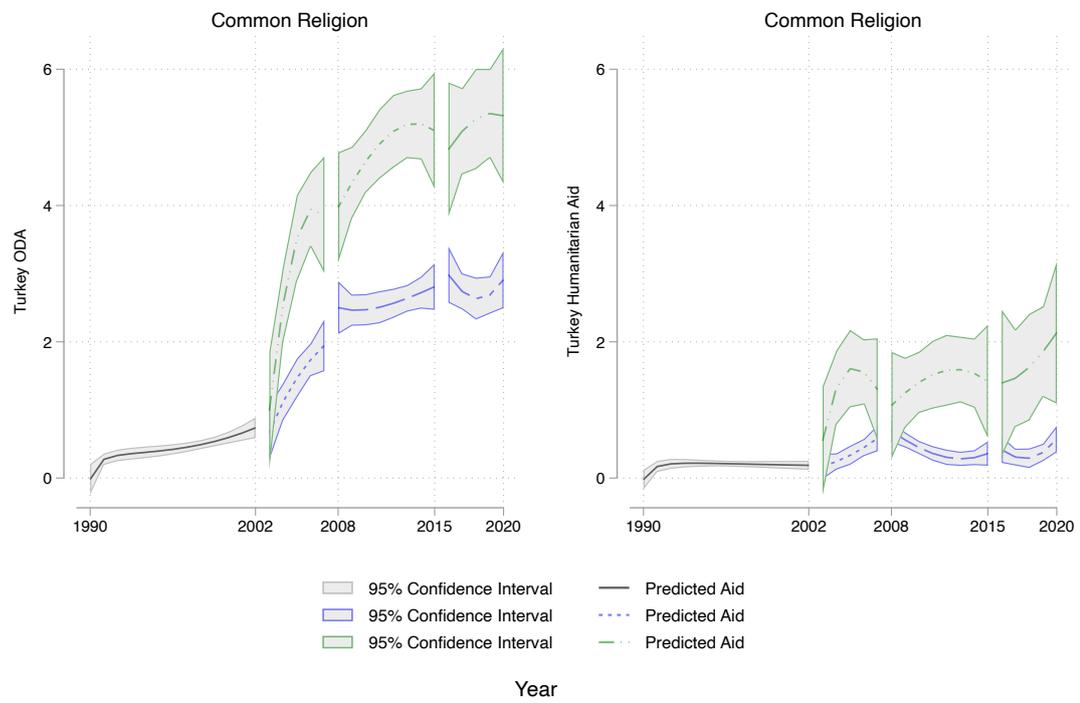


Figure 4.4 shows the predicted effects of Common Religion on different types of aid with respect to whether the population of a recipient country is majority-Muslim or not. The findings illustrated in these figures add a second explanatory layer to our investigation of Turkey’s aid heterogeneity. The predicted effects for common religion are not only shown with respect to different types of aid, but they are also broken down into two categories to examine the effect on countries with majority-Muslim populations and those where most of the population is not Muslim. The gray solid lines in the figure show the predicted effect of common religion for the entire sample before the AKP era. The green dashed lines show the predicted marginal effect of common religion on Turkey’s foreign aid during the AKP era for

the countries where more than half of the population is Muslim. The blue dotted lines show the predicted marginal effect of common religion on Turkey's foreign aid during the AKP era for countries where the less than half of the population is Muslim.

Similar to the trend shown in Figure 4.3, the predicted effect of common religion on Turkey's ODA appears substantively more significant than the predicted effect on Turkey's humanitarian aid for countries in both categories. The predicted effect of common religion on Turkey's ODA appears to follow quite a linear and stable trend between 1990 and 2002. Following AKP's coming to power, the predicted effect increases for all countries in our sample. However, the increase occurs more sharply for majority-Muslim countries compared to other countries where less than half of the population is Muslim. For both categories of countries, the predicted effect shows a steeper increase until 2008, then continue to increase for some time after 2008 and reaches its highest levels. Yet the increase slows down, and the trend starts to flatten around 2011-2012. In comparison, the predicted effect of common religion on Turkey's humanitarian aid is flatter for countries in either category. Still, majority-Muslim countries are predicted to receive higher humanitarian aid from Turkey compared to the countries in the other category. Moreover, the predicted effect of common religion increases for majority-Muslim countries between 2002 and 2020, albeit minimally. Although Turkey's post-2002 humanitarian aid appears to be positively affected by a higher level of religious similarity between the two countries, humanitarian aid to countries where less than half of the population consists of Muslims appears to follow a similar linear trend in the pre-AKP era, with the predicted effect of common religion being close to zero.

Figure 4.4 Marginal effect estimates of religious similarity on Turkey's foreign aid for countries with majority-Muslim populations and populations where less than half is Muslim



## 5. CONCLUSION

In this thesis I aimed to explore the effect of various factors on Turkey's foreign aid policies and how they change over time. I particularly focused on the effect of religion as a factor that affected how Turkey allocated foreign aid and as a framework through which the domestic and foreign policy actions were rationalized by the state elite.

An overview of the literature on foreign aid indicates that scholars focus on certain themes in trying to unpack the drivers of states' foreign aid behavior. Among these themes, humanitarian concerns as indicated by the recipients' development needs or experiences of natural disasters appear as one of the earlier points. Another perspective contests this approach by highlighting the donors' strategic interests as the main drivers of their foreign aid policies. In addition, as a policy instrument that enables states to navigate the international scene, some scholars point to states' use of foreign aid to amplify their soft power capabilities. Similarly concerned with states' interactions and their various manifestations in the foreign policy realm, a line of the literature focuses on the competition between the traditional and emerging donors as the main driver for states' foreign aid allocation decisions. Finally, another group of scholars turns their attention to the sub-state level along with the interaction between international and domestic dynamics behind states' varying foreign aid approaches.

Considering the breadth of the foreign aid literature and the plethora of countries examined as cases, studies on Turkey as a development actor appear to occupy a relatively narrow space. On the other hand, I suggest that the Turkish case is particularly interesting. First, as a middle power and an emerging donor, Turkey both receives and distributes foreign aid. What makes the Turkish case interesting is that the amount of foreign aid that is distributed by Turkey showed a striking increase, exceeded the amount of aid that was received, and placed Turkey as one of the top aid donors when the allocations as a percentage of the country's gross national income (GNI) over the past decade. Second, Turkey's foreign aid approach

appears to have gone through several transformations and changed course within the same period, despite the same political party has hold the government in the said time frame.

These observations beckon questions about the forces behind such sharp increase in Turkey's foreign aid allocations as well as the factors that drove the Turkish foreign aid policy in varying directions. Literature on Turkey's foreign aid policies indicate many different factors as influences driving the changes. One explanation points to Turkey's condition as a middle power, where its struggles for expanding influence led foreign aid as a niche policy area that has not been fully claimed by other actors. Turkey's aspirations as a middle power and an emerging donor are argued to reactively affect the geographical focus and agenda priorities in its development activities. Accordingly, foreign aid was utilized as a soft power instrument to expand Turkey's influence within the recipient countries and to claim moral superiority against more traditional donors and institutions. Another group of scholars examine to what extent humanitarian concerns drive Turkey's allocation decisions. In contrast to the argument that highlights humanitarian concerns, a group of studies propose that strategic interests, mainly driven by economic and security-related objectives, constitute the prevalent motivation behind Turkey's foreign aid. Finally, some other factors commonly discussed as the drivers of Turkish aid in the literature include cultural similarity with the recipients; shared history; geographical proximity; and Turkey's own material conditions.

Informed by this literature, I aimed to answer the following questions in this thesis: First, how do the factors, which are commonly accepted in the literature as the drivers of Turkish foreign aid, affect Turkey's aid allocations over a more extended period, namely between 1990 and 2020? Do they differ for Official Development Assistance (ODA) and humanitarian aid? Second, how does religious similarity with the recipient country affect Turkey's foreign aid? Does the magnitude of its effect change over time? Third, what underlying factors and dynamics explain the effect of religion on Turkey's foreign aid?

Although the overall foreign aid literature is rich with studies that focus on aid heterogeneity and fluctuations over time, to the best of my knowledge, this study constitutes the first attempt at applying aid heterogeneity approach to the Turkish case. Most studies on Turkey's foreign aid focus on a particular region or adopt a more static approach in examining changing dynamics between periods. In addressing this gap, I expanded my analysis to a wider time span, covering the period between 1990 and 2020. I also utilized an approach that allows to observe the changes in the effects of different drivers of foreign aid over the years. Accordingly,

I presented a two-layered argument which focuses both on the dynamic relationship between material domestic and international factors and on the effect of ideational matters, particularly religion, on Turkish foreign aid policy. Again, to the best of my knowledge, this study constitutes the first attempt that both extends the period of analysis and highlights domestic and international factors to account for the increasing prominence of religion on Turkey's foreign aid.

My findings indicate that the trends in Turkish foreign policy were shaped by the interaction of domestic and international factors and were modified by the government elites' Islamist worldview. Domestically, increasing conservatism and political polarization, intensifying centralization of power and authoritarianism, and frequent turbulence experienced in the political and economic environment appear to contribute to this dynamic. Among the international factors, Turkey's middle power ambitions and expansion of its activities as an emerging donor, changing international balance of power dynamics and resulting alliance formations, and conflicts in the Middle East and North Africa region can be highlighted as the pivotal factors. The rhetorical framework constructed around religion served as the glue to combine these domestic and international forces. In particular, such rhetoric helped accelerate the spillover of clientelism and favoritism that have been prevalent in the public sector on the foreign aid sector, as well as the involvement of religiously-oriented NGOs in Turkish foreign aid practices. Furthermore, framing foreign aid activities within a discourse that marries humanitarianism and Islamic norms and teachings allowed the AKP to selectively prioritize issues, both within the borders and in the international arena, and strategically claim the upper hand.

In conclusion, the implications of my findings are many-fold. As a middle power and an emerging donor, Turkey assumed different policy positions over time in reaction to changing international, regional, and domestic dynamics. The Turkish government used both material and ideational tools to assert influence both domestically and internationally, where Islam and its teachings constituted the normative basis relied on by the political elite. Furthermore, there is a positive relationship between religious similarity and Turkey's foreign aid. References to religious discourse and relevant norms have been strategically instrumentalized through foreign aid policies to assert agency abroad and dominate the political scene at home. The opportunity to combine material and non-material means through foreign aid policies, such as funds and ideology, added to the versatility of foreign aid as a policy instrument for Turkey's state elite. Foreign aid, as a niche area, both provided Turkey with an opening to exert itself as an emerging middle-power and allowed flexibility to change policies or areas of focus as needed during turbulent periods.

Our understanding of the determinants of Turkish foreign aid would further benefit from future research that can focus on a number of different approaches. With respect to the theoretical foundations, literature on aid heterogeneity can guide the future research. For instance, further breakdown of Turkey's foreign aid allocations in sectors and testing the same empirical relationship can provide different outcomes for different categories. This was not possible to do in this thesis due to the lack of data for the sectoral breakdown of Turkey's aid allocations for each recipient country. Another contribution could come from examining the effects of different factors on Turkey's aid with respect to different regions to discover variations in geographic focus, if there are any. Finally, the drivers of foreign aid can be re-conceptualized to reflect long- and short-term objectives. This approach would provide us with an opportunity to compare Turkey's responsiveness to external events and the weight of its strategic roadmap in determining its foreign policy.

Methodological improvements can also serve to fine tune the insights gained from research. For example, running the same analysis using different estimators, improving the dataset by addressing the issues around missing observations, testing the effects of the phenomena of interest by using different variable operationalizations can all be listed among the empirical steps that could contribute to our understanding. Qualitative approaches to unpack the causal mechanism between Turkey's aid and its drivers can also be expanded to include a broader spectrum of primary sources, elite interviews, or participant observation in development settings. In sum, both the overall field of foreign aid and Turkey's engagement as an emerging development actor continue to present a fertile ground that can offer theoretical and practical insights.

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## APPENDIX A

### Descriptive Statistics

Table A.1 Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	SD	Min	Max	N
TR ODA	1.78	2.50	0.00	13.72	4,476
TR Humanitarian Aid	0.43	1.37	0.00	13.72	4,476
Recip. Infant Mortality	7.95	1.16	0.00	9.85	4,476
Recip. GDPpc	11.50	2.91	0.00	15.36	4,476
Recip. Disaster Victims	0.45	0.87	0.00	4.76	4,476
Imports from Donor	4.74	3.99	0.00	14.09	4,476
UN Agreement	1.05	0.56	0.00	2.91	4,476
Common Language	0.00	0.02	0.00	0.26	4,476
Common Religion	0.23	0.35	0.00	0.99	4,476
Recip. Democracy	1.28	5.58	-10.00	10.00	4,476
Recip. Political Terror	2.60	1.19	0.00	5.00	4,476
Recip. Population	19.83	3.00	0.00	25.67	4,476
Distance	6.58	3.29	0.00	9.21	4,476
TR GDPpc	13.31	0.57	12.32	14.04	4,476
TR GDP Growth	4.53	4.42	-5.75	11.20	4,476
TR Disaster Victims	0.17	0.38	0.00	1.71	4,476
TR Political Terror	3.82	0.55	3.00	5.00	4,476

## Repeating the Empirical Analysis by Excluding Syria From the Sample

Table A.2 GLS regression estimates on Turkey's foreign aid (Syria excluded)

	ODA	Humanitarian Aid
Common Religion	0.792 (0.456)	0.005 (0.373)
Year	-0.070 (0.044)	0.071* (0.029)
Common Religion $\times$ Year	-0.262* (0.110)	-0.003 (0.109)
Year $\times$ Year	-0.000 (0.004)	-0.008** (0.003)
Common Religion $\times$ Year $\times$ Year	0.030*** (0.008)	0.005 (0.009)
Year $\times$ Year $\times$ Year	0.000 (0.000)	0.000** (0.000)
Common Religion $\times$ Year $\times$ Year $\times$ Year	-0.001*** (0.000)	-0.000 (0.000)
Recip. Infant Mortality <sub>(t-1)</sub>	-0.468** (0.174)	0.033 (0.057)
Recip. GDPpc <sub>(t-1)</sub>	0.044 (0.042)	0.024 (0.017)
Recip. Disaster Victims	0.032 (0.028)	0.120*** (0.026)
Imports from Donor <sub>(t-1)</sub>	0.014 (0.016)	0.003 (0.011)
UN Agreement <sub>(t-1)</sub>	-0.215* (0.107)	-0.136 (0.079)
Common Language	6.459 (6.141)	2.597 (2.996)
Recip. Democracy <sub>(t-1)</sub>	0.025 (0.014)	0.011 (0.010)
Recip. Political Terror <sub>(t-1)</sub>	0.159* (0.065)	0.121** (0.041)
Recip. Population <sub>(t-1)</sub>	0.283*** (0.068)	0.022 (0.024)
Distance	-0.274***	-0.079***

	(0.048)	(0.020)
TR GDP <sub>pc</sub>	1.678***	0.646***
	(0.177)	(0.132)
TR GDP Growth	-0.016***	-0.003
	(0.004)	(0.003)
TR Disaster Victims	-0.186**	-0.146***
	(0.063)	(0.043)
TR Political Terror	0.196***	0.119**
	(0.059)	(0.039)
Constant	-21.688***	-9.209***
	(2.590)	(1.791)
N	4298	4298

Standard errors in parentheses. Two-tailed tests.

\* p<0.1, \*\* p<0.05, \*\*\* p<0.01

Figure A.1 Marginal effect estimates of religious similarity on Turkey's foreign aid, as conditional on time (Syria excluded)

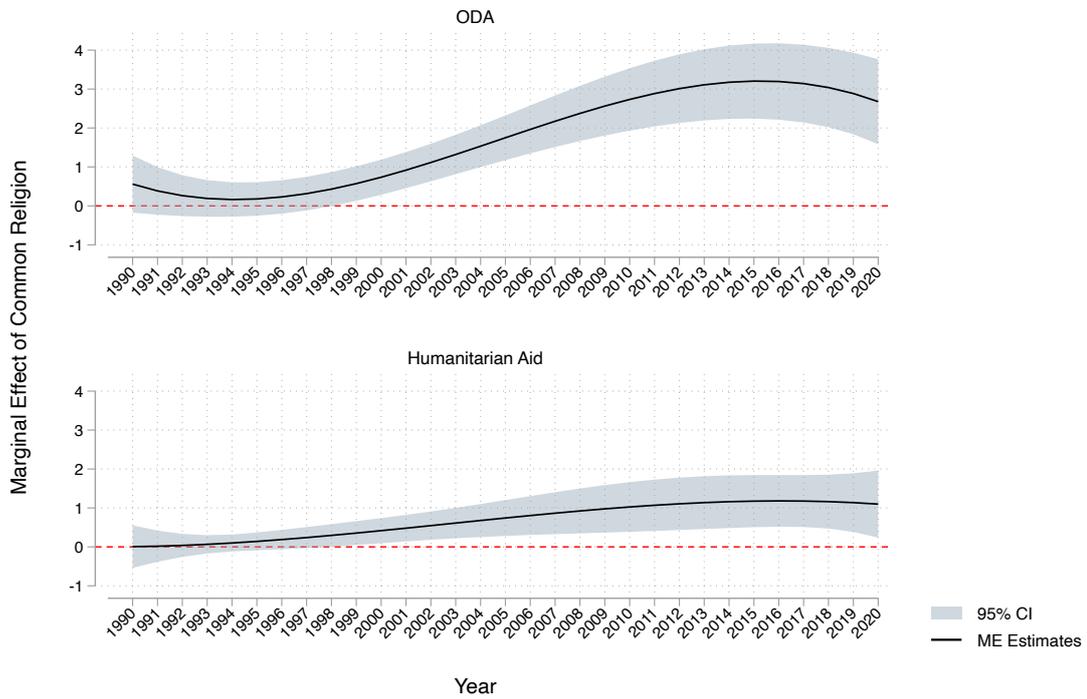


Figure A.2 Marginal effect estimates of religious similarity on Turkey's foreign aid for countries with majority-Muslim populations and populations where less than half is Muslim (Syria excluded)

