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TURKISH INFLUENCE IN THE SOUTH CAUCASUS AND LEVANT: THE CONSEQUENCES FOR NATO AND THE EU

by

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September 2013

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- reflects on the intertwined historical connection between Turkey and Europe in the South Caucasus and Levant;
- examines the extent to which Turkey's interest and policies under the AKP and European Union (EU)-North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) interest and policies intersect and diverge in the two regions; and
- evaluates the implications and avenues for cooperation in areas of common interest.

The analysis and assessment shows Turkey's policies in the South Caucasus dovetail with EU-NATO regional interest and are not politically Islamic but pragmatic in nature.
In the Levant, similar to the South Caucasus, the AKP's interest and policies are somewhat aligned to those of EU-NATO; however, the regions volatility and Turkey's cultural and religious linkages to the Middle East are an added dimension which shapes the AKP's independent foreign policy trajectory. Additionally, realpolitik, not Islamism, rules the AKP's interaction with both state and non-state regional political actors.

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TURKISH INFLUENCE IN THE SOUTH CAUCASUS AND LEVANT: THE CONSEQUENCES FOR NATO AND THE EU

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AGT	Aegean Gateway Terminal
AKP	Justice and Development Party
ANP	Annual National Program
BTC	Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan
BTK	Baku-Tbilisi-Kars
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
CSDP	Common Security and Defense Policy
CUP	Committee of Union and Progress
EEC	European Economic Cooperation
ENP	European Neighborhood Policy
ENPI	European Neighborhood and Partnership Instrument
EPAA	European Phased Adaptive Approach
EU	European Union
EUFOR	European Union Force
EUPOL	EU Police Mission in the Palestinian Territories
EUROMED	Euro-Mediterranean Partnership
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
IPAP	Individual Partnership Action Plan
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
MD	Mediterranean Dialogue
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PfP	Partnership for Peace
PKK	Kurdistan Workers' Party
SOCAR	State Oil Company of the Azerbaijan Republic
TIKA	Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency
TOBB	Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. MAJOR RESEARCH QUESTION

The transformation of the international system in the 21st century has seen the rise of Turkey as a middle-power with aspirations to be a great power in the shifting international order of Eurasia and the Middle East. Should this transformation of Turkey's national security interest and foreign policy actions concern the makers of policy in the European Union (EU) and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)? As this study has been written, the civil war in Syria among pro and anti-Assad factions has raged, and spilled onto Turkish territory at the same time that a wave of anti-Erdogan protest erupted in Istanbul and elsewhere in early June 2013. With these events in mind, the present study analyzes the consequences and opportunities for NATO and the EU presented by Turkey's widening foreign policy objectives and national interest in two volatile geographic regions; the Caucasus and the Levant. Moreover, this study seeks to understand how Turkey's political-geography and relationships with entities and states outside of NATO and the EU inform and interact with EU-NATO interest and strategies. Are actions under the Justice and Development Party (*Adalet ve Kalkinma Partisi*, AKP) signs of a Turkey drifting away from the West or do they complement the desires of Ankara's Euro-Atlantic allies?

B. IMPORTANCE

Geography, economy, and security play an important role in Turkey's strategic outlook. Astride Asia and Europe, Turkey has always been a pivot of the fate of the eastern Mediterranean and the European system of states from the Ottoman Empire's epoch to the eclipse. During which time the Ottoman's penetrated deep into seventeenth century Europe leaving a lasting legacy, particularly in the Balkans. Since 1952 at the latest, Turkey has occupied a key geostrategic location along the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO) southeastern frontier, an area at the nexus of multiple regions and sub-regions: the Balkans, the Caucasus, Central Asia, and the Middle East whose fate in the story of nations and conflict needs little explanation.

Turkey's newfound confidence and foreign policy approach in the last decade is encouraged by economic growth and the opportunities it presents for increased regional and international influence and trade. Turkey's new direction creates questions concerning its future relationship with the West. This opportunity is made more so by the waning fortunes of the western allies in their variety and complexity.

Washington is shifting strategic resources and political energy to the Asia-Pacific region in anticipation of perceived future threats to U.S. national interest. Despite the troubles faced by the EU and NATO in the wake of the recent past with extended warfare and economic crisis, Europe's pursuit of geopolitical stability along its periphery must continue and fill the void created by the shift in U.S. strategic focus. Importantly, 21 countries are members of both NATO and the EU; consequently, the EU-NATO relationship is nearly symbiotic and finds its most problematic juncture in the relationship with Turkey.[1] The EU, for instance, utilizes NATO forces in support of common objectives in the Balkans under operations such as EU military operation Althea in Bosnia-Herzegovina, which began in 2004. The EU's focus on the current economic crisis; and NATO's weariness from over ten years in Afghanistan provides Ankara the opportunity to increase its influence in the South Caucasus, and Middle East; regions which Russia and Iran potentially seek further influence at the expense of NATO and the EU.

Turkey is located at the nexus of 70 percent of the world's oil and gas reserves and is an important transit country for both Caspian and Middle East energy.[2] In both NATO and EU strategic documents energy is defined as an important element in European security. NATO's *Strategic Concept 2010* and 2012 *Chicago Summit Declaration*, and the EU's 2003 *European Security Strategy* and a February 2011 presentation to the European Council by EC President, Jose Manuel Barroso, detail

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[1] North Atlantic Treaty Organization, *EU-NATO: A Strategic Partnership*, Last modified October 29, 2012, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_49217.htm.

[2] Hasan Alsancak, "The Role of Turkey in Global Energy: Bolstering Energy Infrastructure Security," http://www.ensec.org/; International Energy Agency, "Energy Policies of IEA Countries: Turkey," 2009, http://www.iea.org/publications/freepublications/publication/turkey2009.pdf, 8.

energy security and source diversification as NATO and EU concerns.[3] Europe's energy demands are expected to remain constant for the next 15 to 20 years but the demands of China, India, and other emerging economies is expected to create pressure.[4] Additionally, Europe imports more than half the oil and gas it consumes; dependence on imports is expected to increase through 2030.[5] Germany, for example, plans to eliminate its nuclear power-plants by 2020 creating deepening dependence on Russia gas.[6] Russia is the dominate supplier of oil and natural gas to Central and Western Europe and supplies EU countries with roughly 35 percent of crude oil and 32 percent of natural gas requirements.[7] Developing Caspian energy sources with Turkey as the primary transit nation provides NATO and the EU the means to increase energy source diversification, positively affect competitiveness in the EU energy market, and reduce the potential for states such as Russia to use energy as a political tool.

Civil military relations in Turkey form an aspect of the question at hand and the determination of Turkey's role as a regional power in the years to come. The primacy of pluralistic civilian authority over that of the military is evident in Turkey. The emergence of the AKP in 2002 signaled popular desire for a larger, public role for Islam in Turkish society. The popular support provided to the AKP weakened the military's position as enforcer of Kemalist dogma. In many respects the vote also simply signaled the public's impatience with the prior government's corruption.[8] In terms of NATO, the increased influence of the AKP government and a foreign policy migrating from the West to the East must be addressed. A shift to the East does not constitute Turkish dismissal of its western link; however, NATO and the EU must determine the opportunities and potential

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[3] European Commission, *Energy Priorities for Europe*, http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/energy3_en.pdf.

[4] European Commission, *Background on Energy in Europe*, 4 February 2011.

[5] Ibid.

[6] United States Senate, "Energy and Security from the Caspian to Europe," December 12, 2012 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2012), 9.

[7] European Commission, *Energy production and imports*, Eurostat, August 2012, http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Energy_production_and_imports.

[8] "Rotten Eggs Unbroken Turkey's Campaign Against Corruption in High Places Seems to be Faltering," *The Economist*, November 1, 2001, http://www.economist.com/node/842934.

consequences presented by Turkish foreign policy. Importantly, Turkey can complement or complicate NATO interest defined in the alliance's 2010 Strategy, such as: NATO-Russia cooperation, EU-NATO cooperation, missile defense, and water scarcity. Common EU-NATO interest such as energy security; specifically, the demand for diversified sources of oil and gas, and the Arab-Israeli conflict are potentially influenced by Turkish unilateral activities.

Turkey's EU membership goal adulterated the power of the Kemalist camp, specifically the military. EU criteria for membership demands democratization (the basic requirement for EU membership) demands subjugation of the military to civilian authority; therefore, the Turkish military, the self-proclaimed guardians of Kemalism reluctantly acquiesced and submitted authority to civilian leaders. Ironically, by popular vote, the moderately Islamist AKP took power in 2002 as a consequence of Turkey's push for EU membership. The AKP party then developed political, social, and legislative reforms consistent with the EU's Copenhagen criteria.[9] In 2004 the European Council proclaimed Turkey met the required political pre-conditions (democratic principles, rule of law, human rights, protection of minorities) for the accession process.[10]

The elongated accession process and the doubts for Turkish membership conveyed by the EU's two most influential members (Germany and France) play a role in Turkey's unilateral approach and cultivation of Black Sea, Caucasian, and Middle Eastern economic and political ties. Despite Turkey's rejection by the EU, Turkey is economically, if not, institutionally integrated with EU member states. EU exports to Turkey, for instance, totaled roughly 74 billion euro in 2012; Turkish exports to Europe totaled approximately 47 billion euro (see Table 1).[11]

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[9] Kemal Kirişci, "Democracy Diffusion: The Turkish Experience," in *Turkey and It's Neighbors,* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2012), 153.

[10] European Union, *Turkey-Presidency Conclusions*, 16–17 December 2004, http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/turkey/presidency_conclusions16_17_12_04_en.pdf.

[11] Thomas Straubhaar, "Turkey as an Economic Neighbor," in *Turkey and It's Neighbors,* (Boulder,CO: Lynne Rienner, 2012), 186.

EU'S TRADE BALANCE WITH TURKEY

European Union, Trade with Turkey millions of euro, %

Period	Imports	Variation (%, y-o-y)	Share of total EU Imports (%)	Exports	Variation (%, y-o-y)	Share of total EU Exports (%)	Balance	Trade
2008	45,963	-2.3	2.9	54,415	3.1	4.1	8,452	100,379
2009	36,220	-21.2	2.9	44,385	-18.4	4.0	8,165	80,605
2010	42,397	17.1	2.8	61,747	39.1	4.5	19,350	104,143
2011	48,143	13.6	2.8	73,096	18.4	4.7	24,954	121,239
2012	47,789	-0.7	2.7	75,172	2.8	4.5	27,383	122,961
2012Q1	12,061	-	2.7	17,766	-	4.4	5,705	29,827
2012Q2	11,982	-	2.7	19,341	-	4.6	7,359	31,323
2012Q3	11,363	-	2.5	18,971	-	4.5	7,607	30,334
2012Q4	12,383	-	2.8	19,095	-	4.4	6,712	31,478
2013Q1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2013Q2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2013Q3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2013Q4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Average annual growth (2008-2012)		1.0			8.4			5.2

Table 1. EU-Turkey Bilateral Trade.[12]

Security is another important component of the Turkey-Europe relationship. Turkey and Europe are part of an interconnected security environment which links the two by geography, culture, and history. Ankara's relevance to NATO, defined initially by Cold War defense requirements, is now legitimated by Turkey's place as a regional power along the European periphery.

Turkey's role in post-Cold War European security is evidenced by its contribution to NATO operations in the Balkans and Afghanistan. Turkey supported NATO Peace-keeping operations in the Balkans by providing land forces, headquarters elements, and fighter squadrons during both Operation Deny Flight in Bosnia and Operation Allied Force in Kosovo.[13] Turkey's contribution to the NATO International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) includes leading both ISAF Command Headquarters and Kabul Regional Command on multiple occasions and consistently maintaining its status as one of the major troop contributing nations since 2003.[14] Most recently, Turkey agreed on the

[12] European Union, *EU Bilateral Trade and Trade with the World*, April 26, 2013.

[13] Ali Karaosmanoglu, "The Evolution of the National Security Culture and the Military in Turkey." *Journal of International Affairs* 54, no. 1 (2000): 211.

[14] Janes Sentinel Security Assessment—Eastern Mediterranean. 18; Afghanistan ISAF, Accessed March 12, 2013, http://www.isaf.nato.int/troop-numbers-and-contributions/index.php.

construction of an AN/TPY-2 ballistic missile defense radar site in its eastern region as part of the U.S. led European Phased Adaptive Approach (EPAA) defense network.

The post-Cold War development of the European Community's *Common Foreign and Security Policy* (CFSP), formerly the *European Security and Defense Policy* (ESDP), served to adulterate Turkey's influence over European security issues.[15] However, Ankara demonstrated its ability to influence European security policy by creating obstacles to EU-NATO cooperation and institution building. Grounded primarily in fears that the EU, as a military contingent, could intervene against Turkey vis á vis Cyprus, Ankara demanded a mechanism ensuring Turkey's role in European decision making on Cyprus related issues. The 2001 Ankara Document, developed by Turkey in coordination with the U.S. and UK, established that no EU-led operations shall be conducted against NATO allies which are not members of the EU.[16]

Turkey's security and economic interest are clearly oriented Westward despite the appearance of superficial Islamist accoutrements under the AKP. The current stalemate reference Turkey's EU accession does not negate the importance of Turkey to Europe in both the economic and security realms.

C. PROBLEMS AND HYPOTHESIS

In the past, Turkey followed a cautious foreign policy approach in an effort to ensure "zero problems with neighbors." International affairs analysts Igor Torbakov and Hanna Ojanen correctly state, "The Turkey that Europe and America are likely to deal with in the foreseeable future is a different kind of geopolitical animal—one that the Western allies appear to find difficult to get used to."[17] After the AKP's 2011 landslide election victory, third term Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan proclaimed: "The

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[15] European Union, *Common Foreign and Security Policy* Accessed February 7, 2013, http://eeas.europa.eu/cfsp/index_en.htm.

[16] Şebnem Udum, "Turkey's Role in Post-Cold War European Security Policy," in *European Security in Transition*, ed. Gunther Hauser and Franz Kernic (Hampshire: Ashgate, 2006), 165.

[17] Igor Torbakov and Hanna Ojanen, "Looking for a New Strategic Identity: Is Turkey Emerging as an Independent Regional Power?," *Finnish Institute of International Affairs Briefing Paper*, May 2009, 7.

Middle East, the Caucasus, and the Balkans have won as much as Turkey."[18] Erdoğan's words signaled a shift in focus and an increase in foreign policy activity by the Turkish government. Turkey's military power and soft power (economic, cultural and historical linkages, and diplomacy) within the regions it borders vary, but the potential for increased Turkish influence is favorable. According to the *Futures Power Index*, Turkey will compete with Saudi Arabia and Iran for influence in the Middle East in the years to come.[19]

This study surmises the AKP's foreign policies and strategy in the South Caucasus and the Levant creates both obstacles and opportunities for the EU and NATO. After years of cautious foreign policy predicated on maintaining amicable relations with its neighbors and working within the NATO construct, Turkey gradually increased its level of unilateral regional engagement. Turkey's geostrategic calculations are shaped by years of European Imperial influence and intrigue, and competition with what was once Turkey's traditional adversary—Russia. At the forefront of Turkey-Russia relations are overlapping interest in the South Caucasus and Black Sea region. The objectives of Ankara's policy in the South Caucasus include maintaining regional stability, increasing trade, and avoiding friction with Russia. Turkey's foreign policy approach entails balancing its ties to NATO and the U.S. with gradual rapprochement with Moscow. The U.S.-Russia relationship places Turkey in a delicate position as it attempts to meet U.S.-NATO obligations and assuage Russian geopolitical demands. The 2008 Georgia-Russia conflict compelled Turkey to respond to instability in its backyard. Parallel to French president Nicolas Sarkozy's efforts to end the conflict in his role as EU president, Ankara conducted its own diplomatic effort to end the Russia-Georgia conflict. On the night of 11 August 2008, Erdogan and his Foreign Policy Minister Ali Babacan met with Russia's Prime Minister Vladimir Putin, President Dmitri Medvedev, and Foreign Minister Sergey

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[18] Sussane Güsten, "Mandate for a New Turkish Era," *New York Times*, June 15, 2011, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/16/world/europe/16iht-M16-TURKEY-POLICY.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0.

[19] "The International Futures Modeling System Version 6.69," University of Denver, 2013, http://www.ifs.du.edu/ifs/index.aspx.

V. Lavrov and "urged them to cease hostilities and certainly not march on Tbilisi."[20] Some western countries interpret Ankara's unilateralism as further proof of Turkey's gradual movement away from NATO and the West. Turkey's location on the volatile East-West corridor and Ankara's perceived oscillation between the West, Russia, and the East creates a complex convergence of foreign policy issues and relationships. Turkey heavily depends on Russia for natural gas and trade.[21] Economic leverage applied by Russia potentially impacts Turkey's stance on EU, NATO, U.S., *and* UN issues. Events just after the Russian invasion of Georgia exemplify the potential for Russian coercion. U.S. Navy vessels supporting NATO Operation Active Endeavor attempted to enter the Black Sea with humanitarian aid for war-torn Georgia; Russia pressured Turkey to not let the vessels through the Bosporus straits.[22]

Turkey's foreign policy movements in the Middle East are also transforming the geostrategic landscape. Rapprochement between Turkey and Iran is a potential problem. Turkey maintains a relationship with Iran despite international condemnation of Tehran's suspected nuclear weapons program. Related to the Iran question is Turkey's lukewarm relationship with Tehran's nemesis— Israel. Ankara's poor relationship with Tel-Aviv over the last few years complicates the Palestinian question. Turkish PM Recep Tayyip Erdoğan is cultivating a relationship with Hamas that in the long-term potentially supports the peace process and the efforts of the Quartet (the EU, UN, U.S., and Russia) or hampers diplomatic efforts for an amicable settlement.

The Turkish governments growing tendency to dilute democratic principles and secularist ideas and increasingly support Islamist ideology within government institutions is a source of tension between the West and Ankara. Furthermore, burgeoned by a vibrant economy, Turkey is taking steps to increase its profile within the South Caucasus, and Middle East. Turkish Foreign minister Ahmet Davutoğlu's publication *Alternative*

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[20]Bulent Aliriza, Edward C. Chow, Andrew C. Kuchins, Haim Malka, and Julianne Smith, *Turkey's Evolving Dynamics: Strategic Choices for US Turkey Relations*, (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, March 2009), 62.

[21] Alexander Ghaleb, "Natural Gas as an Instrument of Russian State Power," The Letort Papers-Strategic Studies Institute, 2011, http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/.

[22] Bulent Aliriza et al., "Turkey's Evolving," 66;

Paradigms: The Impact of Islam and Western Weltanschauung on Political Theory in 1993 suggest political Islam is incompatible with Western democratic political traditions.[23] Further evidence suggests non-democratic practices are creeping into domestic policies (e.g., suppression of the free press). Ankara's past policies were informed by its ongoing struggle for EU membership; empirical evidence and rhetoric emanating from EU member-states such as France suggests Turkish membership is not on the horizon. Both the EU's rebuff of Turkish membership and Turkey's economic success play an important role in Ankara's unilateralism and the perception of an Eastward shift. In the past the Turkish military traditionally held sway in the political realm as the keeper of modern Turkey's Kemalist traditions. The Turkish military took steps to increase Turkey's chances for EU membership by allowing itself to be subsumed by civilian authority. Ironically, the military's efforts led indirectly to conditions that allowed for the arrest of hundreds of senior military leaders and the emergence of a political party which does not strongly embrace Kemalism.

Turkey's newfound foreign policy approach is potentially problematic for NATO and the EU. Energy security is a problem voiced by both NATO in its *2010 Strategic Concept* and by the EU in the 2003 *European Security Strategy* and a 2011 background report on energy in Europe prepared for the EU Council.[24] Europe's natural gas and oil needs are predicted to remain somewhere near current demand levels but heavy dependence on one primary source and the increasing consumption of emerging economies creates energy concerns and downstream impacts on other commodities and industry.[25] Turkey-EU cooperation (or lack of cooperation) in the energy sector portends far reaching implications for Europe and exporters in the Caspian Basin. If Russian

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[23] Ahmet Davutoğlu, *Alternative Paradigms: The Impact of Islamic and Western Waltanschauungs on Political Theory* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1993), 2.

[24] North Atlatic Treaty Organization, *Strategic Concept For the Defence and Security of The Members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation*, 2010, http://www.nato.int/lisbon2010/strategic-concept-2010-eng.pdf, 17; European Union, *EU Security Strategy*, December 12, 2003, http://consilium.europa.eu/, 3. European Commission, *Background on Energy in Europe*, February 4, 2011, http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/energy_background_en.pdf.

[25] Ibid.

leverage in the region is not balanced Caspian fuel potentially transits through Russian versus Turkey further entrenching Europe's and the Caspian state's dependence on Moscow.

The activist foreign policy implemented by Turkey's ruling Justice and Development Party (*Adalet ve Kalkinma Partisi*, AKP) is viewed warily by NATO and the EU. Since joining NATO in 1952, Turkey has played the role of both pivotal ally and conflicted unilateralist; Turkey's emergence as a unilateral actor adds an additional layer of complexity to its relationship with the U.S. and NATO.

D. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature and strategic documents related to Turkey's foreign policy movements and national interest, geopolitical issues in the South Caucasus and the Middle East, and NATO and EU strategic objectives within these regions are readily available. However, information dedicated to analysis of Turkish foreign policy and interest and its implications for NATO and the EU is not as prevalent. Documents touch on the relationship of the three but a gap exists concerning an assessment and comparison of the overlapping interest of Turkey and those of the European entities within the South Caucasus, and Middle East.

Several books and documents analyze the origin of Turkey's strategic culture, foreign policy, and relationship with its neighbors. The historical legacy of Turkish secularist ideology espoused by Mustafa Kemal (later "Ataturk') is covered in much of the literature and is used to explain Turkey's unique position in both the Muslim and Western world. *Turkey at the Crossroads* and *Turkey: A Modern History* for example details the origins of Kemalism, its linkage to the Ottoman Tanzimat era, and how the military emerged as the keepers of Turkey's secularist tradition.[26] The authors, of *Turkey at the Crossroads* Dietrich Jung and Wolfango Piccoli, for instance, detail the rise of political Islam in Turkey in relation to the political nature of the military, an important element in understanding the AKP. The authors point to several instances where

[26] Dietrich Jung and Wolfango Piccoli, *Turkey at the Crossroads* (London: Zed Books, 2001); Erik J. Zurcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, 3rd ed. (London: I.B. Tauris, 2004).

diplomatic conflict with the West caused Turkish rapprochement with the Arab world (1962–63 withdrawal of US Jupiter Missile from Turkey and 1964 Cyprus issue) and examples where Islamist Prime Ministers, such as Necmettin Erbakan, promised Turkish withdrawal from both NATO and the EU Customs Union but then disregarded the threats in light of Turkey's national interest.[27] This historical treatment of Turkey lays the groundwork for understanding Turkish foreign policy and its relationship with its neighbors within an EU-NATO context.

Turkey's relationship with the West and its more active role in its neighborhood spark much of the interests in Ankara's foreign policy. Several sources offer explanations for why Turkey's foreign policy changed since the end of the cold war are explored; the loss of the Soviet threat; impact of U.S.-led wars in Muslim-majority lands; the impact of the EU accession process; economic success; the changing power structure in the Middle East; and the Islamist nature of the current Turkish leadership. Much of the literature concludes despite the international political leverage loss by Turkey after the Cold War, the multi-dimensional instability created by the post-Cold War era brings Turkey's importance and impact on the West to the forefront of regional policy issues.

Three books, *Turkish Foreign Policy in the Post-Cold War Era*, *Turkey's Foreign Policy in the 21st Century*, and *Turkey and Its Neighbors: Foreign Relations in Transition* synthesize similar factors affecting Turkish geopolitical activities and its relationship with the EU and NATO.[28] *Turkey's Foreign Policy in the 21st Century* touches on the political aspects of the EU security apparatus in relation to Turkey but does not cover overlapping regional strategies and interest. *Turkey and Its Neighbors* briefly addresses the implications of Turkey's policies in the Middle East for the EU. *Turkish Foreign Policy in the Post-Cold War Era*, similar to *Turkey's Foreign Policy in the 21st Century* analyzes the political aspects of EU accession and additionally discusses NATO within

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[27] Jung and Piccoli, *Turkey*, 132.

[28] Idris Bal, Meliha Benli Altunisik, Deniz Ülke Aribogan, Hüseyin Bagci, Zeyno Baran, Fulya Kip Barnard, Erol Bulut, et al., *Turkish Foreign Policy in Post Post-Cold War Era*, ed. Idris Bal (Boca Raton: Brown Walker, 2004); Ismael, Tareq and Mustafa Aydin. ed. *Turkey's Foreign Policy in the 21st Century: A Changing Role in World Politics*. (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003); Ronald H. Linden et al. *Turkey & Its Neighbors: Foreign Relations in Transition* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2012).

the context of the Turkey-U.S. relationship. While the three books, take a social and historical approach in analyzing recent Turkish foreign relations and policies, the political treatise written by Ahmet Davutoğlu, Turkey's foreign minister, provides an understanding of the political theory underpinning Turkish foreign policies, relationships, and decision calculus. In *Alternative Paradigms: The Impact of Islamic and Western Weltanschauungs on Political Theory*, Davutoğlu proclaims, "Islam is conceived as an alternate *Weltanschauung* to the Western philosophico-political tradition," and moreover, the Foreign Minister believes "the efficiency of rationality of the political mechanism is a secondary and dependent variable" to Islamic values which are solidified through the "Muslim historical experience."[29] Although published in 1994, the words of Davutoğlu resonate in both Turkish domestic and foreign policy. The U.S. Congress Committee on Foreign Relations report, titled *Turkey's New Foreign Policy Direction: Implications for U.S.-Turkish Relations*, provides varied expert opinions on the AKP which help in extrapolating Ankara's foreign policy direction and the long-term implications for the West. Ian Lesser, Senior Transatlantic Fellow for the German Marshall Fund, believes Turkey's new foreign policy direction is "durable" and reflects shifts in public opinion.[30] Conversely, Soner Cagaptay believes the Islamist lens through which the AKP sees the world shapes the Turkish public's perspective on international issues.[31] In essence, both foresee continued AKP foreign policies and approaches to international issues that differ from the West.

NATO and EU documents provide the basis for analyzing EU-NATO versus Turkish interest and policies in the South Caucasus and the Middle East. The European Security Strategy (ESS), CFSP, and Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP), are the EU's foundational security documents. Missions conducted under the CSDP are both military and civilian in nature and cover Europe, Eurasia, Africa, and the Middle East. Past and present examples include; EU Force Althea in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the EU Rule

[29]Davutoğlu, *Alternative Paradigms*, 123.

[30] U.S. Congress Committee on Foreign Affairs: House of Representatives, *Turkey's New Foreign Policy Direction: Implications for US Turkish Relations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2010), 28.

[31]Ibid, 37.

of Law Mission in Kosovo, EU Police Mission in the Palestinian Territories (EUPOL COPPS), and EU Police mission in Afghanistan (EUPOL Afghanistan).[32] Issues important to the EU include weapons of mass destruction (WMD) proliferation, illegal trafficking, counterterrorism, engagement with Russia, and energy security. The EU documents demonstrate the overlay of regional interest between the EU and Turkey and the potential for cooperation or interference between Brussels and Ankara. The security interest defined in the 2010 NATO Strategic Concept mirror those of the EU but also places emphasis on missile defense and security in Central Asia (important for ISAF and Afghanistan). The Lisbon and Chicago summits reiterate much of the requirements found in the strategic concept.

Scholarly literature, U.S. government reports, and various EU and NATO strategic documents provide a great deal of data and analysis concerning EU-Turkey relations and Ankara's policy direction; however, analysis of overlapping Turkish and EU-NATO regional policies and interests is not widely available.

E. METHODS AND SOURCES

Turkish foreign policy provides difficulties, layers of complexity, and opportunities for NATO and the EU. The degree to which Turkish policies interact positively or negatively with NATO and EU policies is probabilistic. Empirical examples are used to link Ankara's policies and actions to implications for the EU and NATO. The required antecedent conditions and variables are also analyzed and used to strengthen causal relationships. Additionally, by knotting EU-NATO and Ankara interest, inferences or propositions for the continued relationship between the European entities and Turkey are developed.

Information for this thesis is provided by a variety of primary and secondary sources. Numerous scholarly books and journals, U.S., European, and Turkish government documents, professional studies, and news publications provide information relating to past and recent events.

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[32] European Union, *EU Operations*, European Union, June 2013, http://www.eeas.europa.eu/csdp/missions-and-operations/.

F. THESIS OVERVIEW

The thesis begins with a look at the transitional period between the Ottoman Empire and modern Turkish history followed by a survey of Turkey's strategic culture and security interest. The historical perspective solidifies Turkey's social, cultural, and political links to the regions it borders. Similarly, the short survey of modern Turkish history details the prism through which Turkey views its environment and amplifies the importance of history and geography in shaping Ankara's strategic culture and interest. The bulk of the analysis covers the last 10 years of the AKP-led government. Then looking ahead, comparisons are made between the objectives and interest of NATO and the EU versus those of Turkey as a means to discern future congruencies, divisions, and opportunities.

Next, regional (South Caucasus and the Levant) strategic net assessment serves as the basis for determining where EU-NATO and Turkish policy interest overlap, and the challenges and opportunities presented by mutual regional interest. In the Middle East the Arab Spring fostered instability and violent uprisings in countries such as Egypt and Syria. In the South Caucasus, frozen conflicts, large energy reserves, and Russian influence converge to create strategic opportunities and security concerns.

The conclusion, based on analysis of EU-NATO and Turkish geopolitical policies and interest, will assess the potential for cooperation and obstruction in various areas of common concern such as regional diplomacy, energy security, and crisis management. The purpose is to draw implications for EU and NATO policy and strategy in three important regions.

II. TURKEY AND EUROPE: THE PAST AS PRELUDE

During a 2011 Carnegie Europe speech, NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen declared: "Throughout history, the fates of Europe and North Africa, and the wider Middle East have been linked. Our economies are linked. Our people are linked. And our security is linked."[33] This chapter links Turkey to Europe through the means of a common European-Turkish history and the military and economic linkages that are central to this story. The relationship between Turkey and Europe is not exclusively a product of the Bretton-Woods or Cold-War eras; it is a continuation of common politico-economic and geostrategic strains and interest that manifested during the late Ottoman period and before that is, from the eighteenth century until 1914. Turkey's importance to Europe and vice versa, and modern Turkey's *Weltanschauung*, is forged in the age of rivalries between the great European empires and their downfall in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Indeed, Mustafa Kemal's westward looking agenda and the AKP's moderate Islamist efforts to straddle the fence linking the west to the east are in essence the amalgamation and realization of the modernization efforts of Sultan Selim III (ruled 1789–1807) and Sultan Mahmut II (ruled 1808–1839). Similar to the sultans, Mustafa Kemal's movement modernized and attempted to socially engineer Turkey under enlightened authoritarian rule. Additionally, modern Turkey's Cold War and post-Cold War period relationships, interest, and policies within the European context, similar to the Ottoman era, are informed by politico-military alliances (NATO) and attempts at economic integration (EU).

The transformation and westernization of Turkish institutions began in 1792 as Ottoman Sultan Selim III, and later Mahmut II, attempted to centralize power under the sultan.[34] As a prince, Selim III corresponded with French King Louis XVI and maintained a circle of friends who enjoyed elements of the diverse European cultures.[35]

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[33] North Atlantic Treaty Organization, *NATO and the Arab Spring Speech by NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen*, June 1, 2011, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/opinions_74993.htm.

[34] Erik J. Zurcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, 3rd ed. (London: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 21 and 39.

[35] Ibid., 21.

Transformation began with the Ottoman military transformation (*Nizam-I Cedid*). French military and administrative advisors of the *ancien régime* and later of the republic and Napoleonic Empire attempted to transform Ottoman forces to the European model.[36] Socialization and interaction with the French soldiers and bureaucrats brought new ideas and ways of thinking to the Empire.[37] Selim III's efforts failed, but laid the foundation for Mahmut II's successful effort to obliterate the political and social power of the *jeni çeri* (salaried infantry) and to a lesser extent that of the *Ulema* (doctors of Islamic law).[38] The resulting administrative, economic, educational, and legal structures served to further the Empires European integration and subjugate (not separate) religion to the political. Importantly, the *Tanzimat*, period of Ottoman transformation between 1839 and 1871, ultimately sought to develop within the Empire European-style enablers of power such as professional and educated government officials and effective government bureaucracies to manage the Sultanate and collects taxes for the development of economic power and a modern Ottoman army.[39] The reformers believed a strong army potentially placed the Empire on equal diplomatic and political footing with the great powers and deterred European intrigue and territorial ambition; westernization was not meant to be a social or cultural engineering project. Similar themes concerning political economies and power balancing permeate Turkey's post-World War II western *integration,* a distinction from the *Tanzimat* era's westernization.

It is important to understand the underlying strategic and social context that drives the long-standing relationship between Europe and Turkey. The lands under the Ottoman domain were vitally important to the conflicting empires of Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; the Dardanelles, for example, were a key maritime link between both the Mediterranean and Black Sea and the European and Asian continents. The immense British Empire, in conflict with the Ramanov's in the fate of central Asia in the 19th century, stretched to East Asia. The land routes and sea lanes linking the empire were

[36] Ibid, 22.

[37] Ibid, 23.

[38] Ibid., 39–40.

[39] Ibid., 56–61.

vulnerable to interdiction from other European nations but especially from Russia with whom the British were on bad terms after 1852 and the Crimean War. The passages to India were of particular concern to the English government. The British feared a Russian invasion of India through Afghanistan and foreign influence over the geo-strategically important sea and land routes within the Ottoman Empire. The sea lanes linking the Black Sea to the Mediterranean were particularly important to Britain and Russia. Control or access to the North-South passage from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean would give Russia access to warm water ports and provide a means to interdict British interest in the Mediterranean if necessary.[40] An Ottoman Empire dominated by Russian influence posed an existential threat to the British Empire as well as the whole European state system in the second half of the nineteenth century. The English therefore developed its foreign policy to counter Russia's, and any other adversaries, designs in the region. The cornerstone of the plan required Britain maintain close ties to the Ottoman central government and take measures to strengthen the government from collapse or undue influence from other nations. Conversely, today, Russia is concerned about foreign military access to the Dardanelles and the Black Sea area and demonstrated during the 2008 Russia-Georgia a willingness to pressure Turkey into politically obstructing foreign (non-Black Sea littoral states) military access to the Black Sea.[41]

Other European powers heavily engaged with the Ottoman Empire in the nineteenth century included France, Austro-Hungary, and in later years, the German Reich. French involvement in the Eastern question stemmed initially from its power rivalry with Britain. Alliances and interest changed frequently during the period of empires and so did France's goals which ranged from economic to territorial gain after the Crimean War when conflict with the British attenuated. Austria had similar concerns as the British and sought to deny Russia control over the Balkan region located on the Austro-Hungarian Empire's eastern flank especially in the epoch in which Austria was driven from Germany itself and northern Italy in the mid-nineteenth century, its interest

[40] Ibid., 38.

[41] Tuncay Babalı, "Turkey at the Energy Crossroads Turkey: Present and Past," *The Middle-East Quarterly* 16, no. 2 (2009), http://www.meforum.org/2108/turkey-at-the-energy-crossroads.

in the Balkans intensified. A unified Germany was driven by similar interest as France and the need to uphold its alliance system with the Russians and Austrian to preserve order in Europe, and from the early twentieth century, Germany sought its own sphere of influence in the eastern Mediterranean areas of the Ottoman Empire.[42] In the early nineteen hundreds German investments in the Ottoman Empire surged from one percent to twenty-five percent.[43] The European imperial powers challenged each other and the authority and hegemony of the Ottoman Empire. Such rivalry ended in brutal conflict between the years 1914 and 1918, when war engulfed the region with the Turks allied with Germany and Austria—the Central Powers. The defeat of the Central Powers facilitated British, French, and to a lesser degree, Red Russian dominance of former Ottoman lands. The ill-conceived statecraft and division of the Ottoman Empire engendered an instability that plagues the Middle East into the present.

Turkey's post-World War II relationship with Europe has been manifested through institutional ties with NATO and a more or less tepid relationship with the predecessor organizations of the EU, and since the 1990s with the EU itself. Turkey's relationship with the NATO is informed heavily by geography, Turkey's control of the Dardanelles for instance. Coinciding with the Greek civil war (1946–1949), which pitted pro-western forces against communist, President Harry S. Truman, in March 1947, introduced a doctrine for containing Soviet expansion. The Truman Doctrine's core concept, derived from the so-called domino theory, involved supporting diplomatically, economically, and militarily those countries vulnerable to communist threats (especially in southern Europe). Due primarily to its own economic hardship, Britain announced it could no longer provide aid to Greece and Turkey; the U.S. under the tenants of the Truman Doctrine now took on the role that thrust it more deeply in to the fate of the Balkans and Europe generally.[44]

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[42] Ibid., 82.

[43] Ibid, 85.

[44] U.S. Congress, *President Truman's Message to Congress; March 12, 1947*, Document 171, 80th Congress, 1st Session (Records of the United States House of Representatives), http://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=true&doc=81.

Cold War realities and economic necessity compelled Turkey's decision to pursue NATO membership after 1949. In 1945 and 1946 Joseph Stalin made Soviet intentions of southward expansion clear; contradicting Montreux Convention mandates, the Soviet leader demanded Turkey agree to joint Turkish-Soviet defense of the Bosporus and Dardanelles Straits, and also made territorial claims on the Turkish provinces of Kars and Ardahan.[45] Turkish Prime Minister Adnan Menderes understood a foreign policy step such as NATO membership reached outside the bounds of Kemalist thought; however, the Soviet Union's designs on Turkish territory heavily influenced the prime ministers decision. Turkey orchestrated its western alignment through major diplomatic moves. Key actions included recognizing Israel in 1949 and sending troops to fight in Korea in 1950 under a United Nations mandate. The Turkish brigade composed of 4,500 soldiers, received high praise from U.S. leaders and most NATO member-states of the era; by the wars end in 1953, approximately 25,000 Turkish soldiers had fought on the Korean peninsula suffering heavy casualties.[46] In view of this sacrifice and the urgent requirement to solidify the defense of Europe's southern flank, the North Atlantic Council deputies issued a secret memorandum on 17 October 1951 recommending membership for both Turkey and Greece, but consensus among the alliance was not yet reached.[47] NATO members Denmark and Norway stymied membership for both Turkey and Greece arguing the countries were "neither Atlantic nor democratic;" however, consensus was eventually reached and Turkey (and Greece) joined NATO on 18 February 1952.[48]

Turkey believed NATO membership would lead to the closer affiliation with the institutions of Europe; the final step in solidifying Turkey's Western credentials. In 1948 Turkey joined the European Economic Cooperation (EEC) organization, succeeded later by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, as a founding

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[45] Malik Mufti, "Daring and Caution in Turksih Foreign Policy," *Middle East Journal* 52, no. 1 (1998): 41.

[46] Zurcher, *Turkey*, 235.

[47] North Atlantic Treaty Organization, *Resolution on the accession of Greece and Turkey to the North Atlantic Treaty*, http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2012/Turkey-Greece/Greece-Turkey-membership/EN/index.htm.

[48] Zurcher, *Turkey*, 235.

member.[49] Indeed, Turkey joined the Council of Europe in 1949 further signaling Ankara's desire for a western identity. The 1963 Ankara Association Agreement and the planned Customs Union between Turkey and European Common Market laid the foundation for Turkey's economic growth and portended Turkey's eventual EU accession process.[50]

Trade disputes and political conflict between Turkey and the EEC strained relations in the late 1970s and 80s; fractures occurred in the EEC-Ankara relationship following the 1980 military coup d'état led by Turkish General Kenan Evren. The Turkish army dissolved the parliament and jailed its leaders; trade unions and political groups disbanded under military pressure.[51] Consequently, the EEC cut relations with the military junta.[52] After a rapprochement period Turkey applied for EEC membership 1987. Following two years of deliberation, the EEC rejected Turkish membership citing internal EEC institutional vulnerabilities; Ankara's shortfalls in political reform; and social and economic development "gaps" between the EEC countries and Turkey.[53] In 1999, the EU granted Turkey candidate status.[54]

[49]Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, "History-Organisation for European Economic Co-operation," http://www.oecd.org/general/organisationforeuropeaneconomicco-operation.htm.

[50] "The Ankara Agreement," Republic of Turkey-Ministry of EU Affairs, Last modified April 9, 2007, http://www.abgs.gov.tr/index.php?p=117&l=2.

[51] Berdal Aral, "Making Sense of the Anomalies in Turkish-European Union Relations," *Journal of Economic and Social Research* 7, no. 1 (2005): 101; Jung and Piccoli, *Turkey*, 93-4.

[52] Berdal Aral, "Making Sense," 101.

[53] European Union, *Commission Opinion on Turkey's Request for Accession to the Community*, Dec 20, 1989, Commission of the European Communities.

[54] Straubhaar, "Turkey," 185.

III. SOUTH CAUCASUS REGIONAL ASSESSMENT

A. TURKEY, EU-NATO, AND RUSSIA'S NEAR-ABROAD

The Caucasus signifies a region of crisis where cultural, religious, political, and ethnic ties have smoldered throughout for more than a century. Challenges to stability and order abound: inter-ethnic conflict, corruption, transnational crime, internally displaced persons, and economic depression are persistent problems. Turkey, the EU, NATO, the U.S., Iran, and the Russian Federation all have an interest in this region, but the power, influence, and degree of assertiveness of each state and regional entity varies. Ankara's interest and policies in the South Caucasus mesh with EU-NATO regional interest and objectives such as securing alternate energy sources and ensuring regional security and stability; however Turkey's policy movements are heavily influence by regional actors.

Turkey's policies in the Caucasus changed from near to no interaction during the Soviet-era to a very active approach after the Soviet collapse in 1991. Interestingly, before most other nations, Turkey recognized the Republics of Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan.[55] Ankara, similar to the EU and NATO, attempts to forward its regional political interest without upsetting the geostrategic balance with Moscow. Turkey seeks regional stability and good Ankara-Moscow relations, but unlike the EU and NATO evidence suggests the AKP prioritizes stability over regional democratic reforms. Turkey, for example, similar to Russia, did not support the democratic 2003 Rose Revolution in Georgia.[56] The AKP's good-neighborhood policy seeks to increase Ankara's profile as a regional inoculator and problem solver, but Turkey's current foreign policy approach potentially generates miscommunication between Ankara and Brussels. For instance, Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's action during the 2008 Georgia-Russian conflict is emblematic of Ankara's willingness to unilaterally conduct regional diplomacy.

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[55] Zeyno Baran, "Turkey and the Caucasus," in *Turkish Foreign Policy in the Post-Cold War Era*, ed. Idris Bal (Boca Raton, FL: Brown Walker, 2004), 269.

[56] Gareth Winrow, "Turkey, Russia and the Caucasus: Common and Diverging Interests," Chatham House, November 2009, http://www.chathamhouse.org/publications/papers/view/109168, 6.

Paralleling similar objectives of EU President Nicolas Sarkozy's mediation effort in the region, Erdoğan flew to Russia, Georgia and Azerbaijan proposing a regional dialogue and stability pact through the Ankara-developed Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform.[57] Turkish influence throughout the region is viewed cautiously by both Russia and Iran, but it is regarded positively by the EU, NATO, and the U.S. despite Ankara's unilateralism.

1. Historical and Contemporary Context: "Frozen Conflicts" And Caspian Energy

An understanding of the current conflicts, tensions, and interest of the EU, NATO, and Turkey in the South Caucasus requires some reflection on Europe and Turkey's past exploits in the region. Prominent on both Europe and Turkey's South Caucasus agenda is the instability engendered by so-called "frozen conflicts" and the opportunities for energy diversification presented by Caspian region gas fields.

Dating back to the early 1800's, the Ottoman, Russian, and Western European empires, maintained an ongoing rivalry in the region. Ethnic separatism and conflict is not a recent geopolitical phenomenon in the Caucasus. In 1905, for example, the Azeris and Armenian Dashnaktsutyun grappled for Nagorno-Karabakh; during this period riots erupted in Baku and the Shusha region of Western Karabakh resulting in thousands of deaths.[58] The great power struggle for influence and territory in the Anglo Russian Ottoman and German "Great Game" continued in the last months and immediately after World War I as the newly established Azeri Democratic Republic supported by the Ottomans suppressed ethnic Armenian separatist and ejected British forces from Baku.[59] The German's sought to gain control of the Baku oil fields but the interests of its Ottoman ally derailed the effort.[60] The Ottomans (and the remaining Central Powers), facing military defeat on multiple fronts, signed the Mudros armistice with the Entente

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[57] Ibid., 7.

[58] Svante E. Cornell, "Turkey and the Conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh: A Delicate Balance," *Middle Eastern Studies* 34, no. 1 (1998): 52, http://www.jstor.org/stable/4283917.

[59] Ibid., 52.

[60] Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 121.

powers on 31 October 1918.[61] The Red Army reestablished Russian control of Transcaucasia (South Caucasus) in 1921 and signed the Treaty of Friendship (also known as the Treaty of Moscow) with Turkish nationalist who were fighting for their own independence. In exchange for gold and military supplies Mustafa Kemal's nationalist movement ceded Nachicevan and Batum provinces to the Bolsheviks.[62]

In the last two decades, Soviet communism's left a void soon filled by nationalism, ethno-cultural rivalries, and separatist conflicts. The 1988 to 1994 Armenia-Azerbaijan war resulted in Armenian control of Nagorno-Karabakh enclave and the end of official relations between Armenia and the Azerbaijani-Turkish pact. Ankara eschewed military support to Azerbaijan during the conflict as a deterrent to NATO and Russian military intervention.[63] Turkey, however, in 1993 demonstrated its support for Azerbaijan's position by closing the Turkey-Armenia border crossings and cutting off trade with Armenia. In 2008 Russian and Georgia fought for control of the region South Ossetia. The so-called "frozen conflicts" between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh, and Georgia and the Russian over South Ossetia and Abkhazia threaten both European and Turkish interest.

The discovery of gas deposits in Azerbaijan and Central Asia (gas which most likely will flow to Europe via Azerbaijan) has added another dimension to the economic, geostrategic, and geopolitical complexity in the South Caucasus. Moscow's attempts to gain access to and control over Caspian energy routes potentially leads to further European and Turkish reliance on Russian energy. Russia's monopoly on European and Turkish oil and gas markets and energy infrastructure and Moscow's willingness to use energy as a political tool creates trepidation in both Ankara and Brussels. Most recently Moscow promised Kiev and Moldova reduced gas prices as enticement to join the Russian Customs Union.[64] Russia cut energy supplies to Poland, Latvia, Lithuania, the

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[61] Ibid., 121.

[62] Ibid., 153.

[63] Baran, "Turkey and the Caucasus," 273.

[64] "Ukraine: Between Russia and the West," US-Russia.org, January 17, 2013, http://us-russia.org/778-ukraine-between-russia-and-the-west.html; "Russia Sets Moldova Gas Ultimatum amid EU Price Row," http://www.eubusiness.com/news-eu/russia-moldova-gas.ic0 (accessed 12 September 2012).

Czech Republic, Belarus, and Moldova over the past eleven years further demonstrating Moscow's willingness to use energy as a political instrument.[65]

Both Turkey and Europe are vulnerable to energy coercion and disruption by its hydrocarbon suppliers. The 2009 European gas supply disruptions and events during the 2008 Georgia-Russia war showcase Europe and Turkey's vulnerabilities and the strategic implications. Disagreements between Russian energy giant Gazprom and Ukrainian national oil and gas company Naftogaz resulted in disruption of Russian gas in route to Central and Western Europe and consequently exposed the EU and NATO's vulnerability to coercive energy politics. Severe gas shortages in both large and small EU and NATO member-states forced gas rationing by energy firms; sub-zero temperatures exacerbated the crisis causing many European countries to draw heavily on gas reserves.[66] Turkey imports roughly 60 percent of its natural gas from Russia.[67] Events just after the Russian invasion of Georgia exemplify the potential for Russian coercion. U.S. Navy vessels supporting NATO Operation Active Endeavor attempted to enter the Black Sea with humanitarian aid for war-torn Georgia; Russia pressured Turkey to not let the vessels through the straits under the mandates of the Montreux Convention. Russian customs officials delayed Turkish commercial truck shipments at the Russian border resulting in Turkey losing more than $1 billion in lost revenue.[68] Erdoğan thought of retaliation but quickly realized "we would be left in the dark" if Moscow so desired.[69] Most recently, Turkey's decision to support NATO radar sites near the city of Malatya resulted in Moscow's suspending talks on the Samsun-Ceyhan pipeline. A project championed by Ankara to link Turkey's Black Sea and Mediterranean coast by pipeline as a means to

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[65] Andrew McKillop, "Germany Marches East - Russia Moves West, Putins Energy Diplomacy," Natural Gas Europe, March 13, 2012, http://www.naturalgaseurope.com/germany-russia-energy-diplomacy.

[66] "FACTBOX-18 Countries Affected by Russia-Ukraine Gas Row," *Reuters*, January 9, 2009, http://www.reuters.com/article/2009/01/09/us-russia-ukraine-gas-sb-idUSTRE5071TT20090109.

[67] "Turkey-Analysis," U.S. Energy Information Administration, http://www.eia.gov/countries/cab.cfm?fips=TU.

[68] Bulent Aliriza et al., *Turkey's Evolving Dynamics: Strategic Choices for US Turkey Relations*, (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies 2009), 66.

[69] Ibid., 66.

relieve traffic in the Bosporus Straits created by tankers carrying Russian and Kazakh oil.[70]

Strains of past themes and narratives emanate throughout present day EU-NATO and Turkish interactions in the South Caucasus. The interplay of Russia, energy, and the dormant but smoldering regional conflicts informs the continuing cooperation and dissonance between Turkey and European security and economic institutions.

2. Turkish and EU-NATO Regional Interest and Policies

The AKP's multi-vectored and occasionally schizophrenic regional policy is influenced by its relationship with Russia and Azerbaijan, and Turkey's growing energy demands and economic expansion goals. For instance, despite Ankara's stated objective to diversify energy sources, the AKP met with Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin and agreed to proposals for the South Stream and Blue Stream II gas pipelines only weeks after signing the deal for the Caspian-based Nabucco pipeline, the Moscow supported pipelines defeat Turkey and EU-NATO energy diversification objectives.[71] Turkey's so-called "rhythmic diplomacy" is defined by proactive diplomatic effort and engagement but is susceptible to incoherency and contradictory approaches.

Regional socioeconomic development is an important component of the AKP's good-neighbor policy. The Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA), manages Turkey's foreign aid and development policy and funding initiatives and provides Turkey's Ministry of Foreign Affairs an unobtrusive soft-power tool. The agency's 2011 development and assistance portfolio totaled roughly $2.3 million disbursed to both governmental and non-governmental aid and development organizations.[72] Much of the aid in the South Caucasus goes to Azerbaijan, which

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[70] "Russia, Turkey to Start Negotiations For Samsun-Ceyhan Oil Line," *Pipeline and Gas Journal* 238, no. 1 (2011), http://www.pipelineandgasjournal.com/russia-turkey-start-negotiations-samsun-ceyhan-oil-line.

[71] Ahmet O. Evin, "Energy and Turkey's Neighbors," in *Turkey and Its Neighbors* (Boulder: Lynee Riemer Publishers, 2012), 112; Republic of Turkey Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources, "The Republic of Turkey Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources Strategic Plan (2010–2014)," N.D.,http://www.enerji.gov.tr/yayinlar_raporlar_EN/ETKB_2010_2014_Stratejik_Plani_EN.pdf, 1.

[72] Şaban Kardaş, "Turkey's Development Assistance Policy: How to Make Sense of the New Guy on the Block," *The German Marshall Fund of the United States*, February 4, 2013, http://www.gmfus.org/wp-content/blogs.dir/1/files_mf/1360092556Kardas_TurkishODA_Jan13.pdf.

received roughly $25.5 million in 2011.[73] The TIKA projects compliment the EU and NATO demands for socioeconomic development, democratic governance, and modernization in the South Caucasus. Importantly, Turkish official development assistance (ODA) contains a political component, and though Ankara's humanitarian and developmental aid efforts compliment EU and NATO regional objectives, the ultimate goal is the expansion of Turkish regional influence.

Historical relationships and political and economic interest inform the AKP's distinct policies towards the three South Caucasus states. Linguistic and cultural linkages between Turkey and Azerbaijan create a natural bond between the two countries. Turkey's military academies train hundreds of Azeri officers each year, and Turkey's defense experts advise and assist Azerbaijan in defense sector reforms and military modernization.[74] Turkeys support for Azerbaijan in its war and ensuing territorial dispute with Armenia is manifested through the closed Turkish-Armenian border and Ankara's ongoing trade embargo against Armenia. Common economic and political interest and ethno-cultural linkages foster Ankara and Baku's complementary regional policies. Erdogan understands that rapprochement with Armenia represents an important step in reinvigorating the dialogue on EU accession, but Ankara's overtures to Yerevan without commensurate Armenian concession on the Nagorno-Karabakh problem creates friction between Turkey and Azerbaijan. In 2009 Erdogan spoke before Azerbaijan's parliament to reassure Baku that Ankara's rapprochement process required a satisfactory Karabakh solution prior to opening the Armenian-Turkish border.[75] Most recently, Turkey's transport ministry approved air flights from Van in Eastern Turkey to and the Armenian capital Yerevan beginning April 2013, but after strong Azeri opposition Ankara canceled the plan.[76]

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[73] European Commission, *Turkish Development Cooperation*, June 13, 2012, http://capacity4dev.ec.europa.eu/pubaideffect/document/turkish-development-cooperation.

[74] Graham E. Fuller, *The New Turkish Republic: Turkey as a Pivotal State in the Muslim World* (Washington: United States Institute for Peace, 2008), 136.

[75] Emrullah Uslu "Erdogan Reassures Azerbaijan on Turkey's Border Policy with Armenia," *Eurasia Daily Monitor* 6, no. 93 (2009), http://www.jamestown.org/.

[76] Jonathon Burch, "Turkey scraps flights to Armenia after Azeri resistance," *Reuters*, Apr 1, 2013, http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/04/01/turkey-armenia-flights-idUSL3N0CO1MT20130401.

The relationship between the two countries extends to energy development. In 2011, Turkish business investment in Azerbaijan equaled roughly 6.5 billion U.S. dollars; Azerbaijan investment in Turkey measured half that amount but is steadily increasing.[77] In March 2013, Baku signed a high-profile agreement to invest in Turkey's industrial infrastructure. Danish shipping and energy group Moeller-Maersk and Azerbaijan's State Oil Company (SOCAR) agreed to build a modern petrochemical, container, and general cargo mega-port Aegean Gateway Terminal (AGT) near Izmir.[78] Likewise, SOCAR's Power and Energy division built a 612 megawatt electrical power-plant in Turkey and is in the process of laying pipe for the Trans-Anatolia Gas Pipeline; these investments total between 16 and 18 billion dollars.[79] Additionally, the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars (BTK) railway (trial runs are scheduled for mid-2014) is heavily financed by Azerbaijan.[80] The BTK line is expected to transport passengers, finished and raw goods, and oil between Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Turkey.[81] The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe views the BTK rail line as a significant addition to the South Caucasus economic infrastructure and a potential link between Central Europe and Central Asia.[82]

Turkey's approach to Armenia is a product of past relationships, conflict, and Ankara's regional stability and security objectives. The AKP continues the policy demands of past administrations vis-à-vis Armenia, among them: put an end to claims that Turkey perpetrated genocide against ethnic Armenians in 1915, recognition of

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[77] Republic of Turkey Ministry of Economy, "Countries & Regions—Commonwealth of Independent States - Azerbaijan," Last Modified July 2013, http://www.economy.gov.tr/index.cfm?sayfa=countriesandregions&country=AZ&region=2.

[78] Vladimir Socor, "Izmir Port Project Magnifies Azerbaijan's Integrated Investments in Turkey," *Eurasian Daily Monitor* 10, no. 55 (2013), http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews[swords]=8fd5893941d69d0be3f378576261ae3e&tx_ttnews[any_of_the_words]=finland&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=40640&tx_ttnews[backPid]=381&cHash=4fae7d8ba83399b9568a7f9d80e1cb3c#.UksfcZYoA1g.

[79] Socor Ibid.

[80] State Oil Fund of the Republic of Georgia, "Baku-Tbilisi-Kars New Railway," Access date 3 May, 1969, http://www.oilfund.az/en_US/layiheler/baki-tbilisi-qars-demir-yolu.asp.

[81] "Work is Being Completed on the Turkish Section of the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars (BTK) Railway Line," *Railly News*, April 15, 2013, http://www.raillynews.com/?s=Work+is+being+Completed+on+the+Turkish+Section+of+the+Baku-Tbilisi-Kars+%28BTK%29+Railway+Line.

[82] Fuller, *The New Turkish,* 136.

Turkey's border mandated in the 1921 Treaty of Kars, and find an acceptable outcome to the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute with Azerbaijan.[83] Following the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict both Baku and Ankara severed ties with Yerevan. The closed border between Armenia and Turkey severely constrains Armenian economic integration and development. For instance, both the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) pipeline and the BTK railway bypass Armenian territory further limiting the country's economic opportunities. Consequently, Yerevan re-opened the archaic and dilapidated Metasamor nuclear power plant to compensate for national energy shortages. Turkey and Armenia's attempts to establish a diplomatic relationship under the mandate of the 2009 Zurich protocols failed due to numerous reasons: the interplay of third-party (i.e., U.S. and EU) interpretations of the events of 1915, Azerbaijan public and government pressure on Turkey, the role of the Armenian diaspora in shaping worldwide opinion, and Turkey's domestic politics and public pressure. Importantly, Turkey's (and Azerbaijan's) Armenia policies drive Yerevan's deepening relationship with both Russia and Iran.

Georgia's location on the east-west energy corridor and the north-south trade route to Russia ensures close cooperation between Tbilisi and Ankara. Moreover, Georgia is the fragile link between Caspian oil and gas and European markets, and Turkey's major trading partner and energy supplier—Russia. The overlapping Russian and Turkish interest in Georgia create a delicate political balancing act between the former empires. In 2001 Georgia and Turkey signed three defense cooperation agreements, and both countries are members of the U.S. supported Caucasus Working Group.[84] Despite the 2008 Georgia-Russia war, Turkey maintains a close bilateral defense cooperation relationship with Georgia.

Turkey maintains close political linkage to Georgia's Turkic Adjara province and supports the semi-autonomy position of the Adjarians. A relic of both Ottoman and Persian control of the region, Adjara is a potential source of territorial conflict. Indeed, in 2004 Adjarian autocrat Aslan Abashidze refused to recognize newly elected Georgian president Mikhail Saakashvili. Abashidze ordered the destruction of two bridges and a

[83] Winrow, "Turkey, Russia."

[84] Baran, "Turkey and the Caucasus," 280.

rail line linking Ajar to greater Georgia.[85] During the crisis Turkey supported the EU declaration in favor of Georgia's territorial integrity and right to constitutional authority over the Autonomous Republic of Adjara. [86]

Unlike Turkey, the EU and NATO are encumbered by obligations to regional allies and consequently maintain relatively unbiased South Caucasus policies. Similar to Ankara, NATO and the EU must account for Euro-Russia relations when constructing strategic objectives. The EU-NATO strategy demands the integration and interconnection of all three South Caucasian states. The EU, for example, demonstrated its support for tri-state regional economic integration by refusing to invest in the BTK railway which bypasses Armenian territory.[87] The EU and NATO South Caucasus interest are analogous; democratic and economic development, transnational security, and secure east-west lines of communication and energy routes. The NATO and EU policies allow the South Caucasus nations to take differing paths to European integration. Additionally, both entities work closely with the United Nations (UN) and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) on issues such as conflict prevention and resolution, and confronting emerging security threats.[88] Article 20 of the 2012 NATO Chicago Summit Declaration declares, "NATO and the EU share common values and strategic interest" and highlights the importance of issues relevant to the South Caucasus, such as secure transportation routes for international trade and energy security.[89] EU Security Strategy, similar to NATO's Strategic Concept, states: "We should now take a stronger and more active interest in the problems of the Southern Caucasus, which will in due course also be a neighboring region."[90]

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[85] "Key Bridges Blown up in Georgia," *Seattle Times*, May 4, 2004 http://seattletimes.com/html/nationworld/2001918310_wdig03.html.

[86] European Union, *Declaration by the Presidency on Behalf of the European Union Concerning the Georgian Autonomous Republic of Adjara*, May 6, 2004, http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/cfsp/80305.pdf.

[87] "Baku-Tbilisi-Kars (BTK)."

[88] North Atlantic Treaty Organization, *Strategic Concept for the Defence and Security of the Members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation*, November 19, 2010, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_68580.htm.

[89] Ibid.

[90] European Union, *EU Security Strategy*, December 12, 2003, http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/78367.pdf, 8.

The 2011 and 2012 Council of the EU decisions concerning the South Caucasus and Crisis in Georgia acknowledged that the EU is delinquent in developing a comprehensive policy for the South Caucasus.[91] In 2004 the EU created the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) as a means to develop closer relationships with nations on the EU frontier, increase economic integration, promote democratic values, rule of law, and respect for human rights.[92] EU Special Representatives (EUSR) work within the EU CFSP mandate and its supporting ENP framework to: promote EU interest; foster cooperation; and conduct conflict resolution within potentially unstable and fragile regions.[93] The EU Action Plans specify the resolution of internal and external conflicts as priorities, but interestingly, each plan prioritizes the solution of the "frozen conflicts" differently: in the Azerbaijan plan "a peaceful solution in Nagorno-Karabakh" is given number one priority; in the Armenian plan Nagorno-Karabakh is priority number seven; as for the Georgia plan, the conflicts over South Ossetia and Abkhazia rank as the number six priority.[94] The EU attempts a comprehensive approach supporting public sector reform, infrastructure modernization projects, and democratic practices through the EU's European Neighborhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI). Funding from 2007 to 2013 varies by country: Georgia received €300m; the EU allocated Armenia roughly €255m; and Azerbaijan €214m[95].

NATO objectives in the South Caucasus (similar to its objectives in other regions) complement those of the EU. NATO's primary conduits for promoting its interest and executing policy objectives are the Partnership for Peace (PfP) program and Individual Partnership Action Plans (IPAP). Established in 1994, the PfP signaled NATO's

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[91] European Union, *Appointing the European Union Special Representative for the South Caucasus and the Crisis in Georgia*, Council Decision 201/518/CFSP, August 25, 2011; European Union, *Extending the Mandate for the European Union Special Representative for the South Caucasus and the Crisis in Georgia*, Council Decision 201/518/CFSP, June 25, 2012.

[92] European Union, *European Neighbourhood Policy—Overview*, http://eeas.europa.eu/enp/.

[93] European Union, *EU Special Representatives*, n.d., http://eeas.europa.eu/policies/eu-special-representatives/index_en.htm.

[94] European Union, *European Union Action Plans*, n.d., http://eeas.europa.eu/enp/documents/action-plans/index_en.htm.

[95] "Country Allocations," *Eastern Partnership Community*, March 11, 2013, http://www.easternpartnership.org/programmes/country-allocations.

willingness to support the security needs of emerging democracies born after the disintegration of the Soviet system. Among the stated objectives found in the PfP framework document: promoting transparent defense and budget planning processes, ensuring civilian control of the military, and developing forces capable of operating with NATO during peacekeeping and humanitarian operations.[96] The IPAP is the framework document providing detailed requirements for Euro-Atlantic integration. The 2002 NATO Prague summit introduced and described the IPAP as a medium to "prioritise, harmonise, and organise all aspects of NATO-Partner relationship in the EAPC and PfP frameworks."[97] In this connection, each of the South Caucasus states participates in PfP to varying degrees and maintains an IPAP. Armenia, for instance, is closely linked to Russia militarily, politically, and economically and attempts to balance Western integration through PfP program and IPAP with its relationship to Moscow. Armenia hosted NATO/PfP exercise "Cooperative Best Effort" in 2003 at the Vazgen Sargsian Military Institute demonstrating a willingness to cooperate with the West despite Yerevan's lack of interest in NATO membership. Additionally, partner interoperability and participation in NATO-led operations is a major component of the PfP program. Armenian military forces served under the NATO Kosovo Force in 2004 and most recently Yerevan contributed troops to the ISAF command in Afghanistan.[98]

The relationship between NATO and Georgia is multidimensional and infused with many programs due primarily to Georgia's fervid quest for NATO membership. During the 2012 Chicago Summit NATO reaffirmed its commitment to Georgia's eventual membership in the Alliance and "continued support to the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Georgia."[99] Cooperation is conducted through the NATO-Georgia Commission (NGC) which monitors Georgia's implementation of the Annual National

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[96] North Atlantic Treaty Organization, *Partnership for Peace: Framework Document*, January 1994, http://www.nato.int/docu/comm/49-95/c940110b.htm.

[97] North Atlantic Treaty Organization, *The Prague Summit and NATO's Transformation*, 2003, http://www.nato.int/docu/rdr-gde-prg/rdr-gde-prg-eng.pdf.

[98] North Atlantic Treaty Organization, International Security Assistance Force, *International Security Assistance Force (ISAF): Key Facts and Figures*, February 2013, http://www.nato.int/isaf/.

[99] North Atlantic Treaty Organization, *Chicago Summit Declaration*, May 20, 2012, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_87593.htm?mode=pressrelease.

Program (ANP) which defines the civilian and military reform measures and milestones for Tbilisi's integration.[100] Importantly, the measures required by the ANP are similar to those found within the NATO Membership Action Plan; however, NATO is concerned with regional security and the promotion of democratic principles more so than a roadmap to future membership.

Azerbaijan maintains a neutral stance on NATO membership, but its leanings are Euro-Atlantic and it maintains an important PfP role. Baku understands close ties to NATO weakens its relationship with Moscow, results in greater Russian support for Armenia on the Nagorno-Karabakh question, and creates concern in Tehran.[101] Similar to the incongruities found in the EU Action Plans for Armenia and Azerbaijan, NATO's policy toward the question of Nagorno-Karabakh is murky. In the 2008 United Nations General Assembly Resolution vote "reaffirming the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan," the United States and France voted against the measure and the UK and Germany abstained demonstrating a lack of consensus among NATO (and EU) member countries.[102]

Turkish and EU-NATO policies in the South Caucasus follow similar trajectories and have similar objectives. The EU-NATO institutions attempt to parlay security arrangements in the South Caucasus as a means to stabilize Europe's eastern frontier and groom the region for gas distribution to Europe. Similarly, Turkey demands energy and stability along its borders. Turkey's policies in the region are heavily shaped by cultural ties and impassioned narratives whereas for the EU and NATO the approach is egalitarian in nature, arguably by virtue of the European publics relative disinterest in the region.

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[100] Ibid.

[101] Tornike Metreveli, South Caucasus and Transatlantic Security: Views from the Region, *Atlantic Voices* 2, no. 8 (2012): 7.

[102] The United Nations, "The Situation in the Occupied Territories of Azerbaijan," *United Nations 86th Plenary Meeting Resolution 10693*, March 14, 2008.

3. Aligned and Divergent Policies and Interest: Consequences and Opportunities

There is more harmony than discord between Turkish and EU-NATO South Caucasus interest and policies. The primary areas of common interest are the energy development and regional security domains. Importantly, Europe benefits from Turkey's increasing demand for energy. Turkey's expanding economy and the corresponding growth in energy consumption compels Ankara to increase oil and gas storage and throughput capacity and modernize facilities and seaport infrastructure. Turkey's energy demand is expected to increase roughly 4 percent a year through 2020.[103] EU-NATO members such as Bulgaria, Slovakia, Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Poland, and EU member Austria (among others) depend on Russia for over 60 percent of their gas requirements.[104] Energy source diversification enhances EU and NATO member states' ability to develop policies without undue Russian influence.

The EU and Turkey can facilitate energy access by playing active roles in resolving issues such as Caspian Sea delineation. The uncertain legal status of the Caspian Sea threatens the extraction and export of Azerbaijani and Central Asian gas and oil destined for Turkey and EU member-states. Most Caspian related agreements were developed between Russia and Iran during the Soviet-era. The 1921 Treaty of Friendship gave Russia and Iran responsibility for security of the Caspian, plus fishing and navigation rights.[105] The 1954 Astara-Hasankuli boundary line which notionally connects the towns of Astara, Azerbaijan and Hasankuli, Turkmenistan, by mutual USSR-Iranian agreement defined the administrative border between the two countries; however, sea boundaries were not established under the agreement.[106] The Soviet Ministry of Oil and

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[103] Tuncay Babali, *The Role of Energy in Turkey's Relations with Russia and Iran*, (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2012), 2.

[104] Anita Sobjak and Konrad Zasztowt, "Nabucco West - Perspectives and Relevance: The Reconfigured Scenario," http://www.naturalgaseurope.com/nabucco-west-pipeline, November 14, 2012; "Energy and Security from the Caspian," 11.

[105] Sohbet Karbuz, "The Caspian's Unsettled Legal Framework: Energy Security Implications," Energy Security, May 18, 2010, http://www.ensec.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=244:the-caspians-unsettled-legal-framework-energy-security-implications&catid=106:energysecuritycontent0510&Itemid=361.

[106] Ibid.

Gas sub-divided the area north of the Astara-Hasankuli line into energy development districts administered by the four Soviet Republics bordering the Caspian (Azerbaijan, Russia, Kazakhstan, and Turkmenistan). The fall of the Soviet Union changed the geopolitical landscape in the Caspian Basin and magnified the demarcation issue. More than twenty years after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Azerbaijan, Russia, Iran, Kazakhstan, and Turkmenistan have not reached an agreement concerning Caspian Sea boundaries. The EU and Turkey, more than NATO, can mediate an amicable compromise with the energy producing states bordering the Caspian. The potential for confrontation on the Caspian Sea is ever-present. Indeed, in 2001 Iranian gunboats threatened a British Petroleum research vessel near the Araz-Alov-Sharg offshore oil field which Tehran claims is within Iranian territorial waters. Following the incident Turkey dispatched Chief of Staff, General Huseyin Kivrikglu and Turkey's elite military flying team to Azerbaijan to demonstrate Ankara's resolve and support for Baku.[107] Turkey provides the credibility of a regional neighbor with interest similar to the Caucasian states, and the EU provides the institutional economic and diplomatic regimes necessary for conflict resolution and mediation. NATO, the EU, and Turkey provide an effective counter-balance to both Russia and Iran, but must generate its regional strategy in a manner which includes Moscow and Tehran in the dialogue.

Political cleavages prevail between the Azeri and Turkmen governments and similar cases abound between other nations bordering the Caspian region. Azerbaijan claims ownership of the disputed Azeri-Chirag-Gunashli oil field. The State Oil Company of Azerbaijan Republic (SOCAR) is working with British Petroleum to develop the fields despite Turkmenistan's territorial claims. A trans-Caspian pipeline from Turkmenistan (holder of the fourth largest gas reserves in the world) through Azerbaijan is hampered by the territorial dispute. Turkmenistan, attempted to apply the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea which extends territorial waters 12 nautical miles from the shore; however, Russia protested Turkmenistan's unilateral actions.[108] Furthermore, Iran claims the anachronistic agreements between Iran and the

[107] Baran, "Turkey and the Caucasus," 279.

[108] Sohbet Karbuz, "The Caspian's."

Soviet Union still apply to the current regional situation.[109] Until the Caspian's legal status and legal regime is codified disputes will continue to hamper private investment in upstream oil and gas development, a fundamental requirement to ensure Caspian energy routed via Turkey reaches Western Europe and the Balkans.

The inclusion of Caspian energy in Europe's mix of energy suppliers potentially compels Gazprom to offer competitive pricing and contract terms to EU and NATO countries which are heavily dependent on Russian energy. In the Gazprom dominated European gas market, oil-indexed pricing persist over market based spot-pricing. For many EU-NATO member countries in Central and Eastern Europe, long-term Gas Sale and Purchase Agreements with Gazprom and other Russian energy companies are indexed against oil.[110] Indexed pricing does not represent worldwide supply and demand for natural gas; additionally, gas is not subject to the same pricing pressures as oil. Spot-market pricing (also known as gas-on-gas pricing) is not perfect but reflects the competitive market value of gas and allows European countries to use in other domains revenue once destined for energy suppliers.

The EU, NATO, and Turkey's interrelated energy security and energy diversification strategies demand peace in the South Caucasus. A return to hostilities between Armenia and Azerbaijan portends disaster for the region socio-politically and economically. The BTC (and future pipelines) travel near vulnerable areas; the BTC travels only kilometers away from Azeri territory occupied by Armenia, Russia's outpost in South Ossetia, and Kurdish areas of Turkey.[111] Recently, military forces from the three nations conducted an energy infrastructure security exercises near Ankara.[112] EU-NATO support for future exercises allows Turkey and the South Caucasus to pool and integrate resources and intelligence, and integrate operational procedures. Furthermore, Turkey,

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[109] Ibid.

[110] Anthony Melling, "Natural Gas Pricing and its Future: Europe as the Battleground," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2010, 26.

[111] Martin Malek, "The South Caucasus at the Crossroads: Ethno-territorial Conflicts, Russian Interest, and the Access to Energy Resources," in European Security in Transition, ed. Gunther Hauser and Franz Kernic (Burlington, VT: Ashgate) 2006, 157–8.

[112] "The Baku-Tbilisi-Ankara Axis Grows Stronger," Caspian Research Institute, April 9, 2013, http://caspianresearch.com/category/baku-tbilisi-kars-railroad/.

operating under a NATO mandate, participating in military exercises with the EU potentially strengthens the weakened Ankara-EU link.

The strategic and economic integration between Turkey, Europe, and Azerbaijan creates conditions for dialogue and action on Nagorno-Karabakh. Turkey's policies towards Armenia generally mirror those of its economic and cultural ally Azerbaijan. However, Turkey finds itself in a position to leverage its power and influence due to Azerbaijan's growing economic entrenchment in large-scale projects in Turkey, such as the AGT petrochemical and port infrastructure project. SOCAR and private industry are heavily investing in Turkey's (and Azerbaijan's) energy infrastructure as it becomes increasingly clear that Azerbaijani oil and gas is destined for European markets. The energy corporation Chevron's 2012 annual report supplement, for instance, includes investment in Azerbaijan as one of its major capital projects.[113] The flow of oil and gas out and the flow of financial resources into the region create momentum and coercive pressure for states to maintain economic and political stability. A Turkey-led unilateral approach bringing Armenia and Azerbaijan together is currently unrealistic; however, dialogue within an EU framework perhaps sets conditions for an amicable mandate.

Additionally, Turkey's policies towards Armenia indirectly supports the continued animosity between Yerevan and Baku, draws Yerevan's closer to both Russian and Iran, and complicates EU-NATO attempts to create an enduring regional security architecture and economic development strategy. The Nagorno-Karabakh affair benefits Russia by creating circumstances for Russia to maintain a military presence in the region and also compliments Moscow's troop presence in Georgia and support for South Ossetia and Abkhazia autonomy. The zero-sum political mindset perpetuated by Moscow where EU-NATO "gains" are viewed as a set-back for Russia informs the decision calculus of both Armenia and Azerbaijan. During the 2004 NATO Istanbul Summit, Vartan Oskanian, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia astutely declared: "Turkey is a neighbor whose words, actions, relations—or absence of relations—

[113] Chevron, 2012 Supplement to the Annual Report, http://www.chevron.com/countries/azerbaijan/, 11.

influence the environment in which security concerns must be addressed."[114] Turkey-Armenia reconciliation is ultimately driven by Ankara's ability to create space for a unilateral policy on Armenia. Conditions for Turkish-Armenian reconciliation and normalization of relations are optimal in the next two to three years as the economic integration between Turkey, Azerbaijan, and EU increases. Baku's influence on Ankara-Yerevan rapprochement are increasingly adulterated as pipelines originating in Azerbaijan are laid westward, Azeri investment in Turkish infrastructure grows, and EU Interstate Oil and Gas Transportation to Europe (INOGATE) partnerships with Central Asian states such as Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan solidified.

4. Conclusion

In summary, the findings suggest Turkey, the EU, and NATO have similar interest in the Caucasus: maintaining security and cooperation, resolving "frozen conflicts", and gaining and securing access to Caspian energy. Turkey's EU accession stalemate hampers EU-Turkey communication but similar strategic goals necessitate Ankara-EU cooperation. The AKP is attempting to create a unique Turkish position as a regional power. However, Turkey's path to regional power travels through Moscow and its influence is magnified through EU-NATO policy instruments. The EU and NATO are able to pursue European interest within all three South Caucasus nations with collective institutional mechanisms and resources not available to Ankara. Turkey appears inextricably linked economically and to a degree politically to its regional competitor and trading partner—Russia. Turkey's current reliance on Russian energy constrains Ankara's unilateral policies in the Caucasus and creates conditions for policies and initiatives counter to EU and NATO interest. Europe, similar to Turkey relies heavily on Russian oil and natural gas; however the EU is positioned to deter Russia from wielding energy as a coercive tool. A unified European front wields greater diplomatic leverage against Moscow than Ankara's unilateralism. Ankara is best served by nesting its energy diversification interest within an EU-NATO framework when engaging with Russia.

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[114] Vartan Oskanian, "Statement-2004 Istanbul Summit," *North Atlantic Treaty Organization*, June 29, 2004, http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2004/s040629o.htm.

Turkey-Armenia rapprochement is overshadowed by Ankara's support for Azerbaijan in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, the competing national narratives concerning the atrocities in 1915, and Armenian refutation of the Turkish-Armenian border defined by the 1921 Treaty of Kars. Turkey must balance its actions and rhetoric *vis-à-vis* Armenia to ensure Ankara a prominent role in future dialogue on the Nagorno-Karabakh question, and work within European institutions and regimes such as the OSCE Minsk Group. Turkey's lack of a relationship with Armenia is counterproductive to EU-NATO objectives in the region. The nature of Azerbaijani-Turkish relations is positive for energy security and diversification but perpetuates the ongoing distrust between Armenia and Turkey.

IV. LEVANT REGIONAL ASSESMENT

A. TURKEY, THE EU, AND NATO IN THE LEVANT REGION

The region described in the West as the Middle East, roughly spans from the eastern shores of the Mediterranean to the Western borders of China and India; and from the southern coast of Yemen to the southern borders of Central Asia in the north. The people, histories, languages, cultures, religions, and politics are diverse. This study concentrates on EU-NATO and Turkish interaction in the Middle East's Levant region (Syria, Lebanon, Israel, the Occupied Territories, and Jordan) with emphasis on Syria, Israel, and the Palestinian territories it occupies. Syria and Israel are the primary regional actors which garner international attention and whose policies influence whether peace and stability or insecurity and conflict define the region. The term Levant defines the region geographically; the heterogeneous mixture of religions, ethnicities, politics, and cultures makes other forms of alignment futile. Religions in the region, for example, range from various forms of Judaism (primarily Rabbinates), Islam (Shia and Sunni), and Christianity (Orthodox, Maronite, Coptic Catholics) to the somewhat esoteric practices of the Druze.[115] The region is home to the Arab-Israeli conflict which has smoldered and erupted in various forms from the early nineteenth century to present. The conflicts current incarnation, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, consumes much of the diplomatic energy and resources of the West, specifically the United States. The EU, searching for a stage to demonstrate its global political credibility, and NATO, losing its primary *raison d'être*, are each haltingly attempting to expand their influence in the region under the weight of the European economic downturn and ten years of expeditionary warfare. Under the AKP Turkey is attempting a return to its historical and cultural sphere of influence.

EU-NATO policies for the Levant are similar to Europe's policies in the South Caucasus; increasing or fostering stability, security, and economic well-being, and

[115] The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the Middle-East and North Africa (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), ed. Trevor Mostyn and Albert Hourani, 33; This is not a complete list of the religions practiced in the Levant, it is but a sample to illustrate the regions sociocultural diversity, and imply the inherent relational complexity of the Levant.

partnering with regional actors to prevent conflict and resolve ongoing issues.[116] Turkey's policy goals are driven by both a desire for Turkish prestige in formerly Ottoman lands, but also a need to engender stability, set conditions for greater economic integration, and create new markets for Turkish good and services.

1. Historical and Contemporary Turkey's Ottoman Legacy and Europe's "Great Game"

The Ottoman Sultans ruled over the vast Middle East Empire with an invisible hand, not by design but from necessity. War and famine reduced Ottoman manpower and its ability to hold sway over regional *ayan* (notables-lords).[117] Europe from the early 1800's through the end of World War II viewed the region through an imperial lens characterized by intrigue and rivalry. The efforts of the European powers in the years leading up to the First World War and the ensuing division of the Middle East are the cause of many of the issues the EU, NATO, and Turkey are confronting today in the Levant.

One important element of Turkish-European relations in the nineteenth century is the link between Christian communities under Ottoman rule and the European power's domestically influenced desire for protectorate status over these populations—a sub-element of the broader so-called "Eastern Question." The 1853 to 1856 Crimean War started as a dispute between France and Austria on one side and Russia on the other over whether the Catholic or Orthodox Church should hold authority over the holy places in Palestine such as the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem. The Russian tsar demanded the Ottoman Porte give Russia power over the Orthodox peoples in Ottoman territory; the Porte refused with the backing of the French and British. Following Russian occupation of Ottoman Wallachia and Moldavia, the Ottomans, France, and Britain declared war on Russia.[118]

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[116] Gunther Hauser, "Regional Approaches to Comprehensive Security in Europe," in European Security in Transition ed. Gunther Hauser and Franz Kernic, 141 (London: Ashgate, 2006),.

[117] Stanford J. Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 218 and 283.

[118] Zurcher, *Turkey*, 53-55.

Ottoman support for Jews fleeing European Christian persecution and settling in Ottoman territory in the 1800's is a historical example showing an undercurrent, a memory linking the Ottoman Sultanate and Levantine Jewry to the present Turkey-Israeli relationship. Importantly, Sultan Abdül Hamid (1876 to 1909) denounced Jewish settlement of Palestine due primarily to Palestinian-Arab resistance, but the Sultan ultimately ignored the migration of European Jews to, and growth of, the Jewish community in Palestine.[119] Turkey recognized the Israeli state in 1949 and as the next section attest the relationship throughout the years is a mix of cooperation and dissent.

Discontent among the Empire's large Christian populations created another avenue for European rivalry in the Ottoman Levant. In 1860 Maronite Christian peasants in Lebanon fought a civil war against the Druze land owners. The fighting resulted in the deaths of roughly 5,000 Christians in Damascus and the military intervention of France whose efforts to re-engineer the administration of Ottoman Lebanon and Syria were opposed by the Porte with British support.[120]

The 1908 Young Turk revolution usurped the Sultans imperial power and signaled the end of the Sultanate and the solidification of a Turkish nationalist movement fostered by the educated cosmopolitan elites.[121] The Young Turk's Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) expected inclusion in the European system on equal terms with the European powers but soon found France, Britain, Russia, and to a lesser extent, Italy intended to dismantle the Empire without acknowledgement of CUP legitimacy.[122] The CUP's attempt to centralize authority catalyzed nationalist revolts throughout the Empire's semi-autonomous regions.

Ten years later, the disastrous outcome of the First World War resulted in the 1920 Treaty of Sèvres which completed dismantled the Ottoman Empire. In the Levant, the French gained control of Syria; Palestine was proclaimed a British protectorate and

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[119] Ofra Bengio, *The Turkish Israeli Relationship* (New York: Palgrave-McMillan, 2004), 72.

[120] Zurcher, *Turkey*, 55.

[121] Jung and Piccoli, *Turkey*, 52–3.

[122] Ibid., 62.

eventual national homeland of the Jewish people.[123] The post-World War I settlement and parceling of formerly Ottoman territory in the spirit of the 1916 Sykes-Picot Agreement, and the 1917 Balfour Declaration which was incorporated into the 1920 Treaty of Sèvres solidified the European imprint on the Levant and the whole Middle East region. It was only after the rise of Mustafa Kemal that the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne softened the Sèvres Treaty's harsh territorial claims. It was during this same period that 1921 Ankara Treaty between the new Turkish republic and France laid the groundwork for eventual Turkish control of the formerly Syrian province of Alexandretta (Hatay)—an agreement that plagues current Syria-Turkish relations.[124]

Kemalism and Cold War era alignments further divided Turkey from the Middle East. The new Turkish republic which emerged from the ashes of World War One sought alignment with the West. Mustafa Kemal's secular and westward leaning vision portrayed the Middle East as less progressive and a region in whose affairs Turkey must not become mired. Moscow's support for Arab states in the Arab-Israeli conflict; Turkey's membership in the anti-Communist 1955 Baghdad Pact; and Turkey's attempts at unilateral military action against Syria during its 1957 crisis and against Iraq after the 1958 toppling of the pro-west Hashemite monarchy solidified the divorcement from the Arab Middle East.[125]

The period from roughly the early 1800s to the mid-1900s displays an enduring line of European rivalry, influence, and intrigue in the Levant (and the Middle East in general). The decisions made by the Triple Entente (France, Britain, and Russia) continue to influence Middle East security and the interest and policies of the EU, NATO, and Turkey in the Levant.

2. Turkish and EU-NATO Regional Interest and Policies

This section reflects on the relationship between EU-NATO and Turkish foreign policies, and the related continuity and discontinuity between European and Turkish

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[123] Treaty of Sèvres, 1920

[124] Sarah D. Shields, *Fezzes in the River* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 20.

[125] Jung and Piccoli, *Turkey,* 138.

approaches in relation to the two primary actors in the Levant—Syria and Israel. The Arab-Israeli conflict is also examined within the context of the Palestinian struggle for autonomy and territory in the Israeli occupied territories.

Most recently, the so-called Arab Spring's dismantlement of authoritarian regimes provided Turkey the opportunity to transform its regional policies and step into mediation position once held by states such as Egypt. Turkey relies heavily on its civil-society and private sector interactions to compliment government efforts in the region. After two Middle East wars over roughly a ten year period, the U.S. is weary and struggles to put forth diplomatic energy in the region's troubled areas such as the Levant. Turkey is attempting to fill the void and exercise its soft-power through diplomacy and economic integration. Currently, the AKP is propelled by religious and nostalgic Ottoman ties, and a degree of Turkish exceptionalism in its effort to gain what Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu termed "strategic depth," a vision of Turkey as the active center of multiple regions where multi-regional economic integration is a major component in ensuring the continued prosperity of the center (i.e., Turkey).

Historically, Turkey's policies in the Levant are driven by pragmatic interest, but to a lesser extent than is found in its South Caucasus policies. Turkey, its people and government, estranged from the Middle East for decades, is attempting to re-establish the relationships which suffered as a result of the political and relational dynamics fostered by Kemalism and the Cold War era international system. Pragmatism and self-interest, versus adherence to international norms or regimes, is a theme in Turkey's Middle Eastern policies throughout the post-World War II period. During the Iran-Iraq war, for example, and despite Ankara's (and the Turkish publics) mistrust of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini's Islamist Iran, Ankara ignored the U.S.-led economic embargo on Tehran and continued trade with its economically beleaguered neighbor; conversely, during the war Turkey allowed Iraq to pipe oil via Turkey to sites on the Mediterranean.[126]

Ankara's relationship with Damascus oscillates between warm and cold. Turkey is routinely involved in struggles with its Levantine neighbor over the Hatay province

[126] Zurcher, *Turkey*, 325

(Alexandretta), Tigris-Euphrates river water-flow, Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK, Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan) terrorism, and most recently the overflow of Syria civil-war violence into Turkish territory. Turkey called for Syrian President Bashar al-Assad to initiate political reforms and halt the brutal crackdown on the internal revolt; later Ankara demanded Assad's resignation.[127] After the Syrian's shot down a Turkish military aircraft on patrol straddling the Syria-Turkey border and other incidents resulting in the deaths of Turkish civilians the relationship between Ankara and the Assad government appears irrecoverable. Syria's support of the PKK cause from the early 1980s to the late 1990's widened the gap between Ankara and Damascus. Indeed, Syrian President Hafez al-Assad provided refuge to PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan, and training for PKK fighters. Ankara demonstrated its anger and resolve on the issue by massing its troops on the Turkey-Syrian border in 1998.[128] The show of force compelled Damascus to expel Öcalan from Syria. Water security is increasingly a national security issue for Middle East states. The Tigris and Euphrates rivers which originates in Turkey and travels through Syria (and Iraq) are a source of tension as Turkey's Southeastern Anatolia Project, a system of hydroelectric dams, power-plants, and irrigation projects along the Tigris and Euphrates, threatens downstream water supply. In reaction to hydro-political tension between Ankara and Damascus, Syrian fighter jets shot down a civilian Turkish land survey aircraft in 1989.[129] Moreover, in 1990 Turkey used water as an instrument of state policy against Syria by temporarily reducing the downstream flow of the Euphrates River in protest of Damascus' support for PKK leader Öcalan.[130]

The relationship between Ankara and Damascus transformed favorably in the early 2000's. The AKP maintained positive relations with Syria despite both U.S. and EU pressure after the U.S. Congress issued the 2003 Syrian Accountability Act and the U.S. and EU's condemnations and accusations against Syria following the February 2005

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[127] Jonathon Burch, "Turkey tells Syria's Assad: Step down!," *Reuters*, Nov 22, 2011, http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/11/22/us-syria-idUSL5E7MD0GZ20111122.

[128] Nathalie Tocci and Joshua W. Walker, "Turkey and the Middle-East," in *Turkey and Its Neighbors* (Boulder, CO: Lynee Riemer Publishers, 2012), 40.

[129] Joost Jongerden, "Dams and Politics in Turkey: Utilizing Water, Developing Conflict," *Middle-East Policy* 17, no. 1 (2010): 138.

[130] Phillip Robins, *Suits and Uniforms* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 2003), 229–30.

assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Refik Hariri.[131] In line with its "zero problems" policy approach Ankara hosted a water scarcity summit with Syria (and Iraq) in 2009.[132] However, the current Syrian civil war is causing soured relations between Damascus and Ankara as Turkey attempts to contain the violence along the Syria-Turkey border and provide humanitarian assistance to roughly 200,000 war refugees.[133]

Turkey's relationship with Israel oscillates between strong and weak on both the military and political front. The issues that dominate the cautious partnership over roughly the last twenty years include the threat posed by Syria, the Palestinian question, and the greater Arab-Israeli conflict. The 1990s Turkish-Israeli friendship demonstrates Turkey's *realpolitik* in the face of Arab perturbation. The fall of the Soviet Union left Syria and Iraq on the international periphery; Damascus, along with Baghdad and Tehran, formed a front against Israel exemplified by Saddam Hussein's rocket attacks on Israel during the 1991 Gulf War, and Syria and Iran's proxy war against Israel using the Lebanon-based Hezbollah militant organization. Turkey during the same period, unclear of its geostrategic role after the Soviet collapse, sought a means to increase its profile in the West and simultaneously mitigate the Syrian threat. The 1996 Turkish-Israeli military cooperation agreement is a case where Turkey's domestic terrorism (PKK) and mistrust of Syria informed Ankara's decision to ally with Tel-Aviv. The Israeli Air Force benefited from flying long-range simulated bombing missions using Turkish training areas and the Turkish Air Force took advantage of the Israeli's high-tech training systems.[134] Additionally, Turkey and Israel shared intelligence information relating to Syria; Israel provided information on PKK related activity; and the agreement authorized joint strategic research and technology transfer.[135]

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131 European Union, *Council Resolution-Syria and Lebanon*, 7 November, 2005, http://www.eu-un.europa.eu/articles/fr/article_5244_fr.htm; U.S. Congress, *Syrian Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act of 2003* (Washington DC: U.S. Congress, 2003), 12.

132 Joost Jongerden, "Dams and Politics in Turkey: Utilizing Water, Developing Conflict," *Middle East Policy* 17, no. 1 (2010):139.

133 "Syrian refugees in Turkey reach 200,000," June 14, 2013, *United Press International*, http://www.upi.com/Top_News/World-News/2013/06/14/Syrian-refugees-in-Turkey-reach-200000/UPI-19941371219006/.

134 Jung and Piccoli, *Turkey,* 161.

135 Ibid, 162-3.

In the AKP era Turkish-Israeli relations over roughly the last eleven years is overshadowed by differing perspectives on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. The Second Intifada (2000–2005), which began roughly two years prior to the AKP election victory, and Israel's Operation Caste Lead (2008–2009) in Gaza, set the tone for relations between the AKP and Israel. Turkey viewed itself as a conflict mediator similar to the U.S., and a Palestinian advocate during the crisis, whereas Israel believed Turkey was best suited to facilitate and assist Israel in developing amicable relationships with regional Arab states.[136] Ankara potentially overreached its regional influence and demonstrated its misunderstanding of the political dynamics which necessitate Israel's need for the U.S. as the mediator. Israel, for instance, maintains a strong lobby in Washington, D.C. and is able to shape U.S. foreign policy through this mechanism.[137] Turkey actively continued to provide unilateral indirect support to the Quartet's (EU, UN, U.S., and Russia) Road Map for peace by providing the Palestinians with humanitarian assistance through TIKA and Turkish non-governmental organizations. Turkey and EU perspectives of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict are similar, and differ from the position of the U.S. and Israel. Both Turkey and the EU believe a solution to the conflict must precede any attempts at reform.[138] Both the AKP and the EU adamantly disagree with the targeted killing of Palestinian Hamas leaders such as Sheikh Ahmed Ismail Hassan Yassin, assassinated by Israel in 2004; consequently, in protest Erdogan postponed a trip to Israel declaring Tel-Aviv's actions an act of terrorism.[139]

Despite cleavages in the Turkish-Israeli relationship several examples demonstrate the potential for positive relations between Ankara and Tel-Aviv, and the maturation of the political and economic components of the relationship. In 2005, for example, a telephone hotline between Erdoğan and Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon allowed the two leaders to share information on common security issues such as

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[136] Mesut Özcan, *Harmonizing Foreign Policy: Turkey, the EU and the Middle East* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2008), 125.

[137] Ibid, 125.

[138] Ibid, 129.

[139] "Turkish PM: Assassination of Yassin Was an Act of Terror," *Haaretz*, March 26, 2004, http://www.haaretz.com/print-edition/news/turkish-pm-assassination-of-yassin-was-an-act-of-terror-1.117922.

terrorism; moreover, in 2007 Shimon Peres became the first Israeli Prime Minister to speak before the Turkish Grand National Assembly.[140] In the short-term, Turkish-Israeli relations are influenced by the 2010 Mavi Marmara Flotilla incident where Israeli commandos killed nine Turkish citizen en route to Gaza, and to a lesser extent Israel's 2012 Israeli Operation Pillar of Defense in Gaza. Erdoğan's policy requirement after the Flotilla incident included: a formal apology from Israel (which Erdoğan received March 2013 from Israeli Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu); an end to the Gaza blockade; and compensation for the victims' families.[141] Despite the combative rhetoric in the wake of the 2010 Mavi Marmara incident and disagreements over the Palestinian question, Turkish-Israeli dialogue continues in the military sector and trade is reaching new heights in keeping with the strong economic trade component of the AKP policy. Turkish 2011 exports of goods such as iron, steel, automobiles, and textiles to Israel totaled 2.4 billion dollars; Turkish imports of Israeli goods totaled 1.4 billion dollars in 2010 and included crude oil products, plastics, and chemicals.[142]

Low profile high level security discussions continue between Turkish and Israeli officials despite the tension between Ankara and Tel Aviv. In 2012, for instance, Turkey's senior intelligence officer and the head of Israeli Mossad met in Cairo, and in Geneva senior representatives from the Turkish and Israeli foreign ministries met to discuss Gaza and other regional issues.[143] The Syrian civil war and the potential for the country to collapse into sectarian violence ensure continued cooperation between the Turkish and Israeli defense and intelligence establishment.

EU-NATO is recovering from the recent economic crisis and 10 years of war in Afghanistan. Europeans are consumed by domestic welfare issues more so than strategic

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[140] Nathalie Tocci and Joshua W. Walker, "Turkey and the Middle-East," in *Turkey and Its Neighbors* (Boulder, CO: Lynee Riemer Publishers, 2012), 42.

[141] "Turkey Conditions Normalization on Israel Ending Gaza Blockade, Compensating for Flotilla," *Haaretz*, March 24, 2013, http://www.haaretz.com/news/diplomacy-defense/turkey-conditions-normalization-on-israel-ending-gaza-blockade-compensating-for-flotilla-1.511696.

[142] Republic of Turkey Ministry of Economy, "Republic of Turkey, Free Trade Agreement—Israel," Last Modified 2012, http://www.economy.gov.tr/index.cfm?sayfa=tradeagreements&bolum=fta&country=IL&region=0.

[143] Dan Arbell, "The Beginning of a Turkish-Israeli Rapprochement?," *Brookings Blog*, December 3, 2012, http://www.brookings.edu/blogs/up-front/posts/2012/12/03-turkey-israel-arbell.

interest in the Middle East; the EU and NATO's political and diplomatic lethargy in the region reflects the trend. The EU is steered by the interest of the Franco-German front, each appears to have stronger interest in other regions such as North Africa for France; Germany appears interested in managing its now tepid relationship with Russia. Additionally, inward looking issues on the European economic front and domestic issues are of primary concern for EU member states. NATO's shortfalls in the realm of socioeconomic capability limit its soft-power impact in the Levant. The influx of European funding and resources to the region is significant; however the EU-NATO political and diplomatic activity on issues such as the Palestinian-Israeli conflict is lusterless.

EU and NATO interest and policies in the Middle East dovetail with those of Turkey, but the diplomatic energy applied by the European institutions are not equivalent to the challenges presented by the region. The EU and NATO policies follow both a regional and bi-lateral approach to increasing security, stability, and democratic rights. This section analyzes EU and NATO policies relevant to the Levant to determine their effectiveness and congruencies with Turkish bi-lateral activity in the region. Importantly, EU-NATO and Turkish policies attempt to reduce spillover effects from the Syrian civil war. Turkey is demonstrating its policy objectives by arming resistance fighters. Along with the U.S. and members of the Arab League, the EU and Turkey are implementing sanctions against the Assad regime.[144]

The EU Security Strategy proclaims: "Resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict is a strategic priority for Europe" and a two-state solution, cooperatively road-mapped by the Quartet, the Israelis, and the Palestinians is the only viable solution.[145] The EU's policies for Syria are in limbo as the country writhes in the grip of civil war. The rift between EU

[144] Aram Nerguizian, Nori Kasting, and Anthony H. Cordesman, *U.S.-Iranian Competition in the Levant—II*, 4th ed. (Washington DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2013), 6.

[145] EU Security Strategy, 2003, 8.

members on whether or not to arm Syria's anti-government fighters highlights the EU's struggle to develop a homogenous security identity.[146]

The EU as a member of the Quartet plays a significant role in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. Several EU countries maintain regional diplomatic missions for direct contact with the PA. Belgium, France, Greece, Italy, Spain, Sweden, and Britain maintain consulates in Jerusalem; additionally, Austria, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, and Portugal all maintain some form of diplomatic footprint in the West Bank.[147] The European diplomatic missions are a remnant of a time when Europe was optimistic about the implementation of 1947 UN resolution 181 which mandated the division of Palestine into a separate state and establishment of the Jerusalem international zone.[148] Despite the failure of the UN resolution the European missions to Palestine in conjunction with their embassy counterparts play a role in administering EU policies relevant to both Palestine and Israel.

The EU's actions in the Middle East began in earnest with the ambitious 1995 Barcelona Declaration. The declaration covered a broad range of socioeconomic and political concerns important to peace and stability in the Levant region. The objectives included: developing free-trade areas for economic cooperation, recognizing territorial integrity, reducing of trans-border crime and terrorism, creating education and training programs, and fostering cultural accommodation and human rights. The vision and objectives arguably are suited for the countries outside of the Levant region considering Israel's semi-permanent state of conflict with both the Palestinians in the occupied territories and Hezbollah in Lebanon. The idea of the Barcelona Declaration is closely linked to the anticipation generated by the 1993 Oslo Accords peace process between Israeli Government and the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO). The Barcelona Declaration acknowledges the 1991 Madrid Middle East Peace Conference, the

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[146] Justyna Pawlak and Adrian Croft, "EU Failure Will Allow UK, France to Arm Syrian Rebels," *Reuters*, May 27, 2013, http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/05/27/us-syria-crisis-eu-idUSBRE94Q09320130527.

[147] Michael Schmidmayr, "Assessing European-Levantine Relations by the Numbers," *The Washington Institute*, December 12, 2003, http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/assessing-european-levantine-relations-by-the-numbers.

[148] Ibid.

progenitor to the Oslo Accords, as the guiding beacon for the declaration.[149] Unfortunately, the Barcelona Process, the conceptual framework supporting the Barcelona Declaration, succumbed to disrepair in the wake of the second Intifada, the 2003 Iraq War, and so-called War on Terror. The declaration's signatories included the EU member-states, Turkey, the Levant states, the Palestinian Authority (PA), and other countries located in the Mediterranean and North Africa.[150] The Barcelona Process (EUROMED) re-emerged as the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM).[151] UfM is a reintroduction and expansion of EUROMED which consisted of the 27 EU nations, Turkey, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, the PA, and other members from across the Southern Mediterranean, African and Middle Eastern.[152]

The EU introduced the ENP in 2004 as a broader multi-regional engagement project which includes the Middle East, North African, South Caucasus states, the Ukraine, Moldova, and Belarus. The EU Barcelona Process mandate is built on a multi-lateral regional concept for peace and stability, economic integration, and sociocultural partnership whereas the ENP attempts to implement unilateral Action Plans and resources provided through the ENPI contingent on the regional partners meeting agreed upon conditions. The Palestinian Authority Action Plan, for example, states a contractual relationship between the EU and PA is possible if the PA meets certain objectives.[153] Additionally, the ENPI, similar to the Barcelona Process, maintains "cross-border cooperation programs" which supports areas such as region-based education initiatives, governance, and economic integration. The ENPI attempts to explain the relationship, boundaries, and bridges between it and the Barcelona Process; however, evident suggest overlap and redundancy in multiple areas such as education and governance.[154]

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[149] European Union, *Barcelona Declaration*, November 1995, http://eeas.europa.eu/euromed/barcelona_en.htm.

[150] Ibid.

[151] European Union, *The Barcelona Process*, http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/.

[152] European Union, *Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EUROMED)*, European Union External Action, http://www.eeas.europa.eu/euromed/index_en.htm.

[153] European Union, *Palestinian Authority Action Plan*, December 9, 2004, European Union, 7.

[154] European Union, *European Neighborhood Partnership Instrument (2007-2013)*, European Union, 4.

The source of the EU policies ineffectiveness in the Levant is not only the technical and bureaucratic aspects of the policies and instruments; it is the fact that inter-regional ties are nearly non-existent. Israel maintains only relatively close ties to Jordan, its historical ally in the Arab world. Tel-Aviv's diplomatic, economic, and social ties to Lebanon and Syria are nearly non-existent. In Lebanon, Hezbollah is the shadow government providing civil services to the large Shia population on the same level as the Lebanese government. Hezbollah does not recognize the right for Israeli existence, a fundamental issue that prevents dialogue; additionally, the Lebanese government views Israel as an existential threat—not Hezbollah. Hamas won the Palestinian Parliamentary elections in 2006 but Israel refused to develop diplomatic ties with the government and the U.S. boycotted the results. Both Hezbollah and Hamas are on the EU (and U.S.) list of terrorist organizations; however, the two organizations legally represent large segments of society in their respective country and territory to which they are held accountable; indeed, Hezbollah has peacefully participated in Lebanese elections since 1992.[155]

Additionally, the ENP policies for the Levant countries are dated "2004" and consequently do not reflect the changed regional context in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) as the dust from the Arab Spring settles.

The EU ENP's for the Levant region consist of Action Plans for each Levant Nation plus the PA. The EU's Palestinian Authority Action Plan (dated 2004) is similar to other ENP Action Plans for the region, covering areas such as political, economic, social, and institutional reform, but it also recognizes the limited space for implementation in the unstable and insecure Israeli-Palestinian neighborhood. The plan emphasizes among other things: facilitating the resolution of the Middle East conflict; relieving the humanitarian crisis; strengthening the rule of law; progressing on the economic and education front; and decreasing anti-Semitism and "Islamophobia."[156] Under the democracy and rule of law paragraph, the "organization of transparent general

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[155] Helena Cobban, "Facing Hamas and Hezbollah," *The Nation*, November 1, 2007, http://www.thenation.com/article/facing-hamas-and-hezbollah#axzz2fiQaSUs9.

[156] European Union, *Palestinian Authority Action Plan*, 6-7.

and local elections" is defined as an important objective. In the case of the electoral success of Hamas, the EU (and the U.S.) must reconcile the dissonance created when the popularly elected government is considered a terrorist organization by the international community. The EU supports the PA security capacity through the EU Coordinating Office for Palestinian Police Support (EU COPPS) and Palestinian Civil Police Development Programme. Palestinian Authority Police make frequent trips to Europe, most recently the Palestinian officials visited Ireland under EU COPPS funding to provide exposure to the operations of modern Criminal Forensic Laboratory to understand the role of forensic science in a mature criminal justice system.[157]

The EU's unilateral leverage over Israeli policy is limited due primarily to the support provided Tel-Aviv by the U.S. Israel collects and then withholds roughly $100 million dollars in Palestinian tax revenues each month from fear the money will reach Hamas and Fatah.[158] The EU attempts to ensure the PA receives direct financial support for recurrent cost and public services through the EU-developed PEGASE mechanism.[159] The EU's funding, as the largest donor, is indispensable to Palestinian education, healthcare, civil services, and other needs; additionally, such services are provide in Palestinian refugee camps in Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon in coordination with the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA).[160] Under UNRWA EU contributions totaled roughly €590.5 million.[161] In May 2013 alone the EU contributed €19.2 million to the Palestinian Authority's salary and pension program.[162] It was only after U.S.

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[157] European Union, *Palestinian Officials Participated in a Study Visit to Ireland on Forensics Science*, EUPOL-COPPS http://eupolcopps.eu/content/palestinian-officials-participated-study-visit-ireland-forensics-science.

[158] Jeffrey Heller, "Israel restores tax transfers to Palestinian Authority," Reuters, March 25, 2013, http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/03/25/us-palestinians-israel-idUSBRE92O0GS20130325.

[159] European Union, *PEGASE: Direct Financial Support to the Palestinian Authority*, 2009, http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/westbank/documents/eu_westbank/directfinancialsupport_en.pdf.

[160] Agnès Bertrand-Sanz, "The conflict and the EU's Assistance to the Palestinians," ed. Esra Aymat, "European Involvement in the Arab-Israeli Conflict." *European Union Institute for Security Studies*, 44.

[161] Ibid.

[162] European Union, *The EU contributes €19.2 Million to the Palestinian Authority's May Salaries and Pensions*, EU Press Release, http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/westbank/documents/news/2013/20130605_press_release_csp_may_salaries_en.pdf.

Presidents Barak Obama's March 2013 visit that the Netanyahu government agreed to release the funds needed to pay Palestinian public sector employees.[163]

Israel is a modern state with solid and stable institutions, and a vibrant export economy. Within "green-line" Israel, the territorial demarcation mandated by the 1949 Armistice Agreement, regimes are in place that mirror and seamlessly interact with international institutions. Rule of law, a modern justice system, a liberalized economy, social welfare, and an active civil society are already in place. Israeli trade with the EU totaled roughly €29 billion euro in 2012, with total EU exports of €17 billion.[164] The EU Action Plan for Israel attempts to further EU-Israel cooperation and eventual integration but also speaks to the rift between Israelis and Palestinians and transnational security issues. The EU Action Plans are bi-lateral in nature and the contractual component is activated after certain conditions are met, for Israel, supporting Action Plan priorities such as facilitating political dialogue and cooperation on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a pre-condition for contractual agreements between Tel-Aviv and Brussels.[165] Israel's continued settlement of the occupied territories, and house demolitions and evictions of Palestinians in East Jerusalem and the West Bank under the Netanyahu government abrogate the agreements in the EU-Israel Action Plan; consequently, the EU in 2009 froze continued upgrade of EU-Israeli bilateral relations.[166]

In 1994 NATO instituted its Mediterranean Dialogue (MD) with seven Middle Eastern and North African countries. By 2000 the members included Tunisia, Egypt, Mauritania, Morocco, Algeria, Jordan, and Israel. Through the Dialogue NATO attempts to develop a common understanding between NATO and non-NATO Mediterranean countries; eliminate misconceptions about the Alliance; and play a role in regional

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[163] Jeffrey Heller, "Israel."

[164] European Commission, *EU-Israeli Trade*, Last modified May 3, 2013, http://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/countries-and-regions/countries/israel/.

[165] European Union, *Israel Action Plan 2004*, http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/index_en.htm.

[166] European Union, *Israel Progress Report 2010*, May 12, 2010, http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/progress2010/sec10_520_en.pdf.

security with the objective of creating security along Europe's periphery.[167] Similar to the NATO PfP programs in Europe and the South Caucasus, the MD program offers tailored bilateral Individual Cooperation Programs where member countries define short and long-term cooperation objectives. Similar to the EU's Action Plan members, MD partners choose the "pace and extent" of involvement in the program.[168] Politically the dialogue provides the Secretary General and the Deputy Secretary General an avenue to conduct high-level security discussions with officials in the MD member states. Militarily the Mediterranean Dialogue Work Program (MDWP) focuses on a wide range of security related activities such as: counter-terrorism, defense policy and strategy, border security, military education, civil emergency planning, and crisis management.[169]

NATO's ability to implement the regional activities are impacted by several factors: the U.S. shift to the Pacific; shrinking European military budgets following more than a decade of war in Afghanistan; mismatch in values between NATO and some of the more authoritarian partners; mistrust of Israel by the Arab members in light of ongoing Palestinian-Israeli and Israeli-Hezbollah related frictions, and lastly, Turkey's veto power against NATO events which include Israel. These objectives impact the Muslim countries more so than Israel. Israel maintains close military-to-military ties to the U.S. and applies operational concepts which are similar to NATO standards. Operation Juniper Cobra, for instance, provides Israel with ballistic missile defense interoperability and procedural understanding that informs U.S.-led EPAA ballistic missile defense for NATO.

The policy methods, rhetoric, and interest of EU-NATO and Ankara are similar in the Levant. Turkey's proximity to the region, historical and cultural ties, and the respect it receives from the Arab states provides it with a degree of clout equivalent to the EU, even though the EU provides enormous support and financial aid to the PA and Palestinians located on regional refugee camps. Paradoxically, it is Turkey's ties to the West through NATO and the EU accession process, moreover, its ability to straddle the

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[167] North Atlantic Treaty Organization, *NATO Mediterranean Dialogue*, Last modified June 15, 2012, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_60021.htm.

[168] Ibid.

[169] North Atlantic Treaty Organization, *2005 Mediterranean Dialogue Work Programme*,

fence between east and the west without appearing as a tool of western interest, which gains it the respect of many in the Middle East.

Israel creates a dilemma for both Turkey and the European organizations. Turkey must determine what type of relationship it wants with Israel and for what purposes, and balance its ties with both Tel-Aviv and Arab nations in the region. EU-NATO must reflect on the terms of cooperation contractually agreed upon with Israel in the context of the frozen discourse on the Palestine two-state solution. The AKP's emerging policies, such as arming Syrian rebels and allowing Syrian opposition leaders to conduct meetings on Turkish soil reflect the new reality. Conversely, arming the rebels also contradicts the idea of "zero problems" with neighbors. Turkey more than EU-NATO believes a dialogue with influential actors, such as Hamas (and Hezbollah), organizations that are considered pariahs by the international community, is required for an eventual peaceful settlement of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Ironically, member countries of both the EU and NATO (to include the AKP) maintained relations and economic ties with oppressive regimes in Libya and Egypt prior to the Arab Spring uprisings. Turkey is potentially an inoculator for developing a dialogue with Hamas leaders, but importantly, the AKP must reflect on the potential for its relationship to damage the legitimacy and authority of the EU-supported PA.

3. Aligned and Divergent Policies and Interest: Consequences and Opportunities

Economic integration is creating the most headway for Israeli-Palestinian cooperation and Turkish business leaders are supporting the integration process. The Israeli and Palestinian National Committees of International Chamber of Commerce selected Turkish businessman and chairman of the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey, Rıfat Hisarcıklıoğlu as a co-chairman of the Jerusalem Arbitration Center which mediates commercial conflicts between Israeli and Palestinian businesses.[170] Hisarcıklıoğlu is also the chairman of the Union of Chambers and

[170] Ali Kayalar, "Turkish Boss to Arbitrate Israel, Palestine Trade," Hürriyet Daily News, March 18, 2013, http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkish-boss-to-arbitrate-israel-palestine-trade.aspx?pageID=238&nid=43148.

Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB) which promotes trans-boundary trade and manages the Erez Industrial Zone located between Gaza and Israel.[171] Organizations such as TOBB provide the means and technical ability to increase regional trade and economic integration. Turkey's visa policy also supports regional economic integration.[172] Turkey's liberal visa policy and Europe-focused trade regimes lays a foundation for eventual seamless trade and economic integration between the EU and the Levant. The EU's Palestinian Authority Action Plan mentions providing the PA "a significant degree of [economic] integration" and "a stake in the EU's Internal Market."[173] The Turkish government's ties to Gaza and the West Bank and the experience in EU markets and regimes found in the Turkish private potentially accelerates Gaza and West Bank economic integration and facilitates understanding of EU economic mechanisms among Palestinian businesses.

Turkey, NATO, the EU, and Israel each have vested interest in the outcome in the Syrian civil war. The potential for Turkey's influence in the Levant is contingent upon the fall of the Assad government in Syria, and the loosening of Iranian power over Hezbollah in Lebanon. The Turkish-Syria and Iraqi-Syrian border region is home to the majority of Syrian Kurds, many of whom supported the PKK in its thirty year struggle with the Turkish government. How Turkey handles calls for a federalized Syrian Kurdistan impacts both the delicate peace between Ankara and the PKK and the demands of Turkey's own Kurdish population. The diverse group of Syrian rebel organizations presents a conundrum for the AKP. Turkey and Saudi Arabia hold differing opinions on which rebel forces to support; the AKP supports the Syrian National Council, an organization influenced by the Muslim Brotherhood, whereas the Saudis are vehemently against the Brotherhood.[174] Moreover, as EU members such as France and Britain,

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[171] "The Project on the Revitalization of the Palestinian Industrial Free Zone in Gaza," TEPAV-*Economic Policy and Research Foundation of Turkey*, http://www.tepav.org.tr/en/proje/s/8.

[172] Eduard Soler i Lecha, "The EU, Turkey, and the Arab Spring: From Parallel Approaches to a Joint Strategy?," *Turkey and the Arab Spring: Implications for Turkish Foreign Policy from a Transatlantic Perspective*, 2011, The German Marshall Fund of the United States, 28, http://www.iai.it/pdf/mediterraneo/GMF-IAI/Mediterranean-paper_13.pdf

[173] European Union, *Palestinian Authority Action Plan*, December 9, 2004, 7.

[174] Nuh Yilmaz "Syria: the view from Turkey," European Council on Foreign Relations, June 19, 2013. http://ecfr.eu/content/entry/commentary_syria_the_view_from_turkey139.

contemplate unilaterally arming rebels, one must ask if the Syrian rebel organizations EU nations are willing to support differ from those Ankara is supporting, and how does this play out politically if the war turns into a factional fight between rebel organizations?

In the event of Syrian collapse, Western institutions must not regard Turkey's political system as a model for the new Syrian government. The idea of a so-called "Turkish Model" for the Middle East, or specifically for Syria in the event revolutionary forces defeat the Assad regime, is overstated. Turkey's transformation is the product of a historical, sociopolitical, and socioeconomic context unique to Turkey. Additionally, Arab support for the model and admiration of the AKP must be viewed in the context of Turkey's drifting relationship with Israel and current stance on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. In the event of Syrian collapse Turkey and EU-NATO [and the U.S. and Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)] must find common ground if a revolutionary Syrian government seeks post-conflict reconstruction support. Each must harmonize incentives and criteria in areas such as democratization, rule of law, inclusive governance, and security sector reform. The issue of democratization is a potential source of friction for GCC countries which recently suppressed domestic Arab Spring uprisings. The possibility of sociopolitical transformation in Syria creates the opportunity for a moderate Islamic republic such as Turkey to act as an facilitator of dialogue among the warring factions and an influential co-partner to the EU.

In the case of NATO's MD program, the MENA partners are potentially suspicious of NATO and are reluctant participants in a security program that includes Israel. Supporting Turkey as a lead nation for the program takes advantage of cultural similarities. Israel is the only Levant region member of the organization. Contingent on continued rapprochement, Ankara and Tel-Aviv can take advantage of the continuity provided by long-standing security agreements. If fences are not mended between Israel and Turkey further NATO cooperation with Israel within the MD or any other context is hampered by Ankara's veto power in NATO. Indeed, Turkey vetoed a recently planned MD event despite Israel's apology for the Mavi Marmara-Flotilla incident.[175]

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[175] Elad Benari, "Turkey Blocks Meeting of NATO Group which Includes Israel," April 17, 2013, *Israeli International News*, http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/167207; Serkan Demirtaş, "Turkey and Egypt Nix NATO Meet with Israel," *Hürriyet Daily News*, April 13, 2013, http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkey-and-egypt-nix-nato-meet-with-israel.aspx?pageID=238&nid=44828.

The Arab Spring created opportunity and instability, and for EU-NATO and Turkey it provides the opportunity to influence regional stability and governmental modes and re-evaluate regional policies. Moreover, the Arab Spring potentially opens the door for Turkey to gain a foothold in the Middle East after years of neglecting past relationships. Importantly, Turkey (and the EU) must take account of the Arab position. Ankara-GCC cooperation is cautious and influenced by modern Turkey's Ottoman legacy, secular origins, and Cold War era stance; however similar regional interest creates space for cooperation.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, the Levant is one of the most volatile and complex regions in the Middle East. Its nations are at the epicenter of the Arab-Israeli conflict and the latest Middle East war in Syria. The AKP over roughly the last 10 years is growing more institutionally ingrained with its Arab neighbors and is attempting to carve out a sphere of influence in formerly Ottoman lands. Evidence suggests Turkey is using bi-lateral and multi-lateral relationships and mechanism in the region to increase its influence and role as a co-mediator in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Maintaining co-existing relationships with Israel and Hamas demonstrates the AKP's pragmatic nature. Security agreements with Israel are viewed as important for Turkish interest by the AKP. Ankara's ties to Tel Avis are at one of its weakest points in the AKP era; however the rift is based on policy differences versus anti-Jewish sentiment engendered by the Palestinian question. Turkey maintains relationships with Hamas and Hezbollah to the consternation of Israel, the U.S., and to a lesser extent the EU. Hamas is an influential element in Palestinian life and politics and Turkey and to a lesser degree the EU views the organization as integral to long-term peace process. The opportunity to cleave Hamas away from Syrian and Iranian influence is magnified in light of the Syrian civil war and the potential loss of Iran's Syrian ally in the Levant.

Turkey is unencumbered by the consensus process that binds and slows EU decisions; consequently, the AKP is able to react quickly to changing circumstances and apply a degree of *realpolitik* to its efforts in the Levant. The EU provides a visionary

framework, value system, and deep pockets, but Turkey, provides the sociocultural bridge. Turkey as a moderate Muslin state and supporter of the Syrian resistance potentially provides a major supporting role in the event of regime change. Importantly, more than Europe, Ankara's interest and vulnerability is urgent in the event Assad maintains control of Syria. In the long-term a continuation of the Assad regime creates issues for NATO in the event Assad takes action against Turkey which requires NATO Article V support.

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V. CONCLUSION

The research provided in this study of Turkish foreign policy under the AKP government is meant to determine Turkey's foreign policy direction and its impact on EU and NATO security and foreign policies. An enduring but inconstant link between Turkey and Europe exist from the Ottoman period to the present. The interest and foreign policies of EU-NATO and Turkey overlap and influences the geostrategic prospects for multiple regions. Throughout the roughly ninety year existence of the modern Turkish republic, Turkey's secular and moderate Islamist governments sought to maintain the link to the West through both informal unilateral relationships (with the U.S.) and binding ties through Euro-Atlantic institutions such as NATO. The decade-long dominance of the moderate Islamist AKP in Turkish politics, ensuing economic growth, and the frozen EU accession process set the conditions for Ankara to practice independent foreign policies. In the process of defining and executing an independent foreign policy, is Turkey now drifting eastward under an Islamist mandate?

The empirical evidence suggests Turkey's unilateralist foreign policy trajectory under the AKP government is not a sign of Ankara disengaging from the West; furthermore, the policy is grounded in pragmatic self-interest versus political Islam. Ankara understands the source of its power lies primarily in a secularized approach and its unique link to European institutions. There are shared EU-NATO and Turkish interests that potentially lead to common policy objectives and multilateral approaches; however, it is important to remember that Turkey seeks to carve out a unique position of influence within *all* regions it borders in keeping with its multi-vectored approach. In studying the South Caucasus and Levant it is clear Ankara's objectives include: fostering peace and stability, investing in economic integration and development, and supporting an amicable settlement of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and the frozen conflicts in the South Caucasus. The context and rational for Turkey's increased contact with the Middle East must be evaluated against the power of other regional actors. Russia is dominant in the South Caucasus and is Turkey's primary energy provider; EU-NATO is strong in the Balkans and holds great interest in ensuring another Balkans implosion does not occur;

the path of least political resistance, the East, also held the greatest cultural linkage for Turkey.

Turkey's historical and cultural linkage to the South Caucasus and the Levant, and particularly the volatility and complexity of the interactions between multiple actors in the two regions results in exigencies that lead to the AKP's fluctuating and at times contradictory policy positions. In the South Caucasus the shadow of Russia constrains Turkey's policy options and the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict in particular is a Gordian knot which binds Ankara's relationship with both Azerbaijan and Armenia. Ankara's interests in the South Caucasus are heavily influenced by Caspian energy and the potential for Turkey to gain further economic and political prominence as an energy corridor to Europe. Both NATO and EU security documents emphasize the importance of energy security and diversification in Europe's future strategic environment thus emphasizing an opportunity for multilateral cooperation on issues such as Russian obstructionism and Caspian Sea demarcation or agreements *in lieu* of demarcation. In the Levant Ankara's interest and policy objectives are similar to EU-NATO. The interest of Turkey are influenced by the degree of respect that Middle East Muslims have for Turkey and the AKP's search for a privileged position of influence in the region informed by nostalgic reference to Turkey's Ottoman legacy. Turkey's relationships and diplomacy in the Levant illuminates the difference between the AKP and EU-NATO policy conceptualization; Turkey believes a dialogue including all actors is required to reach a lasting peace whereas the European institutions to a greater degree determine its regional interaction with state and non-state actors through consensus mechanisms and democratic value judgments.

In both the South Caucasus and the Levant, Turkey cultivated relationships supporting "zero problems" and the "strategic depth" concepts espoused by Minister of Foreign Affairs Davutoglu. The AKP approaches regional exigencies pragmatically in its effort to meet perceived Turkish national interest. Ankara intends to increase its strategic depth by maintaining and cultivating ties with states and non-state actors along its periphery that potentially impact Turkey's stability, security, and economic opportunities, even if the actor is viewed negatively by the international community, Hamas for

example. The EU ENP and NATO PfP policies demands democratic alignment for partner countries; the empirical evidence suggest democratic values are not part of the AKP's criteria for diplomatic relationships. The AKP, for instance, remained silent while the West applauded the 2003 Rose Revolution in Georgia, but Turkey, in line with the West, supported calls for Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak to step down in 2011, and supported NATO operations against Libyan president Gaddafi that same year. The factor which shaped the AKP's reaction to the Rose Revolution is Russia's lukewarm view of the event; Turkey viewed its interest as outweighing the normative model in this particular case.

The view held in some Western capitals that Turkey is losing its Western perspective and is drifting eastward is derived from several factors: Ankara's refusal to allow U.S. forces to invade Iraq from Turkish territory in 2003; the AKP's recent pre-civil war relationship with Assad's Syria and Kaddafi's Libya; Erdoğan's past support for Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir (currently under charges indictment by the International Criminal Court); Ankara's opposition to sanctions against Iran; and Turkey's relationship with Hamas, and the related fallout between Tel-Aviv and Ankara following the 2010 Mavi Marmara flotilla incident. Some critics also look to such minor events as Erdoğan's years in the Islamist Welfare Party (RP) during which the young leader spent four months jail term in 1999 for publicly reciting what was defined as an Islamists poem, or the writings of Davutoglu where Islamic political thought is conceived as an alternative approach to the normative Western institutions and ways of thinking about the world.[176] The analysis suggest the AKP's foreign policy choices that appear to signal an eastward shift, such as relations with Iran and Syria prior to the current Syrian civil war, are driven by underlying contextual nuances that speak to the overall concept of a multi-vectored and pragmatic approach to foreign affairs.

The above examples signaling that Turkey is decoupling from the West must be weighed against the AKP's record demonstrating the status-quo commitment to European security institutions (and the U.S.), such as the AKP's early efforts to accelerate EU

[176] Davutoglu, *Alternative Paradigms*, 2.

membership, continuing support and participation in international regimes, allowing NATO BMD sites on Turkish soil in the face of Russian and Iranian protest, and providing multiple operational headquarters for ISAF. The evidence provides concrete examples of long-term Turkish commitment to NATO and indirect support to EU strategic objectives. Moreover, the thesis used history from the Ottoman era to the present to demonstrate Turkish Islam is subjugated to central political authority versus a *caliph*. The AKP's policies are generally moored to democratic principles; however, of late Erdoğan is demonstrating authoritarian proclivities.

The research in this study is limited to the foreign policies of Europe's primary security institutions and Turkey's AKP in two sub-regions of common interest. Further study delving into the domestic sociopolitical and economic influences on EU-NATO and Turkey's foreign policy decisions, and analysis of overlapping EU-NATO and Turkey policy positions in regions, such as the Balkans, North Africa, and the broader Middle East potentially provides deeper insight into the roots of dissonance and cooperation between Turkey and Europe. Analysis of the political influence held by Europe's growing Muslim populations (both citizen and non-citizen) perhaps sheds light on future EU-NATO positions relating to the MENA. Indeed, study of Turkey's influence over its European Diaspora potentially sheds light on Ankara's potential to shape certain aspects of European foreign policy. Is Turkey's bi-lateral relationships with MENA countries and non-state actors such as Hamas merely one aspect of the AKP's multi-directional concept?

Brussels and Ankara must determine the opportunities and dilemmas presented by converging regional interest. Turkey's importance to Europe in the South Caucasus, the Levant, and other regions bordering Turkey is likely to grow in the long-term. In the South Caucasus Ankara's role in Europe's energy security and diversification is vital and growing gradually whereas the Syrian civil war adds a degree of urgency and volatility to future interactions between EU-NATO and Turkey. Continued dominance by the AKP allows one to speculate on the shape and quality of future Brussels-Ankara relations and policy interaction.

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