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Dynamic Partnership

A Constructivist Discourse Analysis of the Contemporary American Understanding of the U.S.-Turkish Relationship

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URSULA ELINOR MOFFITT

In dieser Masterarbeit wird eine konstruktivistische Diskursanalyse durchgeführt um die These zu unterstützen, dass eine grundlegende Umgestaltung im amerikanischen Verständnis der türkisch-amerikanischen Beziehung unter Präsident Obama im zuge eines übergeordneten Wandels der amerikanischen Außenpolitik stattgefunden hat. Anhand einer analytischen Betrachtung diverser hochrangiger Diskurse und Präsidenten-Reden seit der Ära Ronald Reagans versucht diese Arbeit den chronologischen Weg der amerikanischen Außenpolitik anhand politischer Sprache, politischem Handeln und struktureller Veränderung, unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Türkei, aufzuzeigen. Die Formbarkeit dieser Beziehung soll mittels Anwendung der konstruktivistischen Theorie besonders hervorgehoben werden. Zudem wird der Frage nachgegangen, wie sich das Verständnis amerikanischer Führungspolitiker in Bezug auf ihre Rolle in der Welt und der Beziehung zur Türkei, abseits des strikten Kurs des Realismus, in den letzten Jahrzehnten verändert hat.

Stichworte: Konstruktivismus, Diskursanalyse, Poststrukturalismus, amerikanische Außenpolitik, U.S.-türkische Beziehungen, Präsidentenreden, Obama, Erdogan

Using a constructivist discourse analysis, this thesis argues that there has been a fundamental shift in the American understanding of the U.S.-Turkish relationship under President Obama, situated within a broader change in the nature of American foreign policy making. By analyzing presidential and other high-level discourse beginning in the Reagan era, this thesis examines the chronological path of American foreign policy, specifically in relation to Turkey, delving into political language, actions, and structural changes. By engaging constructivist theory, this thesis highlights the fluid nature of relations, endeavoring to answer the underlying question of how the high-level understanding of the U.S. role in world affairs generally, and in relation to Turkey specifically, has moved beyond a strict realist foundation over the past decades.

Keywords: Constructivism, discourse analysis, post-structuralism, American foreign policy, U.S.-Turkish relations, presidential speeches, Obama, Erdogan

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1. Introduction

In the spring of 2009, newly elected American President Barack Obama made a stop in Turkey during his first official visit overseas. President Obama addressed the Grand National Assembly in Ankara, opening his speech by stating:

"Some people have asked me if I chose to continue my travels to Ankara and Istanbul to send a message to the world. And my answer is simple: Evet -- yes. Turkey is a critical ally. Turkey is an important part of Europe. And Turkey and the United States must stand together -- and work together -- to overcome the challenges of our time." (Obama 2009).

With this succinct yet significant introductory statement, President Obama laid the foundation for a new chapter within the American-Turkish partnership. By choosing to publicly grant such weight to this alliance through both his actions and words, Obama underscored Turkey's role as a powerful nation worthy of explicit notice. He also emphasized its position within Europe at a time of stalled European Union (EU) accession talks, thereby setting the United States (U.S.) apart from nations such as France and Germany, who acted as key players in slowing the negotiations. Additionally, Obama stressed that not only should the United States and Turkey "stand together," but they should also "work together," thus differentiating between tacit alliance and active partnership, implicitly heightening the importance of the Turkish side of the American-Turkish relationship. This brief excerpt displays the great significance that even singular acts of speech can hold in terms of relations between states, wherein a shift in rhetoric can affect the development of overall discourse, which includes not only speech but also actions.

Such an interpretation of the power of discourse embraces a constructivist view of international relations, which espouses an intersubjective relationship between actors and structures within and across societies, meaning that the understanding of self, other, and the relations between the two are continually being formed and reformed by the actions and speech acts of individuals and institutions (Klotz/ Lynch 2007). When embarking on a constructivist reading of inter-state alliances, discourse can be analyzed, offering an important tool in understanding the ever-changing nature of relations, which are viewed as fluid, malleable, and situationally contingent. Following this logic, material structures such as treaties, international organizations, or even

currency, gain their significance only via shared frameworks of meaning, reinforced by the actions and discourse of actors (Griffiths 2007: 60). According to such an interpretation, there can never be a static relationship, as even what seems to be an accepted ongoing alliance must in fact be kept that way by the repeated reconstruction of norms and conditions maintaining the status of the liaison.

This thesis will endeavor to examine the contemporary American understanding of the U.S.-Turkish partnership through such a constructivist lens, highlighting the fluidity of the relationship and attempting to reconstruct the path the alliance has taken in the recent past in order to situate it within a current geo-political context. Moreover, the American understanding of the alliance with Turkey will be situated within an analysis of broader American foreign policy, as it is hypothesized that shifts in wider understandings of America's role in the world are linked to and prompt changes in the perception of Turkey as an ally. The thesis will focus predominantly on the discourse offered by American political leaders, most notably presidents, but will also examine that of Turkish political actors as well as the secondary literature presented by scholars in the field. Corresponding changes in material relations will also be explored in order to critically examine the larger context of the relationship, including the status of trade relations, levels of investment, bi-lateral agreements, and other factors that may influence the nature of the partnership.

Through such analysis, the thesis will strive to address the question of whether or not there has been a marked change within the American understanding of its relationship with Turkey since the Cold War period, focusing specifically on the years since 2002, when the Justice and Development Party (AKP) was first elected in Turkey, and most significantly since President Obama was elected in 2008 and the beginning of the Arab Spring in 2011. These historical landmarks will act as points of reference within the analysis, offering concrete chronological context to the thesis while also contributing a basis for an examination of structural change. Additionally, within this basic time frame, major events and other regional relationships will be explored, including the first Gulf War, the September 11th attacks in the U.S., the American-led invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan, Turkey's relationship with nations such as Israel, Iran, and the island of Cyprus, and the presence of the Kurdish separatist group known as the PKK. Examining these events and other interstate relations will help to situate the American foreign policy outlook in general, thereby making more clear the related changes

within the U.S.-Turkish relationship. The body of the thesis will be formulated following chronological order, as such a design seems most suitable for this particular research. Based on a constructivist reading of international relations, it is assumed that the American understanding of U.S.-Turkish relations at any given time has greatly influenced the nature of actions taken in relation to Turkey, thereby affecting continued discourse and the ongoing relationship. Following this structure, the independent variables within this analysis are the regional and world events affecting the relationship, and the dependent variables are the ensuing discourse that shapes the ongoing understanding of the relationship itself.

Furthermore, this thesis will work to analyze not only the changing nature of the American-Turkish partnership, but also to elucidate the American understanding of Turkey as a "model nation" for the Middle East, using textual analysis as well as a thorough examination of Turkey's ties to the U.S. and other nations, therewith gaining a stronger framework for how this title reflects the contemporary nature of American foreign policy in the region. In order to understand why the U.S. has promoted Turkey as a model, the thesis will also include an examination of changes in Turkish domestic and foreign policy over the past decades, investigating in particular how these changes have affected the U.S.-Turkish partnership. It is hypothesized that a discursive shift concerning the nature of the American relationship with Turkey will be evident in the years following the break up of the Soviet Union as well as between Presidents Bush and Obama, but that a deeper change in underlying American strategy will in fact only be recognizable within very recent discourse, specifically as a result of the election of Barack Obama, which was then heightened by the events of the Arab Spring. This shift will be situated within a deeper underlying change in the high level perception of America and its role in the world, meaning that although there were concrete changes in the U.S. relationship with Turkey during and after the Cold War, it is hypothesized that only Obama's understanding of and approach to global politics has in turn prompted a more fundamental shift in U.S.-Turkish relations. Following on this hypothesized change in foreign policy strategy, this thesis will also endeavor to explore the hypothesis that the U.S. no longer expects nor is seeking a tacit partner in Turkey, but instead is attempting to cultivate an active alliance.

2. Theory and methods

2.1 Constructivism and Discourse Analysis

Although it can be argued that the field of international relations (IR) has existed in some form for millennia, with theorists from Thucydides to Machiavelli, Locke, Hobbes, and Marx laying out philosophies and models that continue to shape scholars' understandings of humans and structures, the discipline of IR as a field specifically devoted to the analysis of modern states arose only in the 20th century. Amidst the harsh aftermath of two world wars, the increasingly bi-polar world propagated systems of analysis based largely on state-centered arguments, with the assumption that the desire for power was inherent to the state of human nature, thus leading to an inevitable and continuous struggle for supremacy among nations (Griffiths 2007: 11–12). Theorists such as Hans Morgenthau in the first decades after WWII, and later Kenneth Waltz and John Mearsheimer, shaped the field of IR with their focus on the nature and origin of conflict between states. While there exist certain distinctions between the different theorists' arguments and interpretations, the perceived inevitability of ongoing inter-state power struggles based on the self-interested choices of actors attempting to reign in the natural anarchy of the world bring all of them together under the broad headings of realism and neorealism. Moreover, a general assumption that all actors will behave in a similar power-mongering fashion given similar circumstances, dubbed rational actor theory, was an underlying postulation within realist philosophy, with any deviation from this notion seen as irrational (Griffiths 2007: 12).

By the 1980s, as relations were changing between states and the Cold War came to an abrupt end, the discipline of IR underwent a critical re-examination, with numerous scholars questioning the basic realist idea that there can be objectivity and pure rationalism within global politics. Theorists began arguing that realist and neorealist scholarship was in fact naturalizing existing power structures, taking as given something that is, in fact, constructed (Griffiths 2007: 61). The ensuing debate focused on the ideas of so-called rationalists versus critical theorists. Realists and neorealists fall under the category of rationalists, accepting the idea that state actors are rational in their choices and actions in a given situation, thus allowing international behavior to be studied as a science, with hard facts governing clear outcomes. Conversely, critical theorists balk at this idea, proffering that theory based on the idea

that human nature inexorably leads to the type of modern system of state-based behavior witnessed in the 20th century in fact works to recreate this very system, thereby taking an active role in shaping something that is not actually inevitable (Griffiths 2007: 54). Critical theorists, such as Robert Cox, argued that it is necessary to ask how current structures came into being, to look at how and why they are changing, and moreover to understand alternative structures of power and politics. This type of analysis draws to some degree on the work of Karl Marx, who believed that social theory itself can perpetuate certain structural arrangements, which benefit some to the detriment of others (Griffiths 2007: 55). Constructivism emerged from this debate, offering a new theoretical structure for analyzing contemporary international relations – building upon the critical theorists' shift away from realism while taking the argument a step further, rejecting structuralism in favor of so-called post-structuralism, allowing room for the effects of individuals themselves and granting weight to the actions taken by each actor.

In 1989, Nicholas Onuf published World of Our Making, marking the introduction of constructivism as a new theoretical structure within IR. In 1992, Alexander Wendt popularized the theory in his article "Anarchy is What States Make of It," and in the years following, these two theorists, along with others such as Friedrich Kratochwil and John Gerard Ruggie, brought constructivism into its current place as a key theory of analysis within the field of international relations (Zehfuss 2002: 11). Constructivism as an IR theory does not necessarily argue against the underlying state-centric nature outlined in realism, instead disputing the perceived inevitability seen within realist analysis. Realism is based in positivism, meaning the notion that an objective truth can always be found (Zehfuss 2002: 10). In contrast, constructivists are idealists, arguing that in lieu of objective truth there is simply a structure of meaning based on a continually reinforced system of understanding, which can also be referred to as norm creation (Griffiths 2007: 62). Norms and the surrounding system of understanding are upheld or changed through an ongoing two-way process between society and people, also called structures and actors or agents. Constructivists do not deny that realism heavily influenced political functioning, particularly in the U.S. in the latter half of the 20th century, as the foundational ideas of realist theory became normative within political action. As such, constructivist principles can now be used to analyze the realist-centric discourse of political actors. Each constructivist theorist maintains a different formula for approaching the cycle of constructed meaning, but for the

purposes of this thesis the theory will be referred to under an umbrella heading, with each individual's work being referenced as necessary.

The idea that agents and structures continually influence one another through an ongoing cycle of intersubjective reinforcement of meaning supports the notion that not only does objectivity not exist, but neither does neutrality. In this way, no speech act can be considered neutral, since all speech invariably either works to uphold or dismantle existing structures, which in turn affect the nature of speech. Thus, constructivism attempts to examine states' and agents' particular formations of a given reality, thereby accepting that there is no fixed linearity or inherited order to international relations (Okulska/ Cap: 2010). In general, constructivist ontology relies on three basic components: intersubjectivity, context, and power (Klotz/ Lynch 2007: 7–10). Intersubjective understanding is comprised of the aforementioned norms, as well as rules, both of which make up social reality, guiding human behavior and action. Within such intersubjectivity exist material structures, which can include institutions, organizations, or physical objects such as uniforms or money. Constructivist analysis does not deny the meaning granted to such objects and structures, but instead acknowledges that such meaning is created and reinforced through the behavior of people within societies. As stated by the social scientists Audie Klotz and Cecelia Lynch, "constructivists characterize this interactive relationship between what people do and how societies shape their actions as the 'mutual constitution' of structures and agents" (Klotz/ Lynch 2007: 7). For this reason, context is also key to understanding a given circumstance or relationship, as meaning varies drastically across points in time, region, or culture. Finally, power is understood by constructivists as operating within the ongoing relationship between actors and structures, rather than as the realist conception of zero-sum possession of capabilities (Klotz/ Lynch 2007: 11). In this way, the constructivist understanding of norm-based power draws heavily on the philosopher Michel Foucault's usage of the term, noting that a relationship itself cannot connote a balance of power, but rather the ongoing iterations of that relationship, which are made up of a continuous cycle of actions and reactions between parties (Taylor 2011: 6).

In this thesis a discourse analysis will be conducted, employing a conglomeration of concepts taken from the broad egis of constructivist theory, and following a methodological structure outlined most specifically by Henrik Larsen in his 1997 work

Foreign Policy and Discourse Analysis: France, Britain and Europe. In this book, Larsen highlights the power of individual language understood within a post-structuralist reading. According to structuralist analysis there is no way to access meaning behind specific language, as the assignment of meaning to given words is viewed as arbitrary, thus creating a disconnect between language and its potential value. Conversely, post-structuralists, including Foucault, believe that words themselves hold vast social meaning and therefore shifts in word usage greatly affect an overall discourse. Therefore, a word in a vacuum would hold no meaning, but through usage, social significance is built up through responses, reactions, and reiteration of language. Therefore a study of discourse must include not only the words themselves but, as described above, an examination of the surrounding intersubjectivity, context, and structures of power. Larsen utilizes Foucault's term "discursive formations" in order to describe the summation of these concepts, as when an overarching theme or trajectory can be traced across areas of discourse (Larsen 1997: 12). In this way, this thesis will argue that the American understanding of U.S.-Turkey relations fashioned a discursive formation over the decades, as certain expectations of compliant partnership were repeatedly reflected through use of language and action across both actors and structures.

Larsen argues that there is a key difference between changes in discourse and changes of discourse, with the latter occurring only after fundamental shifts in framework have transpired. In order to best approach analyzing such potential changes, he outlines a hierarchical structure through the use of what he calls a discursive tree: "governing statements" form the foundational core of a discourse and "concrete statements," which can include both language and action, form branches (Larsen 1997: 17–18). Thus, Larsen suggests that while discourse can change direction, or be added to or detracted from, the Foucaultian idea of discursive formation is only affected if the governing statements are changed, consequently necessitating a new framework of understanding. In these terms, it is hypothesized that the American understanding of U.S.-Turkish relations maintained a singular discursive formation from the years after WWII all the way through the 2000s, as even in the face of volatile ups and downs in the alliance, a subject/object relationship was reiterated and American expectations of a return to tacit cooperation were reiterated. Moreover, this perception fit into the broader American understanding of foreign policy, which was grounded in realist, interest-based alliances. Beginning with President Obama's first visit to Turkey in early

2009, however, the governing statements began to shift, thereby suggesting an overall shift in discourse regarding the U.S.-Turkish partnership, situated within a larger shift in the American understanding of its role across the globe. This thesis will therefore use a detailed discourse analysis of this recent period, as compared to the years and decades prior, in an attempt to clarify whether a change has in fact occurred in the American understanding of its relations with Turkey dramatic enough to be classified as a full discursive shift.

2.2 Selecting Material for Analysis

Throughout the process of choosing material for analysis, as well as while engaging in analysis itself, the Foucaultian concept of a "history of the present" will be kept in mind (Campbell 1992: 5). In this way, this thesis will not try to analyze the history of U.S.-Turkey relations or the history of America's foreign policy, but simply a history. Just as constructivism recognizes that there can be no objective reality in international relations, so too does it encourage scholars to recognize their own subjectivity within their work. Such subjectivity will necessarily influence the selection of texts for analysis and the boundaries of analysis itself within this thesis; thus, it is with an awareness of this personal interpretation of events and discourse that this thesis will endeavor to address the American understanding of U.S.-Turkey relations and broader shifts in American foreign policy discourse.

When choosing which speeches or press briefings to consult in the era of the 1980s through mid-1990s, the strikingly limited search results concerning Turkey reiterated the very recent nature of its role as a perceived prominent American partner. This fact alone offers preliminary support for the hypothesis that it was not until quite recently that the American understanding of relations began changing, instigating a corresponding rise in the discussion of U.S.-Turkish relations. Under these circumstances, as a way of maintaining consistency and building a basis for general discourse, the initial national address, the inaugural speech, will be examined from each of the three afore-mentioned presidents, as well as from Bush and Obama, focusing analysis on discussion of foreign policy and relations within the region, as well as how the discourse of American identity ties into foreign policy ideals. While there is arguably a great difference between the internal and external identities of states, in the case of examining American foreign policy it is pertinent to engage in a study of both, as it has been shown that American domestic policy and self-perception in fact

deeply affect foreign policy choices. Furthermore, because the individual president dictates the political discourse of the nation so greatly, this thesis will focus on these presidential speeches as the bedrock for understanding broader actions and decisions.

To broaden the scope, however, numerous other speeches and texts will also be drawn upon, including transcripts from official visits and press briefings from meetings and events, all of which were found on official government and/or academic archival websites.Taken together, these documents and presidential speeches will form a chronological basis for the textual component of an in-depth analysis of American discourse concerning relations with Turkey, while also elucidating the broader American foreign policy discourse. They will be used to directly address the research questions laid out in the previous section of this thesis by offering a concrete means of locating American discourse within a broader framework, which will include an examination of institutional structures. Excerpts of the texts analyzed will be included within the body of the thesis in order to offer specific language-based analysis, while links to the full texts will be included in the Works Cited section.

3. Analyzing the American Understanding of U.S.-Turkey Relations

3.1 Historical Background: Turkish Needs and U.S. Interests

While Turkey has long been outwardly considered a European partner by the United States, its accepted role as an ally has been vastly different from the established role of nations within Western Europe. Turkey's unique geographic position and particular history grant it specific opportunities and potential importance within the diverse regions of Central Asia and the Middle East, as well as within Europe. Nevertheless, since the founding of the Turkish Republic in 1923, Turkey largely remained an inward-looking country, with only minimal ties to its neighbors and its main alliances based in Europe and the U.S. (Albright/ Hadley/ Cook 2012: 7). Turkey has been considered a strong American ally since the formation of the Truman Doctrine in 1947, which emphasized Turkey's strategic role in stemming the westward expansion of Communism (Campany 1986: 2). When Turkey joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1952, its Cold War position within the Western camp was concretized and its relationship with the United States reinforced. In the 1950s and 1960s, geostrategic relations remained close as American aid under the 1958 Joint

United States Military Mission for Aid to Turkey (JUSMMAT) program helped to rapidly increase the size of the Turkish military and allowed for economic growth despite widely inefficient state enterprises (Campany 1986: 22).

Less than two decades after Turkish troops fought alongside Americans in Korea, however, the United States made clear that such a favor would not be returned if the occasion arose. After Cyprus gained independence from the United Kingdom in 1960, tensions over Greek versus Turkish control were increasingly resulting in violence on the small island, and the Turkish government under Prime Minister Inönü repeatedly threatened to intervene militarily in order to protect the Turkish Cypriot population (Couloumbis 1983: 61). In 1964, a divisive letter written by President Johnson was dispatched, stating plainly that if Turkish action on the island of Cyprus spurred a Soviet invasion, the U.S. would not come to Turkey's aid. This letter brought anti-American sentiment on a wide scale, prompting the re-evaluation of Turkish foreign policy, with bilateral visits between Turkey and the USSR occurring in 1965, followed by the Turkish joining of the Regional Cooperation for Development (RCD) with Iran and Pakistan in the same year (Capmany 1986: 33). Such actions were viewed as transgressions from the accepted U.S.-Turkey relationship in the eyes of American leaders, underscoring an assumption of a liaison on unequal terms, in which Turkey was supposed to fall in line with American interests in exchange for aid, regardless of whether they actually reflected the needs, wants, or overall interests of the Turkish people.

When the Turkish military invaded Cyprus in 1974, a bill was already being discussed in the U.S. House of Representatives to cancel all aid to Turkey on the grounds of Turkey's refusal to uphold an American-imposed ban on poppy cultivation, which had been proposed in response to a growing heroin epidemic in the United States (Campany 1986: 34). Although the bill did not initially pass in Congress, a full embargo became effective in February 1975, cutting off all American aid to Turkey until "substantial progress" had been made towards peace in Cyprus (Campany 1986: 56). This move shifted the focus of American geo-political pressure on Turkey, creating a new discourse in which the Cyprus issue was the key point of strife between the U.S. and Turkey. The embargo is a prime example of how material structures gain their significance only through reinforced systems of meaning, which are subject to change as context changes. While the same embargo was already being discussed in

reference to the poppy issue, as the conflict over Cyprus gained in importance, the exact same structure was then used to deny aid, while the entire system of meaning surrounding this structure vastly shifted in order to bring all focus to Cyprus.

After the embargo passed, the Turkish Defense Minister countered by stating that unless aid was restored within thirty days, all U.S. military bases in Turkey would be closed. To this, Secretary of State Kissinger responded, "No one can threaten the U.S." (Kissinger 1975, quoted in Campany 1986: 56), thus making explicit the perceived imbalance between the U.S. and Turkey, with Turkey as the necessarily submissive partner expected to pander to American demands while never making mandates of its own. The American embargo remained in effect for the following three years, during which time technological advancement within the Turkish military stagnated and mistrust of the U.S. grew. This embargo is an example of a structural choice leading to a shift in importance and meaning of certain elements of the relationship, as previously the U.S. had not been explicitly involved in the dispute over Cyprus. Because the embargo was such a drastic structure of power, it thereby granted much greater weight to the American understanding of the Cyprus dispute, creating space for a shift in discursive concrete statements and prompting further American involvement over the island of Cyprus. Additionally, this embargo set precedent for an imbalanced and tension-ridden relationship between the U.S. and Turkey, with much of the Turkish population growing hostile towards a partner who seemed to nonchalantly flaunt its power to the detriment of its ally, particularly in relation to an issue that many Turks felt was outside of American jurisdiction. After a long discussion in both houses of Congress the embargo was ended in 1978, after which President Carter made brief remarks to the public. He stated:

"In recent weeks there have been signs of improvement in the web of problems affecting relations among Greece, Turkey, and Cyprus. These developments helped produce the congressional actions which will now enable us to put the embargo era behind us. … Today's decision by the House is a crucial step toward strengthening the vital southern flank of NATO. It will soon make possible the reopening of our military instillations in Turkey. And it brings all the parties concerned closer to the goals of peace and security in the Eastern Mediterranean." (Carter 1978)

This statement makes clear the underlying motivations of the lifting of the embargo, namely American strategic security. The explicit connection of the goals of "peace and

security" highlights the understanding of American interests at the time, furthering the role laid out for Turkey as a buffer against Soviet expansion. Carter casually states that the embargo era can now be left behind, thereby speaking from a distinctly American perspective while making the assumption that his words hold true for all parties involved. This American understanding of the U.S.-Turkish relationship is wholly uni-dimensional, situating Turkey simply as the "vital southern flank of NATO" (Carter 1978) while overlooking any interests of Turkey itself.

In early 1980, with the Cyprus issue, in fact, still broiling between Greece and Turkey, and both right and left-wing terrorism on the rise, the United States passed a new Defense and Economic Cooperation Agreement (DECA), based on what an official American report referred to as "Turkish needs and U.S. interests" (Couloumbis 1983: 153). This language once again reflects the ongoing perception that the American-Turkish partnership was one in which the U.S. held greater sway, noting that while both countries benefitted from their mutual relationship, the perceived motivations behind their involvement were not of the same ilk. The perception of Turkish need referred largely to the two years of economic crisis directly preceding this deal, which were principally a result of a shortage of foreign exchange (Diner 2011: 308). The economic as well as political situation in Turkey thus put it at a strong disadvantage in terms of bargaining power, furthering the image of reliant partner understood by the U.S. Moreover, this particular phrasing puts the impetus of power on the American side, as an "interest" is never as pressing as a "need," therefore insinuating that the U.S. could choose its level of involvement whereas Turkey was not in a position for independent decision making. The shift from arms embargo to security-based cooperation was largely a result of regional events which occurred in 1979, namely the Iranian Revolution and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. American officials feared that the domino effect was now more likely to occur than ever, with radicalism and communism set to spread across the Middle East. The U.S. therefore looked to Turkey now not as a buffer against communist expansion into Western Europe, as it had in the early years of the Cold War, but instead as an asset towards helping secure American interests in what was then referred to as Southwest Asia, specifically the vast oil reserves in countries such as Iraq and Saudi Arabia (Han 2010: 90). This change in circumstances allowed for the continued understanding of Turkey as a regionally strategic partner, while shifting the perception of Turkey from a European to a more diverse partner, with the alliance still firmly based in American security interests.

A few short months after DECA was passed, in an ongoing climate of intense political instability and acute economic hardship, a military coup d'état took place, ousting Prime Minister Demirel in favor of a military regime upholding martial law. In contrast to the Turkish putsches of 1960 and 1971, the 1980 coup resulted in multiple years of undemocratic rule, during which time the junta leaders reaffirmed some of Turkey's Western alliances, particularly with NATO and the U.S. (Couloumbis 1983: 161). Turkish relations with much of Europe deteriorated after the coup, but the American policy was to overlook what were considered cultural matters in favor of a more hardheaded alliance focused solely on strategic interests, as outlined by Commander-in-Chief of Allied Forces Southeastern Europe Admiral Crowe, who stated, "No Western or Soviet planner can address the Middle East challenge without considering Turkey's orientation, terrain, airspace, forces and bases" (Crowe 1980 quoted in Karasapn 1989). This statement makes clear the geo-strategic importance of Turkey, while also once more emphasizing the complete lack of interest in Turkish domestic affairs. The willingness of U.S. leaders to work closely with Turkish military officials while keeping a blind eye to vast human rights abuses underscores the pragmatic nature of relations and the, while also emphasizing the enhanced importance of Turkey as a strategic regional ally.

The military leaders retained Turgut Özal as the Minister of Economics, who continued an overhaul of the floundering economy, which he had begun under Demirel, largely by opening it up to international market forces to a degree large enough to qualify the nation for the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) support and stabilization programs. This move prompted a 65% increase in Turkish exports (Couloumbis 1983: 161), and the establishment of the Ministry of Foreign Investment, drastically shifting the nature of an economy that previously attained its largest source of foreign exchange through the remittances of workers in western European nations (Campany 1986: 50). These economic changes were top-down and strongly influenced by a global shift toward neoliberal market policies. The idea of neoliberalism in this context can be described by what became known as the "Washington consensus" concerning economic affairs across the developing world, meaning a liberalization of interest rates, liberalization of trade and inflow of foreign direct investment, vast privatization, general market deregulation, and the officialization of private property laws (Diner 2011: 306). While ideas of neoliberalism had been around for decades within the U.S., it was not until the mid-1980s that they became prominent on the world stage within such organizations

as the IMF and the World Bank (Drolet 2011: 95). Such changes were generally promoted as tools to increase competition while decreasing state-centered clientelism and corruption. Yet, such reforms under Turgut Özal were conducted with few checks and balances, thereby creating a great consolidation of power and laying the groundwork for increased, rather than decreased corruption. Moreover, the creation of new bureaucratic departments, such as the Ministry of Foreign Investment mentioned above, or the so-called Privatization Administration, created intra-bureaucratic conflicts and further slowed down the state economic apparatus (Öniş 2004: 3). Because these negative consequences took years to harden into pervasive issues, it has been argued that economic reform was relatively successful in the 1980s while sliding into disaster by the end of the 1990s (Öniş 2004: 3).

At the same time, following the break-up of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, there was some question regarding the direction Turkey would take in both its domestic and foreign policy. Yet, the underlying assumption of an ongoing alliance with the United States remained evident within American foreign policy discourse throughout the 1990s, even as Turkey began forging stronger relationships with the new nations of Central Asia and its neighbors across the Middle East (Albright, Hadley, and Cook 2012: 39). As such, many analysts have argued that the U.S. took Turkey for granted as an ally throughout the duration of the Cold War and the initial years following, as even in the face of such striking issues as the embargo and the ongoing Cyprus dispute, there is evidence of an underlying assumption that Turkey would continue to pander to American wishes if the correct pressure were applied and aid was kept flowing (Grigoriadis 2007: 55). This anticipated partnership was one in which Turkey, as the subject of American interests, was never viewed as an equal. Thus, in contrast to American national interests, Turkish interests, much less the interests of its people, were never paid specific heed. This thesis will argue that it is precisely this assumption that has begun to change in recent years, as Turkey has gained power on the geo-political scale and American strategies in its foreign policy have slowly begun to shift away from a strict rubric of neoliberal and realist-based formulas towards more concrete recognition of the interests and wishes of allied nations beyond those of Western Europe.

3.2 Reagan: Freedom and Neoliberalism

President Ronald Reagan delivered his inaugural address on January 20th, 1981. He begins his speech by addressing the issue of rapid inflation in the American economy, stating that "in this present crisis, government is not the solution to our problem; government is the problem" (Reagan 1981). Without putting forth any specific policy, Reagan spends the initial paragraphs emphasizing the need to "put America back to work" by "freeing America from the terror of runaway living costs" (1981). He goes on to state that the reason the U.S. has been able to be a prosperous and powerful country in the past is because "freedom and dignity of the individual have been more available and assured here than in any other place on Earth. The price for this freedom at times has been high, but we have never been unwilling to pay it" (Reagan 1981). At this point, Reagan has created a specific connotation for the word freedom by using it three times, first as an action verb in reference to what he will do as president in order to create jobs and lower taxes, and second in noun form as a concept enshrined in individual Americans. By using the two forms of this term in direct succession, Reagan creates a dichotomy between the portrayed evil of high cost of living (ostensibly created by too much government) and the personal freedom historically enjoyed by individual Americans. This dichotomy acts as a backbone for the yet unspoken agenda that was to be unfurled in the coming years of the Reagan era, which would come to be known as "Reaganomics." Reagan's economic theory was largely in line with neoliberal ideas of deregulation and privatization, while also pushing supply-side economics, meaning lowered taxes under the premise that people will work harder and put more money into the economy on their own if granted lower income taxes (Drolet 2011: 96). By making a direct tie between high living costs and terror while reiterating the importance of individual freedom as an American value, Reagan quickly generated a strong discourse of neoliberal economic policy embedded within a nationalist and moralistic framework.

Reagan then goes on to say, "and as we renew ourselves here in our own land, we will be seen has having greater strength throughout the world. We will again be the exemplar of freedom and a beacon of hope for those who do not now have freedom" (1981). With this statement, Reagan is both promoting the vague system of neoliberal economic and moral values he has outlined above, while also creating a self/other relationship between the U.S. and "those who do not now have freedom." In doing so,

he is also directly encouraging his vision of the American understanding of freedom, thereby endorsing the concomitant system he proposes will best promote such freedom. He follows these statements by saying:

"To those neighbors and allies who share our freedom, we will strengthen our historic ties and assure them of our support and firm commitment. We will match loyalty with loyalty. We will strive for mutually beneficial relations. We will not use our friendship to impose on their sovereignty, for our own sovereignty is not for sale. As for the enemies of freedom, those who are potential adversaries, they will be reminded that peace is the highest aspiration of the American people… We will maintain sufficient strength to prevail if need be, knowing that if we do so we have the best chance of never having to use that strength." (Reagan 1981)

This last statement underscores the realist conception of the "security dilemma." In this predicament, it is thought that states can continually increase their own security by increasing power, which is understood in this case largely as a build-up of military and weaponry, as well as strategic alliances. According to this theory, which strongly guided Cold War policy, the heightened power of one state inherently decreases the security of opposing states (Jackson/ Towle 2006: 15). However, in the sentences prior to Reagan's stated belief in the military solution to the security dilemma, he notes that he will support American allies while not imposing on their sovereignty. When examined closely, however, it must be noted that he specifically states neighbors and allies "who share our freedom" (Reagan 1981). This specification shifts the nature of his statement, indicating that he in fact only refers to those countries who support his previously outlined notion of freedom, meaning a system of neoliberal economic policies. As such, while he explicitly states a desire to allow countries their own sovereignty, he is also promoting broadly overhauled economic systems in order to align more nations with the interests of the United States, while simultaneously promoting an expanded military as means of intimidating those who do not fall in line with his promoted policy. In this way, Reagan's usage of the term "ally" is strongly tied to the specific understanding of freedom he is structuring, indicating that only those countries that embrace neoliberal economic policies are in fact American allies. Understanding the overarching discourse Reagan was building through the use of such language helps to situate the actions and choices made by American policy actors during this time, thereby outlining the broader perspective guiding foreign policy.

While Reagan used the verb "free" three times and the noun "freedom" eight times in his inaugural address from 1981, he upped the usage of the noun to thirteen during his 1985 speech, while once again employing the verb three times. In this address the president emphasizes the success his economic overhaul has brought the country, reiterating that "tax rates have been reduced, inflation cut dramatically, and more people are employed than ever before in our history" (Reagan 1985). Reagan implies that this has been achieved because "our economy was finally freed from government's grip." Thus, he is once again praising neoliberal economic ideas as the road to freedom, further emphasizing this connection between a deregulated economy and a free individual. In this address Reagan focuses largely on domestic issues, with his only discussion of foreign policy in direct relation to the Soviet Union, who is portrayed as an enemy of freedom. He states:

"America must remain freedom's staunchest friend, for freedom is our best ally and it is the world's only hope to conquer poverty and preserve peace. Every blow we inflict against poverty will be a blow against its dark allies of oppression and war. Every victory for human freedom will be a victory for world peace." (Reagan 1985)

By once again drawing a direct line between economic prosperity based on neoliberal principals and the concept of human freedom, Reagan has created a platform for promoting neoliberal principles on the world stage, structured within a highly domestic idea of freedom. In this way, the sole definition of freedom given is in reference to economic issues, while the usage of the term can vary, creating rhetorical ambiguity while maintaining an underlying discourse of neoliberal economics as the basis for all positive outcomes. Moreover, Reagan draws explicit parallel between American prosperity and world peace, placing American economic success as the highest benchmark in terms of examining global interactions. In this excerpt, Reagan uses "ally" not in reference to other countries, but rather to his concept of freedom itself. In doing so he solidifies the discursive tie between neoliberal economic structures, conceptions of freedom, and the U.S. itself, while also promoting each of these as universally positive.

The framework of each of these speeches, tying changes in domestic policy to specific ideas of what constitutes appropriate functioning across the global economy, was reflected in Reagan's foreign policy in general. Within his first year in office Reagan had already begun tying market capitalism to aid eligibility across the developing world

(Drolet 2011: 141). These policies affected not only bilateral agreements but also swiftly influenced the functioning of the IMF and the World Bank, prompting the previously mentioned "Washington Consensus" (Drolet 2011: 141). A vast overhaul of developing economies swept the globe, thereby shifting the structures of intersubjective power previously held by so-called Third World countries as counter-weights within the U.S.-Soviet power struggle throughout the Cold War. As developing nations dismantled state systems and opened their economies along neoliberal lines, they joined the global economy on terms outlined by the West, thus aligning themselves with the capitalist camp while relinquishing autonomy in favor of potential economic gain. Near the end of Reagan's presidency, as the Iron Curtain was beginning to crumble and Gorbachev's policies of glasnost and perestroika were quickly shifting the very nature of the Soviet Union, Reagan said in a foreign policy address that, "These democratic and free-market revolutions are really the same revolution" (1988). This quote succinctly summarizes the position he had been putting forth since coming into office – namely that a liberalized economy is the sole important factor in his understanding of freedom and democracy.

As Turkey began its vast economic overhaul in the years between Reagan's two inaugural addresses, it falls easily into the category of "ally" the president outlined in his initial speech. In his first years as prime minister, Özal lifted all import quotas, completely removed price controls on both imported and domestically produced goods, and allowed banks to set interest rates freely. Within four years of implementing such changes the volume of trade neared 30% of gross national product (GNP), which was double what it had been previously (Abramowitz 2003: 35). Although much of this change was taking place without strict oversight or necessary infrastructure to allow solid economic policy, it was the act of undertaking such liberalization, rather than the domestic consequences, that underscored Turkey's role as an American ally according to Reagan's understanding of the term. Moreover, the economic liberalization in Turkey was coupled with a shift in the composition of the middle and upper classes, as more religious and conservative businessmen from central Anatolia gained ground in areas traditionally dominated by secular elite (Zanotti 2012: 7). These shifts were little remarked upon by American leaders, however, as the discourse remained predominantly concerned with Cold War ideas of security and the expansion of neoliberal policies. This lack of interest paid to domestic issues highlights the ongoing nature of the Turkish-American relationship as one in which Turkish success in

geostrategic terms was promoted by the U.S. not out of inherent interest, but rather out of self-interested drive for security across the region. The limited, realist definition of security being employed, however, narrowed the field of vision and understanding, thereby foregoing possible discussion of changes that would affect relations in the future.

The expansion of neoliberal relations was reiterated by a number of novel initiatives centered on trade and joint military investment, including the production of F-16 fighter planes on Turkish soil, funded by American dollars. In 1985 the two nations signed the Treaty Concerning the Reciprocal Encouragement and Protection of Investments and also jointly founded the Turkish-U.S. Business Council (Akyüz 2000). Both of these signified a certain broadening of the longstanding American understanding of Turkey's position solely as buffer against Soviet expansion, heightening the importance of trade instead of focusing entirely on military-based security. In remarks following the signing of these initiatives Reagan stated, "Prime Minister Özal's official visit, the first in more than a decade by a Turkish leader, has been an important part of a long-overdue revitalization in U.S.-Turkish relations" (1985). With such an opening statement, Reagan made concrete his position on the enhanced importance of the alliance while also granting weight to its changing nature. Later in the speech he speaks directly to Özal, saying, "You're a good friend and important ally, and I thank you for all that you're doing to strengthen our cooperation. Together, we're serving the cause of peace and freedom" (Reagan 1985). Here Reagan is directly tying his neoliberal idea of economic-based freedom to his understanding of America's relationship with Turkey, while also specifying the impetus for such a relationship to Özal himself, thereby heightening the importance of Özal as a specific actor in the reiteration of this relationship. Later in the same year, Turkish officials demanded that changes be made to the 1980 DECA, of which the U.S accepted only a few (Uzgel 2002). This move underscored the remaining inequality of the partnership, highlighting the fact that although the focus of relations and its public nature might be changing, the underlying governing statement remained the same – American strategic interests guide the relationship and Turkish interests do not hold the same weight.

Prime Minister Özal, however, was quite vociferous about his demand for "trade, not aid" (Akyüz 2000), which he made explicit during his two trips to Washington in 1985 and 1987. No other Turkish prime minister had ever been to Washington twice on

official visits, further indicating a shift in the level of perceived importance concerning relations between the two countries. Each visit allowed for more interpersonal interactions, creating space for dialogue and setting the stage for potentially significant decisions. Yet, even as trade relations were increasing, numerous other factors were also strongly affecting the U.S.-Turkish relationship. For instance, stagnated negotiations concerning Cyprus prompted the drafting of another American bill in 1987 prohibiting the use of U.S. aid in military operations on the island, which in turn spurred Turkish officials to once again threaten the temporary closure of American bases (Uzgel 2002). Neither action was undertaken, stressing the pragmatic nature of the relationship, but also its continued imbalance. While both nations were pushing for their own interests, on each side of the deal lay American military technology and force, with Turkish leverage coming only from its geostrategic position. This type of deal making is borne of realist strategy, with a focus not on the long-term relationship but rather on the immediate interests and potential gains pushed for by the dominant partner. Yet, the increase in both military and economic relations helped bring the U.S.-Turkish partnership back into a positive realm after the dismal years of the 1970s and early 1980s.

At the very end of his term, President Reagan welcomed his Turkish counterpart, President Evren, to the White House on an official visit. Evren had come into his post through the 1980 coup, and his leadership had been strongly supported by Washington even before his official election to presidency in 1982. Evren was one of the key drafters of the 1980 constitution, which highly restricted many civil liberties in the name of national security (Karasapan 1989). At his visit in 1988, Reagan awarded Evren with the Legion of Merit, Chief Commander for Turkey's service in the Korean conflict forty years prior. During the ceremony Reagan stated, "In Korea, Turks and Americans shed blood together on the battlefield in defense of freedom. Today the solidarity of our mutual commitment to collective security keeps us safe…" (1988). This statement, as well as the award ceremony overall, act as tools of power in the constructivist sense, as they highlight the understanding of a mutual relationship based on the American conception of freedom and security. By referencing a past event in which Turkey aided an American military initiative while tying such an event to particular ideological concepts, Reagan's words and actions worked to normativize these concepts and reinforce a particular framework of meaning. Reagan goes on to say, "Americans have admired the way that Turkey pulled itself back to democracy

when challenged by the violent forces of terrorism and anarchy a decade ago" (1988). By using such language to reference the 1980 coup d'état, Reagan further highlights only a partial narrative of past events, thereby maintaining the understanding of an alliance based on pragmatic recognition of perceived positive attributes and an ongoing tendency to ignore what were seen as domestic cultural issues, including sweeping loss of civil liberties or human rights abuses. This understanding reinforced the power dynamic of a weaker Turkish ally by undercutting the people of the nation while simultaneously allowing for a positive public image by stressing only the ties of interest to U.S. officials. Such a dynamic fit into Reagan's broader foreign policy schematic, which was based strictly on realist notions of interest-based action built around a framework of neoliberal economic policy.

3.3 G.H.W. Bush: Freedom and the Gulf War

In his inaugural address in January 1989, President George H.W. Bush followed in Reagan's footsteps, using the word "free" nine times and "freedom" six. The similar usage of this term connotes a normatization of a particular meaning, as the repeated usage in the specific neoliberal, conservative American framework granted the term social meaning in this context. Bush begins his speech by focusing on the changing tide in governments across the world. Without referencing any specific nation, he says simply, "Great nations of the world are moving toward democracy through the door to freedom. Men and women of the world move toward free markets through the door to prosperity" (Bush 1989). With such a statement, Bush is reiterating Reagan's understanding of the inevitability of connections between free markets, economic success, and democracy. Bush goes on to talk mainly in platitudes concerning human value and national goodness, keeping his sentences void of specific policy suggestions. In regard to foreign policy he states, "To the world, too, we offer new engagement and a renewed vow: We will stay strong to protect the peace" (Bush 1989). Not offering any further information on this subject, such an assertion can be understood in a variety of ways, but its underlying message presaged the actions undertaken both during his presidency as well as under President Clinton, as American-led humanitarian intervention took center stage in the decade following the end of the Cold War.

One major issue of humanitarian concern, which boiled over into a matter international involvement during this period, was that of the Kurdish minority in the nations of Iraq, Iran, Syria, and Turkey. Since the founding of the Turkish Republic in 1923, Kurds

lacked official recognition as an ethnic minority group, following the nationalist rhetoric of a singular Turkish people and the continued use of the Ottoman guideline of only recognizing religious minorities (Gunter 1990: 53). This policy was harshly enforced through bans on use or teaching of the Kurdish language, and widespread suppression of Kurdish tradition or exhibits of group identity. The deputy chairman of the Motherland Party under Prime Minister Özal was quoted as saying, "some Turks speak dialects, but there is no Kurdish minority in Turkey" (Taşcioğlu 1989, quoted in Gunter 1990: 51). Such denial of the group's existence became increasingly difficult by the late 1970s and 1980s, however, as the rise of radical politics coincided with the rise of Kurdish separatism and the foundation of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), headed by Abdullah Öcalan. In 1984, the Turkish military began what would become a decades long assault against the guerilla PKK army in southeastern Anatolia, resulting in tens of thousands of civilian deaths (Abramowitz 2003: 85).

By 1990, the ongoing conflict between the Turkish army and the PKK had intensified and was thrust into the national spotlight due to the American-led invasion of Iraq and the ensuing Gulf War. In January 1990, Özal made his third official visit to Washington, meeting with President Bush and underscoring Turkey's interest in a continued close alliance with the U.S. (Uzgel 2002). After Iraq's August 1990 invasion of Kuwait, Turkey quickly backed the U.S. in enforcing sanctions and closing its oil pipeline with its neighbor, although at the time Iraq was Turkey's second largest trading partner after Germany, with the pipeline providing abundant revenue. By the following year, top-down support for the Gulf War was fervent, headed by Özal, who had shifted into the role of president in 1989 (Bresheeth/ Yuval-Davis 1991: 80–83). The Grand National Assembly backed Özal, spurring the deployment of 200,000 Turkish troops to the Iraqi border and allowing the immediate use of Incirlik Airbase as the launching point for a second allied front into Iraq under the UN-backed Operation Desert Storm (Bresheeth/ Yuval-Davis 1991: 80). This marked a distinct break in Turkey from decades of isolationist policy, particularly in the realm of Middle East affairs, setting the stage for a new path in Turkish foreign policy.

Moreover, popular opposition to Turkish involvement in the war was widespread, with opinion polls showing up to 88% of Turks against it (Bresheeth/ Yuval-Davis 1991: 80). The disparity between zealous elite support and pervasive opposition among the general populous indicates strategic reasoning extending beyond the stated

humanitarian interest in coming to the aid of fellow sovereign nations. By the end of the Cold War, Turkey was the third largest recipient of American aid, and while Özal was interested in changing the aid-based relationship, he did not want to lose the close connection to the world's emerging singular hegemonic power (Han 2010: 89). In a press conference regarding the status of the Gulf War, President Bush opened by referencing his close communication with high-level officials from Jordan and Saudi Arabia, as well as with President Özal in Turkey. Bush states that Özal was "somewhat optimistic about the effectiveness of these international sanctions," placing high value on the Turkish opinion while also giving a quote that lacks concrete valence (1990). By referencing Turkey's involvement in the very beginning of his speech and making note of Özal's opinion on the state of affairs, Bush is normativizing Turkish participation in the Gulf War while also placing a third party between himself and the onus of responsibility. At the same time, Özal was openly arguing that staunch support of the American invasion was the only way to ensure an advantageous position in the future of regional dealings (Bresheeth/ Yuval-Davis 1991: 81). Such a statement reiterates the continued subject/object dynamic while also denoting a slight shift in concrete statements coming from Turkey, as Özal was pandering to American demands with Turkish strategic interests in mind.

Yet, Turkish security interests were also based around the longstanding fear that if Iraq were to fall apart the Kurdish issue would become untenable across the region. Within a few months of the inception of war, thousands of Kurdish refugees began fleeing from northern Iraq into southeastern Turkey. Özal responded pragmatically, supporting the allied Operation Provide Comfort by setting up a safe haven for refugees while deploying additional forces to protect Kurds in northern Iraq (Uzgel 2002). In June of 1991, President Bush visited Ankara, marking the first American presidential visit since Eisenhower (Bush 1991). Bush spoke of an enhanced partnership between the two nations (Prager 2003: 5), quelling fears that Turkey would become irrelevant in American strategy as the Cold War was coming to an end and boosting Özal's choice regarding Turkish involvement in the Gulf War and its protection of Kurdish refugees. This visit and the discourse outlined in Bush's speech also highlighting a change in Turkish-American relations, linked to the regional changes resulting in the fall of the USSR. Yet, the inherent assumptions upholding the relationship remained the same, thus indicating a shift only in concrete statements, but not the overall governing statement influencing the alliance. In a press conference

after returning to the U.S., a reporter asked Bush whether Turkey was stronger ally than before the start of the Gulf War. In response, Bush hedges a bit, stating, "If you would rephrase it from 'stronger ally' to say 'more appreciated here,' I would certainly say, true" (1991). With this answer, it could be argued that Özal's efforts received the desired outcome, as Turkey is receiving open appreciation as an ally. Yet, the linguistic choice of appreciation over strength in alliance once again belittles Turkey's side of the relationship, placing them in a position to await praise from the dominant partner rather than respect as an ally on equal footing.

While Özal made broader concessions concerning the Kurdish minority than any previous Turkish leader had, he also made clear his support for further Turkish military intervention into Iraq if there was movement towards an independent Kurdish state (Bresheeth/ Yuval-Davis 1991: 87). In 1992, Prime Minister Demirel (who was once again elected to this office after being allowed back into politics many years after the 1980 coup d'état) made his first visit to the U.S., meeting with President Bush and other senior officials. The two leaders publicly stated that the continuation of sanctions against Iraq and the communal fight against terrorism, such as that of the PKK, would be two key allied priorities (Uzgel 2002). This statement offered further support of an ongoing U.S.-Turkish alliance in the face of the crumbling Soviet Union, marking the shift from Cold War partnership based on realist ideas of deterrence and regional buffers to strategic alliance focusing on new regional instabilities and communal interests. Thus, it can be argued that what had previously been dubbed a marriage of convenience was increasingly becoming one of mutual choice, though undeniably still on highly unequal footing. This alliance reflected the ongoing predominant philosophies guiding American foreign policy at the time, namely realism and neoliberalism. Although the fall of the USSR shifted the nature of the global playing field, policies under Bush did not diverge significantly from those of his predecessor, instead remaining within a continued discursive framework of interest-based action and rhetoric.

3.4 Clinton: Free Markets and Democracy Promotion

When Bill Clinton took office in 1992, it seemed that he was interested in changing course to some degree, embracing the new era in global politics with ideas diverging from strict realism. With the Soviet Union dissolved, a plethora of unstable, newly independent nations were left in its wake. In his meeting with Prime Minister Demirel,

President Bush had stated his support for Turkey to act as a model to the newly founded Central Asian republics, marking the first explicit mention of Turkey as a model nation (Uzgel 2002). This statement promoted both the American support for the current iteration of Turkish nationhood (a secular emerging democracy with Western ties and an open market), as well as the continued belief in the importance of American ideals in structuring the future of the emerging nations across the region, as it was the American-approved aspects of Turkish society that Bush was promoting. In his inaugural address, Clinton firmly speaks to this standpoint, stating, "Today, a generation raised in the shadows of the Cold War assumes new responsibilities in a world warmed by the sunshine of freedom but threatened still by ancient hatreds and new plagues" (1993). While using the word "freedom" early on, Clinton utter it only three times throughout his speech, saying the word "free" just once. Still, his usage reflects an understanding based acutely in neoliberal ideals, thereby upholding the particular normative framework utilized by both Reagan and Bush. Clinton goes on to address the fall of the USSR, saying, "Today, as an older order passes, the new world is more free but less stable. Communism's collapse has called forth old animosities and new dangers. Clearly, America must continue to lead the world we did so much to make" (Clinton 1993). The latter half of this statement explicitly references the understanding that it is American-style democracy that is now emerging across the globe, and that it was American initiative that helped bring about this change. Such an assertion implicitly upholds Cold War ideals by granting America a particular importance in this transition, while also stating it as self-evident that the U.S. should continue to "lead the world." This type of discourse asserts power, which must then be reiterated through action and the reaction of others in order for it to be validated and upheld. While the relationship between the U.S. and Turkey was shifting in terms of strategic reasoning during this time, the ongoing dynamic of the alliance allowed for precisely such a reiteration of the American understanding of power inherent in Clinton's words.

Clinton goes on to further outline his understanding of American interest in nations around the world, making clear that the particular American understandings of democracy and freedom are at the core of his policy. He states:

"When our vital interests are challenged or the will and conscience of the international community is defied, we will act, with peaceful diplomacy whenever possible, with

force when necessary. … Our hopes, our hearts, our hands are with those on every continent who are building democracy and freedom. Their cause is America's cause." (Clinton 1993)

Here Clinton explicitly states that the causes of democracy and freedom are America's causes, and that through either peaceful or aggressive intervention the U.S. will seek to implement some form of these concepts. Within Clinton's first year in office, numerous discussions and treaties were undertaken with Turkey which follow this rhetoric, including tripartite talks in which the U.S., Russia, and Turkey discussed the upheaval in Azerbaijan and Armenia, as well as an official visit by then Secretary of State Warren Christopher, during which he promoted Turkey as a stabilizing secular power within the region (Uzgel 2002). This proclamation falls directly in line with the sentiment outlined in Clinton's speech, as American ideals are promoted while seemingly empowering other nations along the way. While it cannot be argued that the praise given to Turkey during this time harmed the U.S.-Turkish alliance, the selective nature of that praise highlights the continued inequality in the relationship, as the U.S. promoted the elements of the Turkish nation reflecting its own interests, while alternately ignoring or condemning the elements seen as unsavory.

Although Turkey was still deeply shaken both economically and morally by the effects of the Gulf War, when Yugoslavia began its slow break-up in 1992 Turkey was quick to show its interest in becoming involved in the international effort to contain Serbian aggression and quell the conflicts erupting between ethnic groups. This stance underlined the changing nature of Turkish foreign policy, as instability in the Balkans did not directly threaten Turkey, instead posing only a "soft security" issue (Coşkun 2011: 6). With its geostrategic identity in a state of heightened flux, however, Turkish officials wanted to show Europe that they cared about the stability of the neighborhood while also showing the U.S. that they were a consistent ally sharing similar values. Turkey also called on the broader Muslim world to come to Bosnia's aid, harkening back to its historical Ottoman past to boost its ties to modern Bosnia (Coşkun 2011: 14). This diverse involvement highlights Turkey's burgeoning strategy of playing all of its cards and looking to the region to strengthen ties in each direction. As the conflict in Bosnia heated up, Turkish officials were involved in the diplomatic efforts to subdue violence in its first years, and Turkish soldiers facilitated the NATO intervention in 1995. U.S. officials recognized the important role Turkey played in the humanitarian

effort, thereby encouraging Turkish participation in potential regional conflicts in the future while also reinforcing the new role Turkey was coming to play as a strong ally to Western interventionist powers.

While American aid was no longer flowing at the rate it had during the Cold War, the assistance-based relationship between the U.S. and Turkey was still strong. In 1994, a foreign aid bill to Turkey was signed by President Clinton containing the specific condition that 10% of the aid be used to support human rights and to promote progress on the island of Cyprus. In response, recently elected Turkish Prime Minister Çiller accepted the aid package – minus the 10% set aside for human rights purposes. While this act was unquestionably assertive, the discourse put forth following the delivery of the aid package (as well as, of course, the granting of aid itself) reiterated the continuance of interest-based actions on both sides, as well as the unequal nature of the alliance. At a press conference, Assistant Secretary of State Richard Holbrooke simply stated that it would be "extremely unproductive" to allow such an issue to harm U.S.-Turkish relations (Uzgel 2002). This statement and the discourse it espouses belittles the integrity of the Turkish nation by implicitly stating that the rights of Turkish people are in fact inferior to the American investment in the relationship, thereby quietly dismissing the American push for an improvement of human rights in Turkey and exposing what proved to be empty rhetoric in Clinton's 10% condition. Such an act directly contradicts Clinton's stance as the humanitarian president, thereby underscoring the lack of a true discursive shift in the U.S.'s understanding of its relations to Turkey. This assertion occurred at the same time that economic functioning across Europe was becoming more and more integrated, and increasingly excluding Turkey, often on grounds of their poor human rights record. This exclusion prompted Turkey to seek greater connections to the U.S., both because American leaders had openly brushed aside the importance of human rights violations, as well as in the hope that strengthening the U.S. alliance would in turn lead to stronger ties to Europe (Han 2010: 90).

During this period the Turkish-American partnership was also further expanding in the realm of trade, for instance through the 1993 foundation of the Joint Economic Commission (JEC), solidifying the U.S.'s role as a strong contributor of foreign direct investment (FDI) (Han 2010: 89). Yet, the sudden death of Turgut Özal that same year made starkly apparent the importance of his individual leadership, highlighting

the huge role he had personally played in selling his economic and foreign policy to the Turkish people, underscoring the weight of given actors in structuring discourse. President Clinton recognized this importance in a statement released following Özal's death, noting, "He crafted a new regional role for his country, stressing always the importance of democracy, trade, and peace. The alliance of Turkey and the U.S. is stronger today because of the personal leadership of the late President" (1993). With this brief statement Clinton highlights both the personal importance of Özal in Turkey's changing role while also further underscoring the connection between "democracy, trade, and peace" simply by tying them together as what he, and thereby the U.S. interprets as the three key components of the Özal legacy (1993).

The unpopular Gulf War had hit Turkey hard economically, and the liberalization Özal had pushed through lacked sufficient foundation to allow for a quick rebound. The adverse affects on the Turkish economy were amplified by the perceived disconnect between the Turkish people and the structural changes put in place, as the Turkish market was becoming increasingly internationalized. In 1994, American leaders listed Turkey as one of the ten biggest emerging markets, encouraging American investors to become involved in the construction of the multiple natural gas and oil pipelines underway (Akyüz 2000: 2). With the aid of Department of Commerce restructuring in order to increase exports, overall trade volume between the two nations increased by 70% between 1991 and 1997 (Ayküz 2000: 3). From the American perspective, economic investment in Turkey was key to ensuring its Western orientation, no longer against the expansion of Communism, but instead against the ideological threat of radical Islamism as well as the dangers generated by unstable nations in the surrounding regions of the Balkans, Caucuses, and Central Asia (Prager 2003: 6). This understanding was open and explicit, thereby strongly upholding the governing statements solidified during the Cold War of Turkey as a buffer and an asset to American interests, even if the strategies and perceived dangers were shifting.

In his 1997 inaugural address, Clinton focuses almost exclusively on domestic issues, shifting his discourse to highlight the importance of government in society, employing the word "government" itself ten times, while saying the name "America" an overwhelming eleven times, and the adjective "strong" five times. Conversely, he utters neither "alliance" nor "ally," and uses "free" only three times and "freedom" just twice. In reflecting upon what has changed over the past decade, Clinton states:

"The world is no longer divided into two hostile camps. Instead, now we are building bonds with nations that once were our adversaries. Growing connections of commerce and culture give us a chance to lift the fortunes and spirits of people the world over. And for the very first time in all of history, more people on this planet live under democracy than dictatorship." (Clinton 1997)

With this statement, Clinton stresses the importance of commerce in forging international ties, but he does not directly equate a free market with freedom, nor does he tie a concept of democracy with an American conception of being free. Only a few sentences later, however, he says, "We will stand mighty for peace and freedom and maintain a strong defense against terror and destruction" (Clinton 1997). With this assertion he is implicitly connecting freedom to democracy and peace, but removing the economic element. Instead, he is introducing the joint concepts of "terror and destruction" as elements against which the U.S. must defend itself. This new orientation of anti-terror would come to permeate political discourse for decades to come, figuring prominently into the U.S.-Turkish alliance.

Another key concept developed during Clinton's second term in office was that of democracy promotion. Following the passage of the Goldwater-Nichols Act in 1986, each American president is required annually to submit an overview of their vision of national security strategy (NSS) to Congress, as a means of promoting greater cooperation between the two branches of government (Snider 1995). These NSS reports do not offer specific outlines of presidential foreign policy intentions, but rather a broad overview of the president's understanding of what is most important and how it should be broadly addressed. As such, these documents can offer key insight into ongoing discourse in the realm of foreign policy and how it relates to changing conceptions of security. President Clinton's 1996 NSS report was the first to include a full section related to the concept of democracy promotion, in which he explains that, "This is not a democratic crusade; it is a pragmatic commitment to see freedom take hold where it will help us most" (White House 1996: 32). While the concept of the U.S. endorsing its particular understanding of democracy around the globe dates back to the ideas of Woodrow Wilson, the more contemporary perspective on what this meant was in flux after the Cold War (Nautré 2010: 63). Clinton's understanding of democracy promotion as a movement based in serving American interests helps anchor both his policies of selected intervention (in Bosnia and Somalia, but not

Rwanda, for instance) and the U.S.'s weaker criticism of Turkey's ongoing human rights issues as compared to the harsh critique coming from much of Europe. Yet, Clinton was also a very strong proponent of multilateralism, maintaining that even the U.S. must not push its own agenda unilaterally but instead work within multinational structures, such as the UN and NATO. Although this idea was well received by leaders across the world, it was also criticized as simply a veiled attempt to crystalize American interests within international structures (Han 2010: 80).

With continued instability in other areas of Turkey's broader neighborhood, including in Iran, Iraq, Syria, as well as in other nations across the Middle East, Turkey extended its military alliance beyond just the U.S. and NATO, forging an unprecedented partnership with the fellow Western-oriented nation of Israel. After having upgraded their alliance to the ambassadorial level in 1992, Turkey signed numerous bilateral military agreements with Israel throughout the 1990s, collaborating also on issues of counter-terrorism and intelligence sharing (Inbar 2011: 3). This partnership boosted the discourse that Turkey was situating itself with the broader West after the Cold War, while also allowing the Turkish military to receive equipment and funds for its ongoing campaign against the PKK, some of which the U.S. was hesitant to publicly offer due to known human rights abuses in the continuing battle in southeastern Turkey (Abramowitz 2003: 90). The newly founded Turkish-Israeli alliance was not viewed positively in much of the Arab world, but created a boost for U.S.-Turkish relations by constructing a stronger link between two of the most prominent Western allies in the region. The development of this relationship underscored Turkey's image as pragmatic and strategic, while also helping to maintain a positive image in the minds of American officials. Furthermore, this relationship reiterated the isolationist tendencies of Turkey toward its Arab neighbors, as a strong alliance with Israel is widely perceived as a contemptuous act in terms of relations with the other nations of the Middle East.

When PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan was first expelled from Syria in 1998 then captured in 1999, it seemed that the boosted military onslaught had proved effective. Many saw Öcalan's arrest as the end to the Kurdish problem, and the imprisoned leader's announcement of an indefinite ceasefire in August 1999 signaled this to be true (Abramowitz 2003: 91). Leaders in the U.S. touted the ceasefire as an anti-terror victory, and used this as a key issue, along with Turkey's bourgeoning economic market, in pressuring the EU to put Turkey on the list of candidate countries at the

1999 Helsinki summit, after its exclusion from candidacy in Luxembourg in 1997 (Gillis 2004: 2). It was following the Luxembourg summit that President Clinton met with Prime Minister Yılmaz, outlining a five-part plan towards further bilateral cooperation. The plan focused on the areas of energy, the economy, security, enhanced regional cooperation, and conflicts in the Aegean and on Cyprus (Prager 2003: 8). While this plan boosted U.S.-Turkish relations, a clearly stated goal was the strategic American interest of keeping Turkey in close alliance with nations of the West. To this end, Clinton publicized this plan as further evidence that Turkey should be considered for EU candidacy. The dual focus on economic and anti-terror issues marked a distinctive shift as strategic relations broadened between the U.S. and Turkey by the end of the 1990s. But even as the alliance strengthened, the balance of power remained skewed and the underlying discourse of anticipated partnership to uphold American economic and tactical interests remained evident.

Three months after the highly destructive Marmara earthquake in August 1999, Bill Clinton visited Turkey and gave an address before the Grand National Assembly, setting precedent as the first American president to do so (Han 2010: 91). Clinton stated that the American-Turkish "friendship does not depend upon a common concern with the Soviet Union," but instead was now based on a changing "strategic partnership" (Clinton 1999 quoted in Han 2010: 91). Clinton's actions and statements confirmed for Turkish leaders that in the decade since the fall of the Berlin Wall and the subsequent break up of the Soviet Union, Turkish efforts had not been in vain in terms of solidifying an ongoing alliance with the U.S. This explicit naming of the relationship as "strategic" on both sides of the alliance was also a clear move away from the decades long understanding laid out in the 1980 DECA agreement of a relationship based on "Turkish needs and U.S. interests" (Couloumbis 1983: 153). This shift in concrete statements reflects the changing nature of geopolitics in the 1990s as compared to prior decades, and Clinton's interest in spreading neoliberal economics in conjunction with humanitarian ideals. The president's rhetoric was backed up by the signing of a bi-lateral Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) that same year, concretizing the enhanced trade relationship just as American aid was starkly reduced (Migdalovitz 2010: 51). The shift in the levels of aid versus trade marked an important turning point in American-Turkish relations, chipping away at the reiterated balance of power based on a dominant, paternalistic America and implementing the structures for further integration in trade and investment.

During a press briefing in March, 2000, Assistant Secretary of State Marc Grossman underscored the strategic partnership notion, saying that the American "agenda with Turkey is focused on security, prosperity and democracy" (2000). He went on to outline the strategic importance of Turkey to the U.S., detailing Turkey's role as a stabilizer in the Balkans and with Iran and Iraq, highlighting its expanding economy prior to the 1999 earthquake, and finally stating that:

"Yes, we do see Turkey as a model for the Muslim world. Turkey is a country that is simultaneously secular, democratic, and Islamic. How Turks deal with that balance is their business, but it certainly is in the interest of the U.S. and Europe. Our objective in Turkey is to make it a success because it is important to the United States." (Grossman 2000)

With this succinct statement, Grossman has put forth Turkey as a model for the region while simultaneously remarking that how the components of such a model are achieved are not important to the U.S., instead focusing solely on their outcome. Such a stance firmly follows the decades-long discourse surrounding the U.S.-Turkish relationship, namely that as long as American strategic interests are being met then Turkey can do as it pleases. While democracy promotion was a new component of these interests, Grossman's words make clear that truly flourishing democracy is not the aim of the American alliance, but instead simply a democracy open enough to be counted as a "success" in American geostrategic terms. This idea fits the framework of Clinton's broader foreign policy, in which American strategic interests dictated decisions and humanitarian involvement was still tied to the neoliberal policies first put forth under Reagan. However, the importance of promoting Turkey as a model should not be undervalued, as this statement marks a stark change in the American understanding of Turkey's possible role in the region, foretelling the words of Obama over a decade later.

3.5 G.W. Bush: Freedom and the War on Terror

George Bush was elected in 2000 on a platform dominated by domestic issues, with foreign policy being relegated to second rung, focusing only on matters such as arms control and reformed relations with rising powers like India and China. He spoke little of the Middle East or the ideas of democracy promotion laid out by his predecessor, since this issue, at the time, was seen as one tied to the liberal idealism of President Clinton and President Carter before him (Nautré 2010: 59). Bush criticized Clinton's

"activist" foreign policy, stating in a 1999 speech that unlike what had been witnessed in the 1990s, he would not allow America to "move from crisis to crisis like a cork in a current" (Bush 1999 quoted in Nautré 2010: 60). When contrasting such rhetoric against actions taken later on in his presidency, the great importance of context in discourse creation becomes overwhelmingly clear. During his inaugural address, given on January 20th, 2001, Bush spoke largely of the need to reform domestic policy, such as the school system and Social Security. Throughout the speech he neither refers to any specific platform nor particular incidents, waxing instead about how the strength of God influences the American spirit, for instance as he states that, "his purpose is achieved in our duty" (Bush 2001). Such a strong invocation of God presages the values-based policy that Bush would maintain, promoting a novel type of discourse openly combining American conservative ideals with evangelical Christian morals. This style of conservatism was dubbed neoconservatism, and is also characterized by a belief in American exceptionalism, endorsing the idea that only the specific understanding of Christian democracy heralded by American conservatives is laudable and worthy of promotion (Jackson/ Towle 2006: 28). While Bush did not believe in Clinton-style interventionism, he also shied away from the isolationism being pushed by some conservatives at the time (Nautré 2010: 60). Without going into detail, Bush promotes his neoconservative understanding for the necessity of continued American engagement around the globe, stating, "If our country does not lead the cause of freedom, it will not be led" (2001). This statement marks one of only five uses of the word "freedom" in his speech, and parallels the other usages in which no direct links are given to offer a definition, instead constructing the idea that freedom is something inherently American, which cannot be effectively wielded or promoted by any other nation.

In the second section of his address, Bush turns to the general issue of foreign policy, stating:

"We will build our defenses beyond challenge, lest the weakness invite challenge. We will confront weapons of mass destruction, so that a new century is spared new horrors. The enemies of liberty and our country should make no mistake: America remains engaged in the world, by history and by choice, shaping a balance of power that favors freedom." (Bush 2001)

With this passage, Bush directly invokes the realist security dilemma, unquestioningly granting it weight as an argument for American engagement in the broader world. Yet, he is also outlining his forthcoming policies based on the idea of bandwagoning, an assumption anchored in the idea that if one nation gains extreme unilateral power then other smaller states will inevitably ally themselves in order to avoid destruction (Williams/ Schmidt 2007: 6). His invocation of the "enemies of liberty" sets the stage for discourse used after the September 11th attacks, with such black and white language as the backbone of what would come to be known as the Bush Doctrine. In the sentences following this passage he further references American values, tying them to the protection of interests. He says, "We will defend our allies and our interests. We will show purpose without arrogance. We will meet aggression and bad faith with resolve and strength. And to all nations, we will speak for the values that gave our Nation birth" (Bush 2001). With this statement, Bush binds his concept of American values with the defense of interests and allies, thereby outlining the neoconservative idea that a moral compass guides American policy and creating a framework for a normativized linkage between values and interests. This understanding of America's role in the world allowed for a promotion of unilateral policies that took little notice of the interests of other nations, since American interests were seen as superior to all others. In this way, Bush's actions and words represent a change in discourse from prior presidents, but did not prompt a change of discourse concerning particular relationships such as that with Turkey, as strategic interests were still the main element guiding decision-making.

Shortly after giving this address, Bush was faced with his first major decision regarding the U.S. relationship with Turkey, as the Turkish Republic fell into its worst economic recession since its founding. While Bush had been intent on ending the Clinton-era IMF bailouts, he relented due to the severity of the economic crisis facing Turkey, signing on to a $31 billion IMF and World Bank package (Prager 2003: 10). Later in 2001 Turkey appointed Princeton educated former World Bank employee Kemal Derviş as its new Minister of Economics, solidifying the position of American influence in Turkish economic restructuring. By furthering and reforming many of the policies put in place by Özal in the 1980s and 90s, Derviş slowed the staggeringly high inflation rate and pulled Turkey back from the brink of complete economic collapse (Uzgel 2002). At the G7 summit in Geneva in July 2001, Bush said of the Turkish restructurings, "We commend these efforts and encourage the continued implementation of their reform

programs in close collaboration with the IMF and other relevant international financial institutions" (2001a). By highlighting the Turkish case in particular, Bush underscored the perceived importance of international involvement within the Turkish market as well as the quick return to stable economic functioning.

In September of 2001, the course of Bush's presidency took an abrupt and drastic turn after the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington. All other interests and issues became secondary to the national security strategy, moving foreign policy from background to number one priority on Bush's agenda. On the evening of September 11th, 2001, Bush gave a televised address, opening his speech by saying, "Today our fellow citizens, our way of life, our very freedom came under attack in a series of deliberate and deadly terrorist attacks. … Thousands of lives were suddenly ended by evil, despicable acts of terror" (2001b). This statement offered a first iteration of the discourse that would be laid out in the following years, based on a neoconservative dichotomy between the value of American freedom and the evil of so-called terror, with a strict line separating allies on one side and enemies on the other. Bush and other political figures rapidly assembled a thorough discourse of national security, basing all policy decisions around the constructed idea that the U.S. was immediately engaged in a moral war against a vague enemy set to destroy the American "way of life" (Bush 2001b). Along the lines of good vs. evil nations, Turkey was highlighted as a member of the allied camp, as Press Secretary Ari Fleischer pointed out in a briefing ten days after the attacks. Fleischer noted:

The President this morning spoke with Turkish President Sezer. The President and President Sezer affirmed their solidarity in the fight against terrorism and all those who support and harbor them. The President expressed his thanks to Turkey, a Muslim country, and NATO, that has long suffered terrorism, for its strong support. The Presidents agree that Turkey and the U.S. will work together in the long struggle ahead (2001).

By specifically underscoring that Turkey is a NATO member and a majority Muslim country, as well as the fact that Turkey has faced terrorism in the past, Fleischer highlights both Turkey's strategic advantages as an ally while also referencing a cultural aspect without having to delve into any interests or specifics concerning the Turkish people. By using the term terrorism multiple times and in reference to both the PKK as well as the theoretical threat of future terrorism against the U.S., Fleischer

linked American and Turkish goals, making an assumption of the far-reaching temporal nature of the partnership within this particular campaign.

The same year, Turkish foreign policy advisor Ahmet Davutoğlu published his seminal work Strategic Depth[1]. Davutoğlu would become foreign minister in 2009, but his influence in Turkish political and military functioning dates back much earlier, and he rocketed to worldwide prominence with this particular book's publication. In Strategic Depth, Davutoğlu outlines a "multidirectional strategic vision" for Turkey, arguing that the nation should more freely follow its own path rather than adhering to "global designs" (Migdalovitz 2010: 2). He famously stated that Turkey ought to strive for "zero problems with its neighbors", sketching four key ways to achieve this: through a focus on security, political dialogue, economic interdependence, and greater integration across the Turkic and Arab cultures (Migdalovitz 2010: 2). This orientation marked a distinct shift from the longstanding policy of looking to Europe and the U.S. for ties while keeping an isolationist distance, if not confrontational stance, in regard to neighbors such as Syria and Iran or even Egypt. Davutoğlu argued that close alliances solely with the Western powers will "bring about a strategic submissiveness", which must be circumvented by becoming a regional leader (Han 2010: 100).

Yet, while Bush was speaking in sweeping terms of Us vs. Them, Davutoğlu was laying the groundwork for a more nuanced, multilateral approach to both domestic and foreign relations, which in fact included stronger ties to neighboring countries without letting go of the alliances already in place. He advocated strongly against ideas of American exceptionalism without arguing against the U.S. itself, claiming that moving beyond the Judeo-Christian dominated world order would allow for "civilizational vivacity" rather than the fundamental clash outlined by theorists such as Samuel Huntington or Francis Fukuyama (Reynolds 2012: 13). Davutoğlu's outlook and policy proposals question the inherent nature of Turkey as a Western power, referencing the Ottoman past and chipping away at the permanency of the nation-state model. In this way, Davutoğlu destabilizes the realist-based worldview still dominant with so many political actors, as he looks at Turkey and its relationships from a perspective allowing dynamic change and fluid relationships rather than an adherence to what he argues is

1 This book has not yet been translated into English, so all analysis and quotations come from secondary literature.

a false linearity. This trend within Turkey directly clashed with the Bush Doctrine, which simply did not allow room for nuance or dialogue, instead solely viewing relationships from a strategic, black and white perspective.

Yet, despite these clashing understandings of the world order, Turkish Prime Minister Ecevit made no move towards retreating from Turkey's relationship with the U.S., ensuring the broader public that stronger regional partnerships were burgeoning in addition to, not instead of ties to the U.S., NATO, and Europe. This stance was put to the test when a U.S.-led NATO alliance began an aerial assault of Afghanistan in response to the September 11th attacks in early October of the same year. The Turkish parliament granted full war powers to the government, meaning that Turkish soldiers could enter combat and Turkish soil was open to foreign troops (Uzgel 2002). Prime Minister Ecevit visited Washington in December 2001, prior to which Bush's press secretary stated that, "Turkey's strong offers of assistance during Operation Enduring Freedom have underscored the vibrancy of our strategic partnership" (Bush 2001b). This statement acts as a reminder of the assumption of an alliance from the American side, while also highlighting the continued strategic basis for that partnership. The use of the word "vibrancy" indicates diversity, when in fact Bush was praising only the Turkish commitment to military cooperation. During his visit to the White House, Prime Minister Ecevit made clear that although he granted full support to the retaliation in Afghanistan, he was not in support of a further invasion into Iraq (Uzgel 2002). In response to a reporter's question concerning Bush's expectations from Turkey in regard to Iraq, Bush stated, "Turkey is an ally and a friend, and no decisions have been made beyond the first theater. And the first theater is Afghanistan, and I do appreciate very much the Turkish support for our efforts in Afghanistan" (2002). The presumptive use of "first" and "second" already indicates a plan for further military engagement, and Bush's evasive answer regarding a lack of decisions indicates that any upcoming choices in the future are in fact solely in his hands, yielding little to no weight to the interests or opinions of Turkey and its leaders. Such language reflects Bush's neoconservative posture, foreshadowing the most predominant act of American exceptionalism, namely the 2003 invasion of Iraq.

In November 2002, the Justice and Development Party (AKP) won a strong victory in Turkey's parliament. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, who had been banned from politics after reciting a religious poem while Mayor of Istanbul in 1997, became prime minister as

soon as the ban was lifted, with Sezer maintaining his post as president. The AKP was borne of the ashes of Virtue Party, which split after its outlaw in 2001, with the more conservative Islamist members forming the Felicity Party and those with social conservative tendencies creating the AKP. In response to overwhelming discussion concerning the Islamic nature of the AKP, Erdoğan stated, "We are not an Islamic party, and we also refuse labels such as Muslim democrat" (Erdoğan 2005, quoted in Taşpınar 2012). However, Erdoğan relied on a strong base of support from traditionally conservative central Anatolia, and once in office it became apparent that he wished to expand upon Davutoğlu's ideas laid out in Strategic Depth – broadening regional relations, including across the Muslim world, while also maintaining strong ties to traditional allies. Erdoğan appointed Davutoğlu as his chief policy advisor in 2003 and quickly pushed through a slew of regional changes, creating visa-free travel and trade zones with neighboring countries from Syria to Greece to Russia, thereby fostering dialogue and closer relations with nations that had long been hostile neighbors (Reynolds 2012: 15).

Erdoğan also made an official visit to the U.S. during his first weeks in office, strongly underscoring his commitment to the American alliance and his continued interest therein. Erdoğan and Bush held a press conference prior to their meeting, which Bush opened by stating:

"Mr. Chairman, welcome to the home of one of your country's best friends and allies. … We thank you very much for your commitment to democracy and freedom. We join you, side by side, in your desire to become a member of the EU. We appreciate your friendship in NATO. You're a strategic ally and friend of the U.S., and we look forward to working with you to keep the peace." (2002a)

The first words of this statement are highly revealing concerning Bush's understanding of the U.S.-Turkish relationship – he distinctly refrains from saying that Turkey is a best friend and ally of the United States, instead formulating an awkward sentence that highlights his idea that the U.S. is a best friend of Turkey's. By then continuing to thank Erdoğan for his commitment to democracy and freedom, Bush ties these concepts to American authority by once again reiterating the subject/object formation, with the U.S. in a position to dole out praise or condemnation over the governmental actions of other nations. Finally, the mention of only the EU, NATO, and the strategic, peace-keeping nature of the relationship gives a strong outline of Bush's interests from

the Turkish partnership, making no mention of cultural or economic relations and thereby underscoring the imbalanced, American interest-based alliance. Such language fits neatly into the framework of neoconservative American exceptionalism guiding Bush era discourse.

Perhaps the greatest test to the U.S.-Turkish partnership to date came the following year when the Turkish Grand National Assembly voted no on March 1st, 2003 to allowing American troops to use Turkey for launching a northern opening into Iraq during the impending war. Ecevit had made his stance clear concerning a second war in Iraq, but Erdoğan did not make strong statements in either direction, allowing American officials to assume a forthcoming "yes" vote based on the track record of Turkish military support. Therefore, despite a lack of Turkish interest in taking part in what was to be an American-led "coalition of the willing," it came as an outright shock to people around the globe when Turkey refused to allow the American military use of Turkish soil for their invasion. This decision, while following the letter of Davutoğlu's urgings to show strength against Western powers, was also deeply based in fears concerning the Kurdish population in Iraq, which had built up an autonomous region following the 1991 invasion. Turks feared that a second American war in Iraq would allow for even greater Kurdish autonomy, potentially creating threats to Turkish territorial integrity. Turkish politicians also felt that the U.S. lacked sufficient concern for this issue, making clear the divergence of interests tying the two nations together (Migdalovitz 2010: 6). The vote was quite close, however, and many argued that the lack of a mandate indicated a changing tide in the power of the Turkish military, as many top officials had in fact supported the American usage of Turkey for the northern front (Kapsis 2006: 3). Rather than acknowledging the numerous domestic reasons behind this vote, however, analysts and policy makers alike thundered about its significance in terms of Turkey's growing eastward allegiance, with paternalist fears of "losing Turkey" being widely discussed (i.e. Minon/ Wimbush 2007).

During a press conference about the forthcoming war in Iraq, Bush was asked if Turkey's parliamentary decision would affect U.S. support for their bid toward EU accession, for which Erdoğan was strongly pushing. The mere asking of this question exhibits an underlying assumption that the American relationship with Turkey was still based on the U.S. getting what it wants from Turkey and only then offering its support, regardless of the causal reasoning behind Turkish actions. However, Bush responded

by saying, "I support Turkey going into the EU. Turkey is a friend. They're a NATO ally. We will continue to work with Turkey" (2003). This concise answer once again highlights the key areas structuring Bush's understanding of the U.S.-Turkish alliance, showing that while there may have been hostility concerning the choices of Turkish political actors, Bush was not intent to drastically shift the American side of the relationship, but instead to keep them as a potential strategic partner for the future.

The image of the U.S. was further tarnished in the eyes of the Turkish public later in 2003, when American soldiers arrested eleven Turkish special forces officers in the northern Iraqi city of Sulaymaniya on grounds of a suspected assassination attempt against a local Kurdish politician. It was not the arrest per se which made headlines, however, but rather the manner in which it was undertaken, with the Turkish officers being hooded and roughly led away for questioning by American soldiers (Grigoriadis 2010: 58). The mishandling of the Turkish citizens was seen as a direct affront to the nation itself, putting on display the American disregard for basic human dignity in the name of Bush's War on Terror. In a 2004 Pew survey, a mere 3% of Turks said they had confidence in President Bush, marking the lowest level of all the fifteen countries surveyed (Grigoriadis 2010: 58). This distrust of President Bush combined with vocal disdain for the American presence in Iraq led to strong anti-Americanism in general, highlighting the intense interconnectedness of political actors' personal discourse, structural choices, and the nation associated with them.

In his second inaugural address following reelection in 2004, Bush mentions neither ongoing American war in specific terms, instead filling his speech with neoconservative rhetoric concerning American exceptionalism and the importance of democracy promotion. He does so, however, with only one usage of the word "democracy," while uttering the word "freedom" an overwhelming 25 times and its counterparts "free" 7 times and "liberty" 15 times. The stark contrast from his first speech four years prior reflects the strong turn in strategic discourse, shifting the emphasis entirely away from domestic affairs to focus solely on building a foundation around his particular foreign policy choices. Yet, though Bush changed course away from internal issues, his discourse makes quite clear how deeply intertwined American domestic and foreign policy actually are, as they are built off of a shared discourse of values and interests. Towards the beginning of his speech Bush states:

"We are led, by events and common sense, to one conclusion: The survival of liberty in our land increasingly depends on the success of liberty in other lands. The best hope for peace in our world is the expansion of freedom in all the world. America's vital interests and our deepest beliefs are now one." (2005)

With this statement Bush has called upon American exceptionalism to the extreme. He once again connects American values and interests, while also stating that the ongoing nature of America as it is depends on American-led democracy promotion in other nations. Such a claim grants weight to the overwhelmingly unpopular invasion of Iraq, as it is viewed as one such necessary component of Bush's plan to promote freedom abroad to ensure freedom at home. Bush goes on to say, "The difficulty of the task is no excuse for avoiding it. America's influence is not unlimited, but fortunately for the oppressed, America's influence is considerable and we will use it confidently in freedom's cause" (2005). This declaration once again takes the paternalistic tone used when Bush thanked Erdoğan for Turkey's democracy – he is granting an intrinsic nature to the quality of freedom in the U.S. and the assumption that people around the world ought to be grateful if influenced by it. In the next paragraph Bush states, "We will persistently clarify the choice before every ruler and every nation, the moral choice between oppression, which is always wrong, and freedom, which is eternally right" (2005). Here he once again uses black and white language to point out the anticipated confusion of other (presumably Middle Eastern) nations in the face of something he sees as unquestionably clear to Americans, creating a framework of seemingly simple and straightforward democracy promotion based on the assumption that when given the freedom to choose, people across the globe would choose American-style democracy.

This type of broad-reaching concrete statement concerning the intrinsic goodness of America and the evil at work in other nations had a strong effect not only on Bush's policy choices, but also on the perception of America around the globe. According to Pew Global Attitudes Project, 52% of Turks surveyed held a favorable view of the United States in 2000, which then took an astounding fall to 15% after the start of the Iraq War in 2003, then diving even further to 12% by 2006 (2012). These numbers reflect global trends, juxtaposing Bush's brash statements of American virtuosity with the negative image held across the world. This type of reaction was in direct opposition to what many neoconservatives openly anticipated before entering into war

in Iraq, as made clear by the statements from prominent contemporary theorists Robert Kagan and William Kristol who claimed that "once Iraq and Turkey – two of the three most important Middle Eastern powers – are both in the pro-western camp, there is a reasonable chance that smaller powers might decide to jump on the bandwagon" (2003, quoted in Williams/ Schmidt, 2007: 6). This statement reiterates the belief that the American-Turkish relationship was one in which the U.S. could count on Turkey to follow its will, lacking any acknowledgement of either the fluidity of relations or the autonomy of Turkish decision makers. Moreover, this sentiment underscores the vast disconnect between the concepts held by neoconservative leadership with real-world outcomes, highlighting the danger of creating policy based solely on personal belief and singular theory.

In the early years of the war in Iraq, Bush broadened his tactics, spearheading numerous policies across the Middle East in the name of democracy promotion, such as the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI), the Middle East Free Trade Initiative (MEFTA), the Broader Middle East and North Africa Initiative (BMENA), and the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) (Nautré 2010: 94-97). These programs focused primarily on civil society and economic issues, based largely on the idea that higher per-capita incomes and a more involved and organized society would create the right circumstances for democracy to naturally flourish. In 2006, Turkish and American leaders published a document entitled "Shared Vision and Structured Dialogue to Advance the Turkish-American Strategic Partnership," which was based on the "global objectives" such as the "promotion of peace, democracy, freedom and prosperity" (Han 2010: 93). This document, in line with the slew of other initiatives focusing on the broader Middle East, was not actually signed or put into official practice by leadership from either nation, thus making it a piece of purely empty rhetoric. Furthermore, after the elections in 2006 in Egypt and the Palestinian Territories brought to power the Muslim Brotherhood and Hamas, respectively, many of the programs listed above began to fall by the wayside and American discourse concerning democracy promotion started to fade. The underlying idea that, given the choice, people around the world would choose American-style democracy was proven to be false in the case of Palestine and Egypt, and the surprise and disdain exhibited by Bush and other officials belied the American desire to promote only democracy that is tied to American interests, rather than truly open democracy that might result in the election of leaders who hold conflicting points of view.

Erdoğan, who was reelected in another landslide victory in 2007, was acutely aware of the unpopularity of the American leadership amongst Turks. Yet, the type of democracy that had been outlined in theoretical terms by American officials was coming to fruition in many ways inside Turkey. After Turkey officially gained EU candidate status in 1999 it began implementing the Copenhagen criteria for accession through such acts as abolishing the death penalty, officially allowing the Kurdish language to be used in public broadcasts, and fostering a greater recognition of civil society (Ulusoy 2010: 72). Such reforms, which resulted in an overwhelming seven legislative reform packages, along with the broadening of relations with surrounding nations, were aptly dubbed the Democratic Opening (Albright, Hadley and Cook 2012: 14). In ways strikingly similar to the Bush administration, Erdoğan and other AKP leaders were basing both domestic and foreign policy on certain ideals concerning their particular understandings of the role of their respective country. In both Turkey and the U.S., such ideals were linked to a set of values derived to some degree from religious belief, but also from a faith that each nation was destined to maintain regional or global prominence. The ways in which these values were translated into policy, however, varied starkly, creating potential fault lines as Erdoğan promoted pragmatism and Bush maintained a strong neoconservative "with us or against us" attitude (i.e. Bush 2002b).

Despite the substantial domestic advances made in line with the Copenhagen criteria, EU accession negotiations had stalled in 2005, leaving Turkey in a position in which a broadening of economic and strategic ties with other nations was quite logical. To Bush, however, Turkey's "fraternization" with a nation such as Iran, which he had glibly listed as a member of an "Axis of Evil" in 2002 (Jackson and Towle 2006: 47), was in direct opposition to the maintained understanding that Turkey was an inherently Western country with interests aligned with those of the U.S. This was made clear in a statement given in 2006 after Erdoğan had once again visited Washington. Bush opened his remarks by saying that the two leaders had, "talked about our determined efforts to fight terror and extremism. We talked about our common efforts to bring stability to the Middle East" (2006). Without pointing to specific endeavors, Bush placed Turkey in line with American strategy as he referred to "common efforts". He went on to note, "I made it very clear to the Prime Minister, I think it's in the U.S. interests that Turkey join the European Union" (Bush 2006). By placing these phrases back to back, Bush has once again highlighted the strategic

point of view taken in regard to America's relationship with Turkey, openly stating that he appreciates joint military efforts and would like to see Turkey join the EU not for its own benefit, but because accession would be of interest to the United States.

By 2008, however, EU negotiations remained stagnated and Russia had eclipsed Germany to become Turkey's largest trading partner (Parris 2008: 7). The step away from a focus on economic ties with the U.S., which had been built up under Clinton, shifted Turkey solidly back to a role of solely strategic partner for the U.S., despite the fact that the Turkish economy was growing at a rate of over 6% a year between 2002 and 2007 and Turkey's regional prominence was still on the rise (Albright/ Hadley/ Cook 2012: 18). After the South Ossetia War broke out between Russian and Georgian forces in 2008, Turkey drafted a proposal for a Caucuses discussion forum that would exclude U.S. involvement. Turkey also sponsored comprehensive peace talks between Syria and Israel in 2008, for which the U.S. publicly acknowledged its support, underscoring the idea that this sort of regional involvement was in line with U.S. interests. Turkish Foreign Minister Ali Babacan was invited to visit the State Department for the first time that year, and he and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice offered remarks to the press, in which Secretary Rice opened by acknowledging his visit, stating, "It is really a great pleasure to welcome you here, Ali, because I believe that despite all of our meetings, this is actually your first time in the Department of State" (2008). With this statement Rice inadvertently acknowledges the lack of diplomatic communication between the two nations. Secretary Rice went on to describe the range of issues discussed during the Foreign Minister's visit, all of which were of a strategic nature, including Iraq and Afghanistan, Israel and Syria. Rice commended Turkey for its work in brokering peace talks, highlighting the fact that the U.S. and Turkey share communal values behind such talks. She states, "those values are of democracy, a strong belief that the rights of individuals to freedom are unassailable and that they are rights that are universal" (Rice 2008).

The same year, Erdoğan hosted Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, forging a deeper relationship over such issues as trade and the continued PKK aggression, a topic to which many felt the U.S. had turned a blind eye (Parris 2008: 8). While Rice had praised Turkey's involvement with Syria and Israel, American officials still viewed Erdoğan's policy of broad regional involvement as in direct opposition to the Bush Doctrine of clear-cut good and evil nations. However, the pragmatic style of building

strategic alliances on grounds of common national interests closely mirrored the realist tendencies displayed for decades by previous American leaders. Therefore, while many American critics feared that Turkey was turning its back on the West in the face of EU rejection and broadened regional connections, the U.S. was in fact failing to acknowledge the changing nature of the Turkish nation, thereby inducing tension at all levels of the relationship. This rigid binary of static and pandering partner versus evil enemy thereby precluded the nuanced consideration necessary for a strong alliance, instead reverting to a uni-dimensional dynamic based solely on American interests at a time when a diversified Turkey warranted greater recognition rather than vague disinterest or outright derision.

3.6 Obama: Pragmatic Communitarianism

By the time Bush left office in 2008, the effects of his presidency and the choices he made while in power were felt the world over. Euphoria concerning the election of Barack Obama was widespread, and the Turkish public vocally supported him as a harbinger of change in the realm of foreign policy, particularly toward the Middle East (Grigoriadis 2010: 59). When Obama visited Turkey in April 2009, he addressed the depth and breadth of the U.S.-Turkish relationship in words beyond any uttered during the eight years prior, noting concisely that, "The U.S. and Turkey have not always agreed on every issue, and that's to be expected – no two nations do" (Obama 2009a). With this brief statement, Obama upended the basic premise of the Bush Doctrine, namely that you are either "with us or against us," which had effectively precluded any room for flexible alliance in the face of disagreement. Before speaking to the Turkish Parliament, Obama and President Gül held a press conference, during which Obama succinctly stated, "I think, despite some of the problems that we saw beginning in 2003, that you have seen steady improvement between U.S.-Turkish relations. I don't think they ever deteriorated so far that we ceased to be friends and allies" (2009b). Obama then went on to say:

"I think that where there's the most promise of building stronger U.S.-Turkish relations is in the recognition that Turkey and the U.S. can build a model partnership in which a predominantly Christian nation and a predominantly Muslim nation, a Western nation and a nation that straddles two continents – that we can create a modern international community that is respectful, that is secure, that is prosperous that there are not

tensions – inevitable tensions between cultures, which I think is extraordinarily important." (2009b)

With this statement Obama addresses Huntington's idea of civilizational clash, contending instead that nations can maintain and promote harmonious relations across religious and cultural lines rather than succombing to some sort of inevitable conflict. By directly addressing both the bump in the alliance in 2003 and the understanding that geography and religion should not preclude close relations, Obama is further countering Bush era discourse, laying groundwork for a sharp shift in U.S.-Turkish relations situated within a broader shift in both domestic and foreign policy discourse. Moreover, by introducing the idea of a "model partnership," Obama has moved firmly beyond the rhetoric of a strategic alliance, creating room for building upon precisely how the U.S. understands and promotes this new step in the relationship. Davutoğlu, who was appointed Foreign Minister in 2009, responded to this new label in a speech delivered in June of 2009 titled "Turkey-U.S. Relations: A Model Partnership, Global and Regional Dimensions". After going through the specific geostrategic histories of each nation and detailing why they prompt parallel interest in a wide range of issues, Davutoğlu states:

"This model partnership is not a matter of choice, it is a matter of necessity. We should sit together, establish all the contacts at every level from political leadership to the lowest rank of diplomats and work together. This should be the new understanding. This is the political side: multidimensionality." (2009)

By promoting such a strong and specific endorsement of the new understanding of Turkish-American relations as a model partnership, Davutoğlu is declaring his pragmatic interest in bringing this vision to fruition through an expanded alliance. Davutoğlu states the word "necessity" in reference to both sides of the relationship, thereby engaging language used during the Cold War to describe Turkish reliance on the U.S. while upending this connotation to promote an understanding of mutual need.

In his speech to the Turkish Grand National Assembly that April, Obama outlined the many challenges facing the contemporary world, from war to poverty to energy scarcity, stating, "This much is certain: No one nation can confront these challenges alone, and all nations have a stake in overcoming them" (2009a). While such sentiment may seem self-evident, its utterance in fact works to further scale back the Bush era idea of American exceptionalism and the aggressive push to spread so-called

American values the world over, presaging Davutoğlu's suggestion that many nations around the world should work together on common strategic interests. The President then reiterated the longstanding American support for Turkey's EU membership, though instead of arguing for it as a boon for American interests he says, "Europe gains by the diversity of ethnicity, tradition and faith – it is not diminished by it. And Turkish membership would broaden and strengthen Europe's foundation once more" (Obama 2009a). Here Obama is addressing an oft unspoken question regarding why the EU is hesitant to accept Turkey into its midst, stating plainly his stance in opposition to any underlying Islamaphobia or fears of Turkey as culturally apart from the rest of Europe. Finally, Obama states that:

"I know that there have been difficulties these last few years. I know that the trust that binds the U.S. and Turkey has been strained, and I know that strain is shared in many places where the Muslim faith is practiced. So let me say this as clearly as I can: The United States is not, and will never be, at war with Islam." (2009a)

With this statement, Obama both tacitly acknowledges the role that individual actors play in shaping relationships by granting weight to the decisions made during the Bush era, while also specifically pointing out the tensions that were generated across the Muslim world. By once again answering an unasked question – namely whether or not the U.S. is at war with Islam – Obama has offered substance to the perception that this could be true, thereby acknowledging his own empathy for such a perspective and creating a space for dialogue. With his emphatic assurance that the U.S. is not engaging in such a war, however, Obama once again pulls away from the values-based rhetoric inspired by the moralistic Bush Doctrine, laying the foundation for a new discourse based on more malleable terms of alliance, explicit room for discussion, and a recognition of others' interests within mutual relationships.

Each of these principles contributes to the theorist James Kloppenberg's description of Obama as philosophical pragmatist, meaning that he is guided by an urge to maintain a stable community, potentially at the global level, while acknowledging the lack of any set of universal truths (Leeman 2012: 4). Kloppenberg notes that Obama's particular rhetorical style offers much broader substance than that of either his predecessor or many of his peers, prompting people the world over to comment on his eloquence while also feeling a sense of identification with the content of his words. In this way, Obama embraced the power of discourse with a high level of awareness, recognizing

the influence of his own language while also noting the crucial significance of interpretation and reiteration of relationships, thereby engaging a constructed, historicist perspective on international relations. This type of stance in regard to discourse as well as to policy-making sets Obama apart from prior American presidents, as his pragmatism overturns the model of strict exceptionalism built up by neoconservatives without reverting to a realist position, instead seeking collaboration and communal understanding while recognizing the inevitability of conflicting opinions. He does not contradict the underlying principles of free-market liberalism heralded by leaders such as Reagan or Clinton, though his unambiguous communitarian rhetoric moves a step beyond Clinton's humanitarian-based philosophy. While this standpoint by no means indicates that Obama's policies will always follow these ideals, it is important to recognize the stark shift in baseline understanding of international as well as basic human affairs, particularly between the Bush and Obama administrations, as it further highlights the great importance of individual actors and how their personal philosophies can influences broader structures.

In his inaugural address, given on January 20th, 2009, a few months before his first visit to Turkey, Obama directly addressed the change in strategy between his predecessor and himself, stating, "On this day, we come to proclaim an end to the petty grievances and false promises, the recriminations and worn-out dogmas that for far too long have strangled our politics" (2009). He goes on to say, "In reaffirming the greatness of our Nation, we understand that greatness is never a given" (Obama 2009). With these words, Obama explicitly acknowledges the fluid nature of power and international relationships, implicitly referencing the myopic assumptions of American greatness tendered under Bush. Obama then addresses the economic downturn, prompting the nation once again to overcome differences in order to address such pressing issues. When he comes to his discussion of foreign policy, Obama says:

"Recall that earlier generations faced down fascism and communism not just with missiles and tanks but with sturdy alliances and enduring convictions. They understood that our power alone cannot protect us, nor does it entitle us to do as we please. Instead, they knew that our power grows through its prudent use. Our security emanates from the justness of our cause, the force of our example, the tempering qualities of humility and restraint." (2009)

Here Obama explicitly derides both the power balancing strategies endorsed during the time of the realist security dilemma as well as the Bush era bandwagoning, instead highlighting once more the importance of strong alliances and a tempered approach. Throughout his speech Obama uses the word "freedom" only three times and "free" only twice, focusing more on a specific discussion of issues, including both the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, rather than on broader platitudes (2009).

During Obama's initial visit overseas, he strongly promoted the fostering of both old and new relationships. After visiting Turkey in April, he went to Egypt in June, giving what quickly became an historic speech at Cairo University. In this address, Obama derided both extremism and widespread hostility on all sides of the spectrum, saying, "I've come here to Cairo to seek a new beginning between the U.S. and Muslims around the world, one based on mutual interest and mutual respect and one based on the truth that America and Islam are not exclusive and need not be in competition" (2009c). He followed by stating that, "I do so recognizing that change cannot happen overnight" (Obama 2009c). Here Obama is acknowledging the harm done by the good vs. evil rhetoric of his predecessor while asking for a chance to build something more positive in its stead. Later in the speech he addressed specificities regarding how this might be achieved, pointing out strategic, economic, and cultural areas for collaboration and improvement. By visiting both Ankara and Cairo so early on in his presidency and by laying out so explicitly his interest in moving relationships beyond the dichotomous lines drawn under Bush, Obama set the stage for an expanded foreign policy embracing broader engagement while potentially also moving beyond the humanitarian-based model created under President Clinton in the 1990s.

In December of 2009, Prime Minister Erdoğan made his first visit to the White House during the Obama administration. Following their meeting, the two leaders gave a press conference, during which Obama stated:

"Over all, just to summarize, I am incredibly optimistic about the prospect of stronger and stronger ties between the U.S. and Turkey that will be based not only on our NATO relationship, our military-to-military relationship, our strategic relationship, but also increasing economic ties." (2009d)

By explicitly stating that he would like to strengthen both the traditional and the economic ties between the two countries, Obama reiterated his desire to move beyond the solely strategic alliance. Erdoğan responded by saying:

"The fact that the President visited Turkey on his first visit overseas and that he described and characterized Turkish-U.S. relations as a model partnership has been very important for us politically and in the process that we all look forward to in the future as well." (Obama 2009d)

This response underscores the significance of Obama's choice of words in his discourse, highlighting the importance of the concrete shift from strategic to model partnership. In response to a question concerning the PKK in Iraq and Turkey, Obama stated:

"I think that the steps that the Prime Minister has taken in being inclusive towards the Kurdish community in Turkey is very helpful, because one of the things we understand is, is that terrorism cannot just be dealt with militarily; there is also social and political components to it that have to be recognized." (2009d)

With this statement the president has gone beyond the discourse of any of his predecessors in the contemporary era, explicitly noting the perceived importance of internal cultural functioning in Turkey. Moreover, he is plainly recognizing that terrorism has causes that cannot be squelched solely through military power, thereby acknowledging the significance of ongoing human relationships in the construction and reiteration of power dynamics.

After heightened positive relations in 2009, 2010 proved a very difficult year for the U.S.-Turkish alliance, as events both within Turkey and across the region gave direct test to Obama's proclamation that allies must not agree on every issue in order to maintain strong relations. In May of that year, Erdoğan signed an agreement with Brazilian President Lula da Silva and Iranian President Ahmadinejad, whereby Brazil and Turkey agreed to accept part of Iran's low-enriched uranium in exchange for enough higher-enriched uranium to fuel a research reactor (Inbar 2011: 8). This deal took place amidst American and UN pressure for greater sanctions against Iran in order to stifle their potential development of nuclear weapons. Rather than publicly admonishing Turkey for acting outside the realm of U.S. interests, however, Obama personally called Erdoğan, acknowledging the potential importance of the Turkish deal while stating his own belief that diplomacy had not proved successful in the past with Ahmadinejad, meaning that sanctions were likely the best route to a non-nuclear Iran (Obama 2010). This type of presidential discourse follows Obama's rhetoric concerning an interest in personal dialogue, resituating the interpersonal power relationship as

one in which each party is recognizing the actions and interests of the other, even in the face of disagreement.

In June 2010, the UN Security Council voted on a U.S.-sponsored resolution to impose a new round of sanctions against Iran, which Turkey and Brazil both voted against, while even China and Russia gave unprecedented support (Cagaptay 2011: 5). Erdoğan stood by his position of diplomacy, openly referencing his trust in Ahmadinejad, who he had referred to in late 2009 as a "close friend" (Cagaptay 2011: 5). With this stance, Erdoğan was challenging the American and broader international view that Ahmadinejad could not to be trusted and that his desire to create and potentially use nuclear weapons could only be dissuaded with the force of sanctions, if not military intervention. Erdoğan had argued during his November 2008 trip to Washington that nations such as the U.S. ought to dismantle their own enormous stockpiles of nuclear weapons before playing world police against countries like Iran (Cagaptay 2011: 5). This statement, backed up by his actions in 2010, highlight the changing nature of U.S.-Turkish relations, as Erdoğan was not only forging ties elsewhere but also openly acting against the policies promoted by the U.S. on the world stage, while also pointing out the hypocrisy of American actions, thereby shifting the structural balance of power and furthering the schism in the previously held notion of Turkey as a largely tacit partner. Erdoğan did all of this while still maintaining close ties with the U.S., thereby acting upon his desire for broadened relations while also operating under the assumption that contradictory actions would not prompt a cutting of ties with the U.S. It is the American reaction to Erdoğan's actions that reflects the U.S. understanding of the relationship, however, and Obama's personal engagement and continued support for broadened relations with Turkey reflect a change on both sides of the Atlantic.

In the midst of the Iran debate, Turkey's relationship with Israel was strongly put to the test when a humanitarian flotilla headed for Gaza was raided by Israeli soldiers, resulting in the death of nine Turkish activists (Albright, Hadley, and Cook 2012: 45). Erdoğan and other Turkish leaders, such as Foreign Minister Davutoğlu, responded harshly both to the attack and to the general response of the U.S. and other nations. Davutoğlu called the incident "Turkey's 9/11," and suggested Turkey cut diplomatic ties with Israel immediately (Cagaptay 2011:5). While the flotilla raid prompted extreme public discord, relations between Turkey and Israel had already begun to sour

the year before. After the 2008-2009 Gaza war, Erdoğan abandoned his previous efforts to act as a mediator between both Israel and Syria as well as between Fatah and Hamas. He walked out of the World Economic Forum summit in Davos in 2009 after a lively disagreement with Israeli President Shimon Peres, and later that year he recalled Israel's invitation to participate in the "Anatolian Eagle" air exercise (Inbar 2011: 1). Throughout 2009, Obama failed to make strong public comment on any of the changes to the Turkish-Israeli relationship. When Press Secretary Robert Gibbs was asked about the President's personal response to the flotilla raid during a June 2010 press conference, Gibbs reiterated three times that Obama's condemnation of Israeli actions were in line with those of the UN Security Council, but that further comment could only be made following a thorough investigation (Gibbs 2010). This hesitation shows Obama's interest in remaining neutral and in line with the broader community rather than creating heightened tension with either Israel or Turkey. In this way, although Obama did not give the strong response that Erdoğan and other Turkish leaders were hoping for, his silence in fact indicates a measured respect for the American alliance with both Israel and Turkey, which marks a distinct shift from the historical tendency to place Israeli relations above any others in the region.

The ensuing UN investigation of the so-called Mavi Marmara flotilla incident, which resulted in the Palmer Report, concluded that it was within Israel's jurisdiction to attempt to stop the flotilla of ships from breaking the blockade of Gaza, but condemned the specific nature of their actions. Israel took this conclusion as grounds for maintaining silence in the face of Turkey's demand for an apology, in response to which Turkey downgraded diplomatic relations to the level of second secretary (Albright/ Hadley/ Cook 2012: 45). This action was accompanied by a dismantling of much of the joint military and intelligence-sharing platforms that had been built up since the 1990s, thereby crumbling the strong strategic alliance between the two nations. In November of 2011, Vice President Joe Biden visited Turkey, prior to which a press conference was held with his press secretary, who stated, "The bottom line is that improved relations between Turkey and Israel would be good for Turkey, good for Israel and good for the U.S. and indeed good for the region and the world" (Obama 2011a). This statement elucidates the basic discourse promoted by the Obama administration – pragmatism with recognition of the interests in all parties involved. However, as Erdoğan and Davutoğlu continued to deepen Turkey's engagement with the Arab nations of the region, it became highly dubious as to whether or not they

viewed restored relations with Israel as "good for Turkey," and it became clear that they were not going to mend fences simply to pander to American wishes.

Another issue that came to a head in 2010 was the American labeling of the 1915 Armenian massacre as genocide. Following the "zero problems" doctrine, Turkey had made unprecedented efforts towards normalized relations with Armenia during 2009, culminating in the establishment of diplomatic relations in October of that year (Kirişci/ Tocci/ Walker 2010: 11). Relations faltered quickly, however, when neither side agreed to ratify the proposed protocol until the ongoing Nagorno-Karabakh territory dispute with Azerbaijan was resolved (Zanotti 2012: 27). In March 2010, U.S. Congress voted on a resolution to recognize the killing of Armenians under Ottoman authority in 1915 as genocide, a move that prompted Turkey to recall its ambassador for one month. The bill did not pass, however, just as previous bills of a similar nature had caused discord between the two nations without ever becoming law (Zanotti 2012: 27). On Armenian Remembrance Day the following month, Obama referred to "one of the worst atrocities of the 20th century," but refrained from using the word "genocide" (2010). Moreover, he stated, "I am encouraged by the dialog among Turks and Armenians, and within Turkey itself … the Turkish and Armenian people will be stronger as they acknowledge their common history and recognize their common humanity" (Obama 2010). By stressing communitarian values and praising the use of dialogue to resolve longstanding conflict, Obama strayed from the discourse of former presidents, particularly that of President Reagan, who had openly condemned the "genocide of the Armenians" in 1981 (quoted in Zanotti 2012: 38). Though Obama had in fact given support for genocide recognition when he was a U.S. Senator, his careful choice of language as President reflects not only his underlying recognition of the power of discourse but also his acknowledgement of the Turkish side of the issue.

Despite the numerous causes of tension in 2010, both administrations continued to promote a strengthening of U.S.-Turkish relations on numerous levels, with the basis of the relationship built on ongoing back and forth dialogue. In September of that year, Assistant Secretary of State Phillip Gordon underscored the importance of such communication when he remarked, "There's not a government in Europe with which we have more ongoing and open dialogue than with the government of Turkey" (quoted in Migdalovitz 2010: 47). With this statement, Gordon made a concrete connection between the relationships the U.S. has with Turkey and with other

European countries, reiterating that communication is the foundational basis of such an alliance. The strong interest in broadened relations was further concretized with the mutual signing of the 2006 "Shared Vision and Structured Dialogue to Advance the Turkish American Partnership" document, giving weight to what had seemed only empty rhetoric when first proposed under President Bush. This document lays out specific means for dialogue in the areas of defense, economic cooperation, trade and investment, and civil engagement. It also calls for a "high level review" of the alliance by Undersecretaries on an annual basis and "regular contact" between the American Secretary of State and the Turkish Foreign Minister (Embassy of the United States 2006), directly following the guidelines of the suggestion made by Davutoğlu the year before. The ratification of this document created a structural basis for the intersubjective relationship of officials on multiple levels, setting the stage for even closer involvement and ongoing dialogue.

In January 2011, Assistant Secretary of State Jose Fernandez gave an address at a business summit in Istanbul, where he reiterated that "Turkey and the U.S. share a very unique and special relationship, which is truly a 'model partnership'" (Fernandez 2011). He went on to say, "This is not some vague and idealistic vision of unity and harmony. It is in fact a realistic assessment based on the substantive steps we have already taken" (Fernandez 2011). By addressing the issue of rhetoric versus substantive discourse, Fernandez is setting apart the contemporary U.S.-Turkish relationship from times past, backing up Obama's words by noting that concrete steps had been taken towards closer relations. By acknowledging that the alliance is unique in the same breath as supporting the idea of it as a model, Fernandez is indicating that the concept of "model partnership" is not understood in reference to the specific elements of each nation, but instead to the nature of their ongoing relationship, marked by its fluidity and strength even in the face of disagreement or difficulty. This supports Davutoğlu's suggestion that overlapping interests and history lay the foundation but only dialogue and a close interaction between actors on all levels can really build meaning behind the idea of a model. Moreover, such a concept of a model partnership falls in line with the idea of Obama as a communitarian pragmatist, granting recognition to the importance of both the close personal relationships between actors in each country as well as the structural ties, while also accepting disagreements or difficulties within the alliance.

The same month that Fernandez gave this address, mass uprisings were spreading across the Middle East, with overwhelming numbers of protestors in nations from Libya to Yemen to Egypt expressing their outrage against long-existing structural inequalities and dictatorial regimes. These protests, along with the subsequent toppling of the authoritarian leaders in Tunisia and Egypt and broader conflicts in Libya and later Syria, led to an unprecedented degree of possibility for Turkish involvement in the region while also highlighting the question of how the U.S.-Turkish alliance should be understood and promoted. Turkey was quick to give public recognition to the protest movements, and Erdoğan was the first foreign leader to openly call for Mubarak's ouster in Egypt (Ustun 2012: 4). Such a stance surprised some, as Turkey had worked hard to cultivate strong relationships with leaders such as Assad and Qaddafi over the past decade as part of the "zero problems" doctrine. The move was viewed as pragmatic, boosting the view of Turkey in the eyes of many across the Middle East, since regardless of motivation, Erdoğan was making a statement by siding with the people over the regimes. While U.S. officials also gave calculated support for regime change in Egypt and other countries, their hesitance was clearly guided by a fear of rocking the boat with allies such as Saudi Arabia, who control the continued flow of oil from the region. In the end, Obama's acknowledgement of the legitimacy of the protests and his support for the removal of dictators marked the beginning of the end of the "Camp David order," in which U.S. officials offered aid and support to authoritarian regimes across the Middle East in exchange for their active or tacit acceptance of Israeli policies as well as oil security (Ustun 2012: 3). This support did not extend to every nation, however, with Gulf countries such as Bahrain still struggling under enduring monarchies. The lack of universal support for democratic change highlights the limits within the realm of Obama's communitarian discourse, underscoring the fact that America's strategic drive to protect the flow of oil still dictates key relationships in the region, overriding any personal interest Obama may profess in changing the nature of all diplomatic relationships to promote the will of a given nation's people.

Following a UN Security Council resolution in March 2011 calling for protection of Libyan civilians, a French-led force began a military intervention in Benghazi with the aim of stopping the violence of Qaddafi's army (Zanotti 2011: 9). Turkey was at first reluctant to join the coalition, with Erdoğan pushing for a peaceful transfer of power following diplomatic talks with the Libyan leader. Once the intervention had begun,

however, Erdoğan relented and gave first diplomatic then military support, while expressing strong reservations concerning the planning and implementation of the attacks (Zanotti 2011: 9). The Turkish embassy in Tripoli remained open and became a base of operations for Western diplomats (Ustun 2012: 4), offering one aspect of a structural element of Turkish diplomatic power working outside a U.S.-dominated framework. The intervention proved tactically successful, as Qaddafi was overthrown in October 2011, though ensuing violence and instability gave credence to Turkish fears of an ill-planned initiative, highlighting the legitimacy of their worry about a further debacle along the lines of Iraq following the 2003 invasion. While the situation in Libya remained unstable, the uprising in Syria was broiling over into a bloody crackdown at the hands of Assad's army. After months of intensive diplomatic efforts attempting to convince Assad to stop the violence and heed the demands of his people, Erdoğan shifted tack and joined the call for the Syrian leader's removal. Turkey also quickly became the primary destination for an ever-increasing flow of refugees escaping Syria. The welcoming discourse surrounding the reception of these refugees underscores the multifaceted nature of changed relations between Turkey and its neighbors, indicating something deeper than simply high-level, realist ties.

In the midst of the ongoing turmoil across the Arab world, American and Turkish diplomatic and business leaders met for an annual TIFA meeting in July 2011, during which representatives from the two nations discussed ways to further integrate their trade and investment interests. Additionally, they planned the second meeting of the U.S.-Turkey Framework for Strategic Economic and Commercial Cooperation (FSECC), which was then held the following summer in Istanbul (Office of the U.S. Trade Representative 2011). While the TIFA agreement was first signed under President Clinton in 1999, the FSECC represents the first systematic Cabinet-level economic cooperation between the two nations, marking a distinct elevation within the structure of U.S.-Turkish relations beyond the strategic level. In a press release following the TIFA meeting, Assistant U.S. Trade Representative said, "We are working hard to fulfill President Obama's commitment to enhance our bilateral trade and investment ties and to seek out new ways to pursue with Turkey our mutual goals in the Middle East and North Africa" (Office of the U.S. Trade Representative 2011). This quote indicates that President Obama maintains a distinct interest in offering substance to his discourse in both the economic and cultural realms. Such actions represent prime elements of the discursive shift occurring under Obama, indicating that his words were not just rhetoric

but are also connected to clear actions, thereby creating a full shift in governing statement as the way Turkey is talked about, the regularity of contact between high level actors, and the breadth of the relationship all began to change since Obama came to power.

Although the strategic relationship between the U.S. and Turkey is no longer highlighted as the key element tying the two nations together, this aspect of the alliance gained a huge boost in September 2011, when Turkey agreed to host a NATO missile defense system believed to act as a counter in case of an Iranian missile attack on Europe. In response to the agreement, a senior White House official told the New York Times that it was, "probably the biggest strategic decision between the U.S. and Turkey in the past 15 or 20 years" (Zanotti 2012: 22). This quote highlights the fact that although the alliance was dubbed "strategic" throughout the Bush years, a lack of bilateral initiatives in fact left the relationship devoid of much strategic output. The Turkish decision to host the defense system went counter to the enhanced ties being built up with Tehran over the past few years, and was therefore seen as a decisively pragmatic move in the face of diverging Turkish and Iranian responses to the Arab Spring, in particular over how to address the increasing violence in Syria (Ustun 2012: 5). Yet, Turkish officials were also quite vocal regarding their demand against sharing defense intelligence with Israel, thereby displaying a lack of interest in returning to so-called "linkage politics," connecting the U.S., Israel, and Turkey. The American and NATO acceptance of Turkish demands marked a clear end to the era in which Washington considered good relations with Israel to be a prerequisite for working with Turkey on regional issues, thus heightening the truly bilateral nature of U.S.-Turkish relations.

Before a UN summit in New York that same month, Obama and Erdoğan gave a joint press conference, which Obama opened by saying, "Turkey is a NATO ally, a great friend and a partner on a whole host of issues … most recently symbolized by the agreement of Turkey to host a missile defense radar" (2011). Erdoğan then began his section of the brief address by noting, "As you have described the relationship between Turkey and the U.S., we have a model partnership. And this is a process which is ongoing" (Obama 2011). With these snippets of discourse it can be seen that while Obama is promoting the Turkish choice to host the missile defense system, Erdoğan is reiterating that what makes the alliance a "model partnership" is not just a singular

occasion, but in fact the continued construction of the relationship, thereby emphasizing the importance of individual actors' reactions to changes in material conditions, such as the NATO defense system, in reconstructing the ongoing relationship.

While Obama acknowledges Turkey's divergent interests and the potential motives behind them to a greater extent than any president before him, his administration is also more willing than prior American administrations to discuss issues of human rights abuses and authoritarian tendencies witnessed within the AKP government. For instance, during the press conference before Vice President Biden's November 2011 trip to Turkey, National Security Advisor Antony Blinken spoke about the issue of potential constitutional reform in Turkey to strengthen freedoms of expression and religion, then went on to express concern over the jailing of journalists. He then stated, "We have the kind of relationship with Turkey where we work very closely together on so many different issues across the globe, but where when we have disagreements we make them known in a spirit of respect" (Obama 2011a). This careful diplomatic language shows the interest held in maintaining close relations while also offering concern regarding internal issues within Turkey, something that was flagrantly not done under previous administrations.

Yet, while Obama has made positive mention of the fact that Turkey is becoming more democratic as the stronghold of military power is slowly dismantled, he has offered minimal comment on the related Ergenekon case or the ongoing attack on the secular elite-based, so-called "deep state" in Turkey. At a rally in Kızılcahamam in early 2012, Erdoğan addressed the crowd, saying, "Dear friends, to be one, to be together, to walk together toward the same future is the biggest strength of our people. For this reason, the first priority should be to eliminate those who do not want Turkey to grow, develop, and advance" (quoted in Filkins 2012). This sort of language alludes to the pervasive imprisonment of journalists, intellectuals, and others who speak against the AKP – more than 700 people over the past five years – as well as to the ongoing case against an alleged network of military and other secular elite set to topple Erdoğan's government (Filkins 2012). While Obama may show definitive interest in expanding the American-Turkish relationship beyond the strategic realm, he has done little to directly engage with Erdoğan concerning the above-mentioned issues. This omission in their dialogue indicates Obama's interest in maintaining a close personal relationship

without giving cause for anger or a potential perception of overstepped boundaries. Thus, while the underlying understanding driving Obama's discourse is starkly different from his predecessors, his pragmatic reasoning in relationship building still leads to tactical oversight in areas that are highly significant for the Turkish public and could prove quite important in terms of how the relationship will unfold in the future.

Nevertheless, even in the face of certain questionably democratic actions and sometimes erratic behavior on the part of Erdoğan and the AKP, the idea of Turkey as a model nation became a hot topic following the Arab Spring. How this concept is understood and promoted varies widely depending on the situation or the person endorsing it, but the way in which the Turkish model is understood by the Obama administration arguably reflects the underlying shift in broader understanding of the U.S.-Turkish alliance overall, as well as a more fundamental shift in policy discourse. Obama's understanding of Turkey's model status is built on the words uttered in his 2009 speech to Turkish parliament, namely that as allies they will work together closely even though it is clear that they will not always agree. Obama openly discussed the role of Islam in Turkey while also praising its democracy, meaning that it was not the strictly secular Kemalist and relatively tacit Turkey that he viewed as a model, but rather the pragmatic Turkey that has gained its current status under the AKP. It is clear from his ongoing personal relationship with Erdoğan that Obama values the Turkish leader himself, but a lack of specific praise regarding the AKP as a party also allows room for the possibility of a continued close relationship in the face of a power change within Turkey, thereby recognizing the fluidity of power relations and the need for adaptability depending on fluctuations in context.

Obama has made explicit mention of the fact that the domestic and foreign policy choices made by Turkish leadership will not always align with U.S. interests and has made it clear that he does not view such alignment as a prerequisite for close relations. In many ways, this type of alliance most closely mirrors those the U.S. maintains with prominent Western European nations such as France or Germany, indicating that it is this sort of pragmatic partnership that Obama also seeks from the emerging democracies across the Middle East, therefore signifying a strong break from the paradigm of past relationships. For instance, when Mohammed Morsi was elected President of Egypt in June 2012, Obama personally called to congratulate him, noting that he hoped for a close relationship in the future (Obama 2012). This move was in

stark opposition to Bush's dissolving discourse of democracy promotion in Egypt following the election of Muslim Brotherhood members in 2006, further underscoring the base-level discursive change seen under Obama.

Obama was reelected in November 2012 amidst continued horrific violence in Syria, long-term instability in Iraq, unresolved issues surrounding nuclear energy in Iran, and myriad other ongoing issues throughout the Middle East, Europe, and across the globe. Two days following his reelection, Obama personally telephoned 12 world leaders to thank them for their support. Erdoğan was among those called, preceding Prime Minister Cameron of the United Kingdom (Obama 2012a). This gesture once again indicates Obama's interest in maintaining close relations with Erdoğan and with the Turkish nation in general, particularly at a time when the relationship could be geostrategically helpful in terms of addressing the many ongoing issues in the region. Some have argued that such pragmatic reasoning is the sole factor behind American interest in the ongoing alliance with Turkey, yet when looking back over the decades this argument quickly falls flat. Obama has made repeatedly clear through both words and actions that his interest in expanding relations with Turkey are neither restricted by nor entirely reliant upon events within the broader region, thereby breaking starkly from the discourse of past American leaders. Moreover, Turkey also offered strong geostrategic advantages throughout the Bush era, but following 2003 Bush did little to strengthen the American relationship with the rising Turkish power, thereby underscoring the importance of the discourse of individual actors in shaping relationships. Yet, the enhanced and expanded relationship with Turkey does not represent a singular shift in discourse, but is in fact situated within a broader change away from strict realist paradigms towards more communitarian alliances. While Obama still faces the myriad pressures affecting any American president, through both verbal and structural acts he has consistently displayed a desire to forge a new era in global politics, shifting the overall understanding of the American role in the world and therewith prompting robust changes within individual alliances.

4. Conclusion

Since its inception as an academic discipline in the 20th century, international relations has focused on the analysis of interactions and power relationships between states. For decades, the bulk of this research was guided by realist theory, which also heavily influenced the decisions of political actors during the Cold War and beyond. While

realism undeniably still plays an influential role in shaping relations amongst actors, structures, and states, the discipline of international relations has evolved to recognize that it is no longer the only game in town. Moreover, even if realist principles shape the decisions being made in certain circles, this fact does not necessitate a realist analysis of those decisions and their effects. The use of constructivism allows for an examination of the discourse surrounding decisions and actions, breaking down the motivations and cyclical effects between structures and actors. By engaging in a constructivist analysis throughout this thesis, the American understanding of foreign policy broadly and its relationship with Turkey specifically were outlined and analyzed, building a framework to highlight the shift in governing discourse witnessed under President Obama. Through the use of this specific frame of analysis, it was shown that not only was there a marked change in political actions and structures between Obama and Bush, but also between Obama and prior presidents, as his communitarian discourse varies sharply from anything that came before. While not all of Obama's policies necessarily reflect this shift, the careful analysis of discourse in this thesis revealed both wider foreign policy changes as well as a fundamental change to the U.S.-Turkish alliance, thereby upholding the hypotheses laid out in the introduction.

Throughout the Cold War, Turkey's relationship to the U.S. was built around its position as a buffer zone between the USSR and Europe. During the 1990s, Clinton expanded the American relationship with Turkey as part of his broader interest in the changing role of formerly third world nations, while Özal also aggressively sought positive relations through economic reform. During the eight years of the George W. Bush administration, however, despite a heightened geostrategic importance of Turkey as Bush initiated wars in two Middle Eastern countries and engaged in the so-called War on Terror, the Turkish-American alliance stagnated. Although many cite the 2003 Turkish parliamentary decision against the U.S. usage of Turkish soil for a northern assault into Iraq as the impetus for a weakened American-Turkish relationship in the first decade of the new millennium, the analysis of high-level discourse undertaken in this thesis makes clear that, in fact, culpability laid more succinctly with political actors on the American side. Though political and societal dynamics within Turkey were indeed in flux, the moralistic, black and white worldview promoted by President Bush impeded a full evaluation of these changes and an concomitant adjustment of relations, instead reverting back to a type of partnership more closely mirroring that

maintained under President Reagan or other previous leaders, when Turkey was seen as a strategic ally solely called upon for fulfilling American regional interests.

Therefore, while geostrategic reasoning unquestionably acts as a motivating factor pushing Obama to seek a positive relationship with Turkey, without his personal philosophical framework guiding both interpersonal and structural choices, it cannot be taken for granted that the alliance would have been strengthened. For this reason, when analysts worry about the U.S. "losing Turkey", they ought to first remember that no relationship is ever inevitable or static, and secondly dig a bit deeper to include the plethora of aspects contained within a given alliance, realizing, as Obama did, that embracing a nation while also recognizing its right to act independently might be the best road to strengthened, ongoing ties. Drawing on this analysis, the idea of Turkey as a model nation for emerging democracies across the region is based not on the specific components of the contemporary or historical Turkish nation, but rather on the current level of pragmatic, dialogue-based policy on display in Ankara. Further, while Obama has openly disagreed with certain choices and actions taken under the AKP, he continues to promote the notion of model partnership between the U.S. and Turkey, thereby giving strength to his underlying philosophy of communitarianism and pragmatic alliances that are no longer solely contingent upon the dominant partner's interests. The promotion of this partnership further works to endorse such alliances across the region, which, if realized, would mean a sea change in the overall U.S. relationship with the Middle East.

Yet, while no relationship is ever static, some contexts and conditions are more conducive to rapidly changing alliances than others. Such conditions are in place right now across the post-Arab Spring Middle East, with ongoing conflict in Syria and new leaders such as Egypt's Morsi flexing power in unprecedented and unexpected ways. With Syria and Iran no longer backing Hamas in Palestine, Turkey has taken a position alongside Egypt and Qatar as a main ally to the group, which is still viewed as a terrorist organization by the U.S. government. Additionally, Turkey's once important role as a mediator with Israel has disintegrated, as was evidenced by their lack of sway during the recent November 2012 conflict in Gaza. Within this context, Turkey's role in the region will continue changing at a rapid pace, as will that of the U.S. Moreover, questions of human rights abuses and the role of the Kurdish minority are as pressing as ever in Turkey today, and will inevitably have an effect on both domestic and

foreign policy. Therefore, it is clear that the internal workings of both the U.S. and Turkey as well as their stances across the Middle East and the globe will in turn affect the way that the two nations interact with each other, as ongoing discourse continues to build and rebuild the active alliance.

As such, while this thesis highlighted the discursive change witnessed under Obama, it does not intend to argue that such a change will lead to a fixed and stagnant relationship. In fact, the analysis undertaken in this thesis underscored the fluid nature of American foreign policy perspectives and the understanding of its relationship toward Turkey, thereby indicating that these stances will continue to grow and change. The highly divergent discourse analyzed in this thesis emphasizes the importance of examining not only historical or contemporary ties but also the broader discourse of leaders when attempting to situate a given alliance. For instance, if Mitt Romney had been elected president instead of Obama in November 2012, a change in discourse would have certainly followed, as Romney's understanding of America's role in the world differs greatly from Obama's, thereby impacting his discursive choices. Yet, even in the face of changes in actors and structures as time moves forward, fundamental shifts in relationships are not erased, and past factors continue to influence current relations. For this reason, examining the important changes that occurred under Obama while mapping them onto the trajectory of American discourse over the past decades allowed for the creation of a robust framework, making clear the hypothesized importance of high-level foreign policy discourse in guiding U.S.-Turkish relations.

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