TURKEY'S OSTPOLITIK (2002-2011)

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Abstract

On May 1, 2009 Prof. Dr. Ahmet Davutoğlu, who has been the ideologue of Turkish foreign policy since the Justice and Development Party (JDP) first swept to power in 2002, became Turkey's new foreign minister. According to Davutoğlu, in a dynamic international system, societies in a dynamic change face various options. Among them, Turkey has to try to convert its dynamic potential into a power parameter with in international dynamism and must act as a "smart power". Therefore, it must use its historical and geographical roots as psychological and instrumental strengths to mainstream its dynamism into international dynamism and play a determinant role in the re-establishment of balance within the international system. To this end, Turkey's "strategic depth" and new mindset shall use its historical and geographical roots as instruments of its foreign policy with the aim of becoming an effective regional and global actor. Within this framework; the balance between security and democracy, zero-problem with neighbours, pro-active and pre-emptive peace diplomacy, multi-dimensional foreign policy and rhythmic diplomacy have been defined as the constitutive elements of Davutoğlu's strategic vision. Theoretically inspired from constructivist approach and practically finding the international dynamics appropriate, Davutoğlu's Turkish foreign policy vision is following the German path, namely German Ostpolitik. During the Cold War, starting with the Willy Brandt administration, West Germany felt itself responsible from post-World War II European structure and political and economic problems in Eastern Europe. Therefore, West Germany, during the Cold War, and Germany, following the end of the Cold War, pursued a policy of responsibility for solving political and economic problems in Eastern Europe that would in turn contribute to German economic development and security. In addition, Germany would play an effective role in regional and international politics. Within this framework, there is a basic analogy between German Ostpolitik and Turkey's Ostpolitik between 2002-2011. This article deals with the new vision of Turkish foreign policy and Turkey's Ostpolitik within a conceptual and historical framework and tries to explain Davutoğlu's "strategic depth" in relation with political, economic and socio-cultural parameters.

Keywords: Strategic depth; *Ostpolitik*; Historical and Geographical roots; Constructivist approach

TÜRKİYE'NİN *DOĞU POLİTİKASI* (2002-2011)

Öz

Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (AK Parti)'nin ilk kez iktidara geldiği 2002'den beri Türk Dış Politikası'nın ideologu olan Prof. Dr. Ahmet Davutoğlu, 1 Mayıs 2009 itibarı ile Türkiye'nin yeni dışişleri bakanı oldu. Davutoğlu'na göre dinamik bir uluslararası sistemde dinamik değişim içinde olan toplumlar çeşitli alternatiflerle karşı karşıya kalır. Bu alternatifler arasından Türkiye, dinamik potansiyelini uluslararası dinamizm

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içindeki bir güç parametresine dönüştürmelidir ve bir "akıllı güç" gibi hareket etmelidir. Dolayısıyla Türkiye, tarihi ve coğrafi köklerini kendi dinamizmini uluslararası dinamizme kanalize etmekte ve uluslararası sistemdeki güç dengelerinin yeniden şekillendiği süreçte belirleyici rol oynamakta birer psikolojik ve araçsal güç olarak kullanmalıdır. Bu hedef doğrultusunda Türkiye'nin "stratejik derinliği" ve yeni zihniyeti, tarihi ve coğrafi köklerini bölgesel ve küresel bir aktör olma amacı odağında dış politikasının araçları olarak kullanmalıdır. Bu çerçevede; güvenlik ile demokrasi arasında bir denge sağlanması, komşularla sıfır sorun, pro-aktif ve önleyici barış diplomasisi, çok boyutlu dış politika ve ritmik diplomasi Davutoğlu'nun stratejik vizyonunun kurucu unsurları olarak tanımlanmaktadır. Teorik olarak inşacı yaklaşımdan esinlenen ve pratik olarak uluslararası dinamikleri uygun bulan Davutoğlu'nun Türk dış politikası vizyonu adı Alman Doğu Politikası olan Alman örneğini takip etmektedir. Soğuk Savaş döneminde, Willy Brandt yönetiminden başlayarak, Batı Almanya İkinci Dünya Savaşı sonrasında ortaya çıkan Avrupa yapısından ve Doğu Avrupa'daki siyasi ve iktisadi sorunlardan sorumlu hissetti. Dolayısıyla Soğuk Savaş döneminde Batı Almanya ve Soğuk Savaş'ın sona ermesinden sonra Almanya, sonuçları itibarı ile Almanya'nın iktisadi gelişmesine ve güvenliğine katkıda bulunacak şekilde, Doğu Avrupa'daki siyasi ve iktisadi meseleleri çözmeye yönelik bir sorumluluk politikası takip etti. Bu politika, aynı zamanda, Almanya'nın bölgesel ve uluslararası politikada etkili bir rol oynamasını da sağlayacaktı. Bu çerçevede, Alman Doğu Politikası ile ile Türkiye'nin 2002-2011 arasında takip ettiği Doğu Politikası arasında temel bir benzerlik bulunmaktadır. Bu makale Türk dış politikasının yeni vizyonu ve Türkiye'nin Doğu Politikası ile kavramsal ve tarihi bir çerçevede ilgilenmektedir ve Davutoğlu'nun "stratejik derinlik" anlayışını siyasi, iktisadi ve sosyo-kültürel parametrelerle ilintilendirerek açıklamaya çalışmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Stratejik derinlik; Doğu Politikası; Tarihi ve Coğrafi kökler; İnşacı yaklaşım

Introduction

On may 1, 2009 Prof. Dr. Ahmet Davutoğlu, who has been widely regarded to be the ideologue of Turkish Foreign Policy since the Justice and Development Party (JDP) first swept to power in 2002, became Turkey's new foreign minister. Taking the office from his predecessor Ali Babacan on may 2, 2009 Davutoğlu said Turkey now had a stronger foreign policy vision towards the Middle East, Balkans and the Caucasus region. "It has to take on the role of an order-instituting country in all these regions," Davutoğlu said and continued, "Turkey is no longer a country which only reacts to crises, but notices the crises before their emergence and intervenes in the crises effectively and gives shape to the order of its surrounding region."[1] Thus according to Davutoğlu, the new dynamics of international politics force

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[1] http://arama.hurriyet.com.tr/arsivnews.aspx?id=11564384, Accessed on: May 4, 2014

Turkey to act in accordance with the prerequisites of a "smart power". Turkey should become a country catching up with (and even managing) the change in world politics, pursuing flexible policies using correct strategies depending on the situation, and addressing multilateralism[2]. In addition, in line with a stronger vision towards regions surrounding Turkey, relations with the West would remain Turkey's main focus and "European Union and NATO are the most important pillars of the policy of setting a balance between security and freedom,"[3] he said. Turkey's relations with the West would continue to be its main foreign policy focus, but not the only one. Turkey's improving relations with its neighbors, stronger vision towards the regions surrounding it and a more active role in regional and global affairs is both a requisite and outcome of this comprehensive and multidimensional approach. Thus, in addition to Turkey's *Westpolitik*, improving relations with the East and *Ostpolitik* has become vital to shape and understand Turkish foreign policy in the 21st century. Within this framework, Davutoğlu's foreign policy course is following the German path and doing the same with what West Germany did during the Cold War and what Germany has been doing since the end of the Cold War.

The foreign policy vision set forth by Davutoğlu resembles West German foreign policy course, especially during Willy Brandt term, and German foreign policy during the post-Cold War era. First of all this is a policy of responsibility and serves for multi-dimensional goals: Germans have felt themselves responsible for the post World War II structure in European continent since East Europe fell under Soviet domination and this domination was defined as the basic reason behind under-development of East European countries. Besides economic side of the issue, political problems and deficit in democratic values (human rights, political representation, freedom of speech and media) and even ethnic and religious conflicts were accepted as outcomes of World War II. Thus, Germany had the responsibility to recover political and economic structures in these regions and contribute to stability, peace and solution of problems. This would create a stable and wealthy region around Germany and in turn would on the one hand contribute to Germany's security and economic interactions. On the other hand, this vision would strengthen Germany's image as a liberal-democratic country and strengthen Germany's position in European politics, and international politics in a wider context. To this end, there is a simple and strong analogy between German *Ostpolitik* since 1960s and Turkish *Ostpolitik* between 2002-2011. Turkey, also, feels a

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[2] Joseph Nye, "Get Smart: Combining Hard and Soft Power", *Foreign Affairs*, 12 April 2012. Available on:http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/65163/joseph-s-nye-jr/get-smart?page=1
[3] http://arama.hurriyet.com.tr/arsivnews.aspx?id=11564384, Accessed on: May 4, 2014

historical responsibility on itself regarding the political, economic and socio-cultural problems in thesurrounding regions. It is a fact that the projections of colonial Western powers have played crucial role in the emergence of these problems and Turkey's integration to Western structures (especially to NATO) brought a standstill on Turkey's historical linkages with these regions. Thus, through a policy of responsibility Turkey has aimed to contribute to the solution of political, economic and socio-cultural problems in these regions and has aimed to contribute to its own security and economic development. Additionally, through playing an efficient role in solution of these problems, Turkey has aimed to become an effective player in regional and international politics.

A discoursive analysis of Turkish foreign policy is likely to set forth the fact that, especially, since Davutoğlu held the foreign minister post, constructivist elements have been playing more prominent role in Turkish foreign policy thinking. Identity, culture, common history, values and responsibilities have become the terms that occupy a greater place in Turkish foreign policy terminology. Davutoğlu's foreign policy vision was (especially during 2006 and 2007 – when he did serve as advisor to the PM) trying to create a new environment in its region and increasing its dialouge with the surrounding countries and regions around it, as well as with the other parts of the world from Africa to South America. According to Turkish foreign policy-makers, this is both a historical responsibility for Turkey and also the prerequisite to make Turkey a regional and global power. Thus, through using the main concepts (identity and culture) of constructivist approach as important constituents of foreign policy discourse and through improving relations with all parts of the world, namely through *Ostpolitik*, Turkish foreign policy has been trying to become more comprehensive with Davuoğlu's strategic vision. On the one hand, Turkey aims to sustain its strong ties with the West and remain within the institutional network of the Western organizations, on the other hand quests for improving its relations with other parts of the world for a more comprehensive and multi-dimensional foreign policy course. In doing so, Davutoğlu defines this both a historical responsibility and as a prerequisite for Turkey to become a regional and global power. Theoretically and practically reconciling Western and Eatern dimensions might seem difficult (and even impossible for some), West German foreign policy during the Cold War, and German policy since the end of the Cold War, sets forth that Germany's Westpolitik has been reconciled with its Ostpolitik that has enabled a comprehensive foreign policy course, and therefore, this is a feasible vision.

Turkey's quest for a more comprehensive foreign policy posture that sustains its relations with the West, but since then would not be solely

dependent on Turkey's western commitments, brought critics on Turkish foreign policy. The new vision on foreign policy triggered the "shift of axis" discussions[4] and some argued that Turkey shifted its western-oriented political posture. However, improving relations with the East was regarded as a prerequisite for comprehensive foreign policy. The new vision was not a rupture from the western dimension, on the contrary, it is the route for a multi-dimensional foreign policy. The term Ostpolitik is a carefully selected concept in this regard. During the Cold War West Germany and following the Cold War re-unified Germany did and has been doing the same with what Turkey tries to do now. Identity (civilian power), culture (culture of restraint), foreign policy instruments (multilateral orientation), historical responsibilities and providing German security and wealth through peace, stability and wealth in the whole region have been the strategic elements of German foreign policy. On the one hand Germany has been loyal to its commitments of Western alliance. On the other hand Germany, both in the name of its historical responsibilities and making Germany a global player, German policy makers have been keen on sustaing Ostpolitik. Therefore, a historical test-case is out there to understand and explain Turkish foreign policy and there is no need to reinvent America.

Moving forward from all these points, this article will deal with Davutoğlu's vision of Turkish foreign policy that is based on the concept of "strategic depth"[5]. "Strategic depth" refers to vision to use Turkey's historical and cultural roots, economic and geopolitical opportunities as its strengths to play a more influential role in regional and global politics. Therefore, with Davutoğlu, Turkey's foreign policy perspective has been constructed upon the quest for becoming a regional power and a global player. Improving relations with the East through *Ostpolitik* – "change through rapprochement" has become a crucial part of the new vision. In order to understand and explain the new vision and its components, Turkish foreign policy will be approached within a regional and global context. The structural factors and developments in the international system, shaping Turkish foreign policy, will be reflected for a more comprehensive analysis. In order to do so, background information is

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[4] Mustafa Şahin, "Islam, Ottoman Legacy and Politics in Turkey: An Axis Shift?", January 2011. Available on: http://www.thewashingtonreview.org/articles/islam-ottoman-legacy-and-politics-in-turkey-an-axis-shift.html, Accessed on: March 28, 2015; İhsan Bal, "Axis Shift or Boom of Self Confidence", 6 July 2010. Available on: http://www.turkishweekly.net/columnist/3362/axis-shift-or-boom-of-self-confidence.html, Accessed on: March 28, 2015 Mensur Akgün, "Turkey: What Axis Shift?", 9 July 2010. Available on:
http://gpotcenter.org/media/530, Accessed on: March 28, 2015
[5] Ahmet Davutoğlu, Stratejik Derinlik, İstanbul: Küre Yayınları, 2001

necessary to understand the evolution of Turkish foreign policy, which will be provided in the following part of the article. The final part of the article will make an analysis of Germany's Ostpolitik and within this perspective will try to understand and explain the Turkish foreign policy *rationale* under Davutoğlu's foreign ministry. The study will end with concluding remarks.

The Path from *Stunde Null*

Turkish Republic was proclaimed on October, 29 1923 – *stunde null*[6], with a political, economic, socio-cultural heritage of the Ottoman Empire. Primary concerns of new Turkey were: to keep territorial indivisibility and territorial unity; to become a recognized, equal and respected member of the international community; a strong commitment to international institutions; upholding the motto of "peace at home, peace in the world" in inter-state relations; to construct new Republic on the foundations of liberal-democratic values and principles of the western community; and accordingly, to define new political system of the state as a democratic, secular and social one based on the rule of law. The young Republic possessed a different political system, with reinterpreted identity, culture, norms and values (values used as the cement of the nation state to be constructed). However, the people comprising new state had Ottoman background, they were the residents of the Ottoman Empire and the citizens of the new Republic and the co-founders of the ne Republic were the bureaucratic elite of the Empire. This background brought a heterogeneous Turkish society in terms of religions, ethnic backgrounds, cultures and languages. The Ottoman legacy had both positive and negative repercussions on the new Republic: On the one hand, the construction of a nation state from a heterogeneous society became a long and painful process. On the other hand, the Ottoman legacy gave the new Republic the chance of outreach to various regions of the world upon the foundations of a common history and a common culture.

Following the World War II, Turkey found itself on the edge of a world structural divide between a liberal-democratic West and a communist East. Turkey made its strategic choice in favor of the western block. Turkey became a member of NATO in 1952 and signed Ankara Agreement with the EEC. The main facets of west-oriented Turkish strategic choice were shaped by a strong commitment to multilateralism, the consolidation of its liberal-democratic political system and westernization of its foreign and security policy ends and means. Turkey's incorporation into the institutions of the western block was a

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[6] It is a concept used for the Germans to define the situation that came out with the division of the country following WWII. It was used to mean a new beginning of history for the Germans with the division.

win-win mechanism for each side: Turkey could protect itself from communist aggression, consolidated liberal-democratic values in its political system and accelerated its economic development (especially with the Truman Doctrine and Marshall Plan). The strategic location of Turkey and Turkey's demographic and military capabilities contributed to the security of Turkey's Western allies, and thus, Turkey was perceived and defined as a security-producer country within the Western community.

The monolithic structure of the Cold War period forced states to pursue a rigid block policy and limited the room for maneuver to improve relations with other block members and the rest of the world. This over-commitment was no exception for Turkey. On the one hand, Turkey was a republic with an Ottoman heritage and had historical and cultural ties with the former territories of the Ottoman Empire. However, the strong commitment of Turkey to the western alliance hindered the impact of these ties. On the other hand, Turkey's neighbours on its eastern and southern borders remained out of the NATO alliance and due to Turkey's insistence on pursuing block policy; Turkey's relations with its neighbours and further regions could not be improved during Cold War. Turkey's early attempts to establish security organizations within the Middle East, linked to NATO and aiming to protect its Western allies' security interests in the region, such as Baghdad Pact failed due to the colonial legacy of the Western powers and increasing Arab nationalism (especially following the establishment of an Israeli state on Palestinian territories). Additionally, Turkey was economically not powerful enough to offer economic benefits to the countries of region and failed to improve relations with its neighbours. On the other hand, West Germany economically developed and started to become a wealth center that East European countries could not risk to deny the economic benefits West Germany offered. Thus, both countries as parts of the NATO alliance faced similar geo-strategic landscape and historical responsibilities to improve their ties with the countries of regions surrounding them. Whereas Turkey's over-commitment to the Western alliance and economic incapabilities hindered such a rapprochement, West Germany increased its room for maneuver (from the monolithic block policy) and facilitated economic dynamics to improve its relations with the countries of the Eastern Europe.

The End of the Cold War

Collapse of the USSR and the end of Cold War was sudden and unexpected, and had enormous impacts on the international system, global and regional politics, and foreign and security policies of states. Turkey was no exception. Just like the rest of international community, Turkey was also unprepared for new forms of threats and challenges. Amidst the historic

systemic changes, Turkey, once a distant outpost of NATO on the European periphery, moved to the centre of the problematic post-Cold War world politics. With the end of the Cold War, Turkey was now surrounded by 13 of the 16 potential conflict matters, determined by EU Commission, in the Balkans, Caucasus and Middle East to affect Turkey's and European security[7]. Yet, from a staunchly pro-western isolationist existence in its immediate neighbourhood, Turkey suddenly moved into a posture that had an effect across a vast region extending 'from eastern Europe to western China'[8]. Turkey, once a flank country of the NATO and security-producing state, became a country neighbouring regions in strategic vacuum.

During the post-Cold War, there was no Soviet threat anymore and West European countries were strong enough to solve the problems of Europe. Therefore, US's new concentration was on Asia and the Middle East. On the other hand, Western Europe was concentrated on determining future of Europe that would be constructed upon liberal democratic values. Since then Turkish-West European relations became a two-pillar structure: The relations, settled upon the Ankara Agreement of 1963, now included not only economic but also political dynamics as well. Turkey's receptivity towards European pressures enabled Europeans to pressure Turkey on certain aspects of its internal politics, especially about human rights and democratization. Since, the reform packages announced by the Turkish administistions, is simply a continuation of decade-long agenda to democratize Turkey[9]. It seems likely that this process has enabled Turkish foreign policy become dependent both on domestic political developments and on European reactions to them. The latter, in turn, has become an important input in determining domestic political developments and implications of these developments on foreign policy issues[10].

The relations with EU have been, paradoxically, an illusion and at the same time a disillusion for Turkey. Turkey's aim to become a member has fostered democratic reforms in the country, however, EU's reluctance to provide a strategic vision for Turkey's membership hinders the further

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[7] Haydar Çakmak, "Avrupa Güvenliği, NATO ve Türkiye", *Beykent Üniversitesi Stratejik Araştırmalar Dergisi*, Vol.1 No.3, 2009, p.4.

[8] Mustafa Aydın, "Turkish Foreign Policy at the End of the Cold War: Roots and Dynamics", *The Turkish Yearbook of International Relations*, Vol.36, 2005, p.2.

[9] Mahir Zeylanov, Will Erdogan's reform package boost democracy?, http://english.alarabiya.net/en/views/news/world/2013/09/29/Will-Erdogan-s-reform-package-boost-democracy-.html, Accessed on: October 2, 2013.

[10] Mustafa Aydın, "Turkish Foreign Policy at the End of the Cold War: Roots and Dynamics", *The Turkish Yearbook of International Relations*, Vol.36, 2005, p.13.

development of relations. There is a huge gap between the means and the ends in this regard. During the 1990s Turkey faced mostly with criticism from the EU side and was unlikely to find the support on its basic foreign and security matters. The PKK terrorism, relations with Iraq and Syria, Iran's "export of revolution" policy, relations with Armenia, Cyprus issue, Aegean problems with Greece and the negative impacts of the Customs Union with EU on Turkish economy (the increasing gap between import/export, foreign trade rates, and its implications on budget deficits) were the issues, Turkey was expecting cooperation from its Cold War allies. However, Turkey was left alone to face the post-Cold War geostrategic realities. Besides this, because of its neighbours as sources of instability and uncertainty (Iran, Iraq and Syria) Turkey was now a country that could carry the instabilities of the Middle East and Caucasus to Europe. Thus, in terms of new international and regional geopolitics, Turkish foreign policy was to be resettled.

With the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the world was not anymore divided between the two blocks and therefore it became meaningless to expect Turkish foreign policy to be formulated acoording to Cold War realities. Within this framework, changes (emanating from the end of the Cold War) in environmental circumstances brought about foreign policy reappraisals for Turkey. Therefore, Turkey had to adapt to changing conditions in its environment. The new environment contained risks and opportunities: On the one hand, new zones of conflicts appeared on three sides of Turkey. Turkey suddenly found itself in a situation where it was threatened by the lingering uncertainties in these zones. Turkey's western security connection that hitherto provided a relative safety and stability in the region was fundamentally damaged by the end of the Cold War, since it had been designed upon a Soviet threat and was not ready to tacle wit post-Cold War asymmetric threats. On the other hand, the emergence of six independent Muslim states in Central Asia and Caucasus (with nearly 100 million Muslim-Turkic speakers) and Turkey's common cultural, linguistic, and religious bonds with the new Republics, was considered as an opportunity for Turkey to enlarge its room for maneuver[11].

In Europe, liberal-democratic framework, enhanced by the apotheosis of the human rights, brought a positive correlation between democracy/wealth/security. Thus, democratization became a prerequisite for international security. To this end, whereas the democratic scope enlarged, geopolitical scope tightened in Europe. The situation for Turkey was the contrary: whereas geopolitical scope enlarged, the democratic scope tightened

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[11] Mustafa Aydın, "Turkish Foreign Policy at the End of the Cold War: Roots and Dynamics", *The Turkish Yearbook of International Relations*, Vol.36, 2005, pp. 29-30.

in Turkey. This damaged the common geostrategic culture between Turkey and its Western allies[12]. The Soviet threat was no more there and Europe was on the way to become a heaven of welfare and security. However, new conflicts and post-Cold War geopolitical realities were out there for Turkey. The Gulf War, bloody dissolution of the Yugoslav Federation and the crises in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo, and conflicts in Caucasia (Nagorno Karabakh, Chechnya, Abkhazia and South Ossetia) were the regional threats that Turkey could be involved in[13]. Turkish-Greek disputes (especially on Cyprus) and PKK terrorism were/are vital security threats for Turkey. Since Greece was (and still is) an EU member and taking part in EU decision-making mechanisms, EU was/is not able to take an objective position and play a constructive role in Turkish-Greek disputes. Regarding the PKK problem, EU has been approaching the issue from the perspective of democratization and human rights; however, neglecting the fact that terrorism itself is the biggest obstacle before democratization, human rights and security. The deficits of Turkish democracy have been used in a way to legitimize terrorism by the EU. From Turkish perspective, EU's this stance has been approached as aiming division of the country[14]. As much as the regional threats and geopolitical problems facing Turkey increased and as far as the gap between Turkey and its Western allies' scope enlarged, Turkey had to pursue an offensive realpolitik and increase room for maneuver for its foreign policy.

Davutoğlu and Turkey's *Ostpolitik*

Rebus sic stantibus - Conditions have changed. There are new issues taking place in agenda and new actors playing prominent roles in international politics since the dissolution of the USSR. The complex web of relations between these actors, combined with mutual interdependencies, force the ruling elites of the countries to adapt the change and formulate dynamic policies. Therefore, the new dynamics of international politics force the policy-makers to act in accordance with the prerequisites of a "smart power"; state using correct strategies depending on the situation, catching up with (and even

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[12] Ali Karaosmanoğlu, "Türkiye Açısından Avrupa Güvenlik Kimliği: Jeopolitik ve Demokratik Ufuk" in Ş.H. Çalış, İ.D. Dağı and R. Gözen (eds.), Türkiye'nin Dış Politika Gündemi: Kimlik, Demokrasi, Güvenlik, Liberte Yayınları, 2001, pp.66-67.
[13] Mustafa Aydın, "Turkish Foreign Policy at the End of the Cold War: Roots and Dynamics", *The Turkish Yearbook of International Relations*, Vol.36, 2005, pp. 30-31.
[14] Ali Karaosmanoğlu, "Türkiye Açısından Avrupa Güvenlik Kimliği: Jeopolitik ve Demokratik Ufuk" in Ş.H. Çalış, İ.D. Dağı and R. Gözen (eds.), *Türkiye'nin Dış Politika Gündemi: Kimlik, Demokrasi, Güvenlik,* Liberte Yayınları, 2001, p.67.

managing) the change in world politics, pursuing flexible policies and addressing multilateralism[15].

Following the end of the Cold War, strategic realities of the post-Cold War era and the disappearence of the common geostrategic culture between its western allies opened the gap between the new dynamics of international politics and Turkey's policies to catch up with the change. Therefore, the 1990s was a decade within which Turkey perceived the regional and international politics through realpolitik. The political, economic and security problems and inability to formulate policies to solve these problems triggered change in Turkish politics. The JDP was elected by the Turkish people to find solutions to political, economic and social problems and to provide political and economic stability and realize democratization. The way for Turkey and the ruling JDP was to provide democratization and improve relations with its neighbours, and acting in accordance with the new dynamics of international system.

Moving forward from the need to solve political and economic problems (and realize democratization) within country and to act according to the new dynamics of international affairs, Davutoğlu formulated a two-pillar strategy. Taking into account Turkey's geopolitical and historical/cultural opportunities, Davutoğlu's vision is intellectually inspired from constructivist approach (through a careful analysis of his discourse) and his foreign policy course is consistent with the prerequisites of Nye's "smart power"[16]. The new vision is a comprehensive one: On the one hand, the consolidation of political and economic stability within the country through democratization, respect for human rights and welfare system is one pillar. On the other hand, redefinition of Turkey's role in the neighbouring regions and in the international system through the new mindset – that is removal of territorial and intellectual limits to Turkish involvement in regional and international politics - is the other pillar. According to Davutoğlu, in a dynamic international system, societies in a dynamic change face three options: The first one is to determine a static stance that limits itself and to wait the re-establishment of balance in the structure. The second one is regardless of evaluating the roots of its dynamism, to be carried away by popular fad of international dynamism. The third one is to try to convert its dynamic potential into a power parameter within international

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[15] Joseph Nye, "Get Smart: Combining Hard and Soft Power", *Foreign Affairs*, 12 April 2012. Available on:http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/65163/joseph-s-nye-jr/get-smart?page=1, Accessed on: May 4, 2014

[16] Joseph Nye, "Get Smart: Combining Hard and Soft Power", *Foreign Affairs*, 12 April 2012. Available on:http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/65163/joseph-s-nye-jr/get-smart?page=1, Accessed on: May 4, 2014

dynamism. The proponents of the third option use their historical and geographical roots as psychological and instrumental strengths to mainstream their dynamism into international dynamism and play a determinant role in the re-establishment of balance within the international system[17]. Within this framework, Turkey has chosen the third option as the road map of its "strategic depth". The balance between security and democracy, zero-problem with neighbours, pro-active and pre-emptive peace diplomacy, multi-dimensional foreign policy and rhythmic diplomacy have been defined as the constitutive elements of Davutoğlu's strategic vision. To this end, Turkey's new mindset uses its historical and geographical roots as instruments of its foreign policy with the aim of becoming a regional and global actor.

According to Davutoğlu; "If a map of the complex web of global relations during the Cold War had been drawn, Turkey would have been considered a frontier country. As part of the Western block, it was a means of control in the South among the Western powers extending to the East and at the edge of the West". However, the situation has changed since the end of the Cold War. Davutoğlu says;

In terms of geography, Turkey occupies a unique space. As a large country in the midst of Afro-Euroasia's vast landmass, it may be defined as a central country with multiple regional identities that cannot be reduced to one unified character. Like Russia, Germany, Iran, and Egypt, Turkey cannot be explained geographically or culturally by aasociating it with one single region. Turkey's diverse regional composition lends it the capability of maneuvering in several regions simultaneously; in this sense, it controls an area of influence in its immediate environs[18].

One of example countries, referred by Davutoğlu, is Germany. Following the surrender of the country, Germany was occupied by four war-time allies and then divided into two. West Germany was established in 1949 and its new political posture rested on integration with the West. As far as the rigidity between the blocks continued, West Germany's foreign and security policy had no alternative other than complying with the decisions given in Washington and Paris. Even, West Germany was called a "quasi-sovereign" state. Historical and geographical causes were the burdens constraining German room for maneuver. After the Cuban missile crisis of 1962, the tension started to decrease and a détente period started. The report titled as "Report of the Council on the Future Tasks of the Alliance" (Harmel Report)[19] was

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[17] Ahmet Davutoğlu, *Stratejik Derinlik*, İstanbul: Küre Yayınları, 2001, pp.10-11.
[18] Ahmet Davutoğlu, "Turkey's New Foreign Policy Vision", *Insight Turkey*, Vol.10, No.1, 2008, p.78.
[19] The Harmel Report, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_67927.htm, Accessed on: March

approved by the NATO Council of Ministers in December 1967, and opened a new phase in East-West relations. The report was called as "the Bible of East-West" relations by the West German policy-makers[20] and paved the way for establishment of good diplomatic relations with the members of the Warsaw Pact. Now the conditions changed and the international climate created conditions for West Germany to pursue a multi-dimensional policy. Historical and geographical causes turned out to create opportunities for West Germany to provide a rapprochement with the East, and therefore to gain German sovereignty back. Rapprochement in relations with the East would make West German foreign policy comprehensive and enable the country to become a regional and global actor, playing prominent role within the international system. Willy Brandt, who became the Prime Minister of West Germany in 1969, echoed "small steps are better than none" and "small steps are better than vain words" and took the steps towards his *Ostpolitik* that enabled Germany a regional and global power after reunification. Up until reunification in October 3, 1990, West Germans "linked the issue of peace between East and West to the question of freedom inside Eastern Europe, marking the symbiotic relationship between external and internal peace….a matter of changing internal relations between state and society inside Eastern Europe"[21]. Thus, a strong commitment to Western values (liberal democracy, respect for human rights, rule of law, free market economy) and loyalty to international institutions (UN, NATO, EU, OSCE) went hand in hand with Germany's Ostpolitik.

Similarly, since the Turkish Republic was established, Westernization (or as interchangeably used modernization) was defined one of the most important constituents of Turkish political system. This was also accepted as a prerequisite to become an equal and respected member of the international community. Following the World War II, when the philosophical inclination towards westernization combined with practical threat from the East (USSR), there was no choice for Turkey other than taking place within political, economic and security organizations of the West. The monolithic and rigid Cold War structure forced Turkey to undertake over-commitment to NATO policies. Turkish foreign policy rested on its Western dimension and could not improve its relations with the other parts of the world, and thus failed to set forth a comprehensive and multi-dimensional vision. Following the end of the Cold War, the common geostrategic culture failed between Turkey and its

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[20] Timothy G. Ash, *In Europe's Name*, New York: Random House, 1993, p.41.

[21] Timothy G. Ash, *In Europe's Name*, New York: Random House, 1993, p.19.

Western allies, and Turkey was regarded as a country that could carry the instabilities in its surrounding regions into European territories. Thus, during the 1990s, Turkey was unable to find support from its Western allies against bilateral and regional problems it faced. The election of the JDP in 2002 and Davutoğlu's new vision towards Turkish foreign policy paved the way for a more comprehensive and multi-dimensional foreign policy. As was the case for West German and German foreign policies, the Western dimension would remain as the most important pillar of Turkish foreign policy, however, Turkey should improve its relations with all other parts of the world from Africa to Latin America, from the Middle East to East Asia. This was regarded as a historical responsibility and a prerequisite to make Turkey a regional and global power. Thus, *Ostpolitik* became a historical responsibility and a comprehensive foreign policy necessity for Turkey with Davutoğlu's vision.

To this end and approaching international relations (and thus Turkey's regional poltics and bilateral relations) from the perspective of constructivism, Davutoğlu uses the main concepts of constructivist approach (identity and culture) as the basic elements of Turkey's foreign policy discourse. Therefore, practically finding the international dynamics appropriate, Davutoğlu's Turkish foreign policy vision is following the German path. In order to fulfill the requirements of the constituents of strategic depth, Turkish administration took several steps:

Within the framework of pro-active diplomacy and multi-dimensional foreign policy, Turkey applied for UN Security Council (temporary) membership on July 23, 2003. Turkey declared the reasons of its application as: the priority it gave to the construction and protection of international peace and security, contribution to humanitarian security and economic development and the role to be played in regional security. In addition, it was declared that Turkey is at the crossroads of multiple conflict areas and has historical, political, economic and cultural ties with the parties to the conflicts, and thus, can play a constructive role in the solution of these conflicts[22]. To this end, rather than expressing general political guidelines, Turkey performed rhythmic diplomacy. The rhythmic diplomacy means a steady rhthym of hosting and participating in multilateral and bilateral diplomatic summits, and negotiating with each group on issue-basis (taking into consideration their sensitivities and priorities). As a result of its pro-active diplomacy, Turkey was elected to the UN Security Council (temporary) membership (for 2009-2010 term), on

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[22]http://www.mfa.gov.tr/no_125--_24-temmuz-2003_-turkiye_nin-2009-2010-donemi-bm-guvenlik-konseyigecici-uyeligi-icin-bati-avrupa-ve-diger-devletler-grubundan-adayligini-aciklamasi.tr.mfa

October 17, 2008 voting, taking the support of 151 UN countries (among 192 members)[23].

Since Davutoğlu establishes a strong connection between global and internal dynamics, a country adapting and managing change must strengthen liberal democracy in its homeland. In line with this, the JDP made several constitutional amendments since it swept into power. Since the membership negotiations with the EU started in 2005, Turkey took steps to adapt the EU criteria, especially in terms of human rights and freedoms. Among these, the 2010 referendum was a milestone for Turkish democracy in this regard. Besides its symbolic meaning (the anniversary of 1980 military coup), with the September 12, 2010 referendum, the Turkish government made constitutional amendments. With these amnedments, the government opened the way for military coup leaders and military personnel to be judged; improved economic and social rights, individual freedoms and judicial rights, in order to strengthen democracy and to establish a balance between security and democracy.

Within the framework of "zero-problem with neighbours", the JDP took several steps since it came to power: From high level visits to Armenia, Azerbaijan, Iran, Iraq, Syria and Greece to economic agreements; from opening the borders in religious bairams to joint projects in education, culture, health, under-construction. Turkey signed an accord with Syria to end visa requirements and a bilateral cooperation accord under which top ministers from each countries would meet each year. Turkey signed similar accords with Libya, Qatar and Lebanon abolishing visa requirements and boosting cooperation in areas of health, agriculture, military ties, transportation and education[24]. On the other side, Turkey took steps to improve its relations with Armenia and aimed to relieve the historical burdens of the "so-called genocide" issue. To this end, former President Abdullah Gül visited Yerevan on September 6, 2008 to watch the football game between Armenian-Turkish national teams and before moving to Yerevan Gül expressed his hopes that "this game would contribute to overcome the barriers between the two nations which share common history and to the further development of friendly relations, peace and stability in the region"[25]. Within the desire to normalize relations and resolve bilateral problems, Turkey signed "Protocol on

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[23] Birol Akgün, "Türkiye'nin Birleşmiş Milletler Güvenlik Konseyi Üyeliği: Amaç, Süreç ve Beklentiler", Selçuk University Center of Strategic Studies, Research Paper Series No.1, July 2009, p.11.

[24] http://www.todayszaman.com/newsDetail.action;jsessionid=1htrQAXThLf6lBcOwz1kucBm?newsId=190556&columnistId=0 Accessed on: November 15, 2014

[25] http://www.tccb.gov.tr/haberler/170/47535/cumhurbaskani-gul-ermenistani-ziyaret-etti.html Accessed on: November 10, 2014

Establishment of Diplomatic Relations" and "Protocol on Development of Relations" with Armenia on October 10, 2009 in Zurich[26].

As part of Turkey's new vision and strategic depth, Turkey hosted crucial meetings on Afghanistan. İstanbul hosted an informal meeting of NATO defense ministers that focused on Afghanistan on February 3-4, 2010. In the meeting, while stressing the significant role played by Turkey in Afghanistan in both the political and military fields, former NATO spokesperson James Appathurai stated that "no other NATO member can play the role Turkey has in Afghanistan -- especially not its political role."[27] Afghanistan became an important case in the combat against international terrorism and Turkey's contribution to the process was (nearly) like a prerequisite for the success. Turkey's enlarged vision was not limited to Afghanistan. Turkey started the "Iraq's Neighbouring Countries Process" on the eve of Iraq's invasion in 2003 and played an important role in coordinating the efforts of Iraq's neighbours and other interested countries, as well as international organizations, in contributing to stability and development of Iraq. Against the US criticisms, the first meeting of the initiative convened in İstanbul on January 23, 2003, with the contribution of Egypt, Iran, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Syria. The March 10, 2007 ambassadors meeting of this initiative (that convened in Baghdad) became a milestone, after a long time the US sat around the same table with Syria and Iran[28]. This was an important part of Turkey's multidimensional foreign policy, pro-active and rhythmic diplomacy in the sense that during this period Turkey played a role of mediator between Iran and the West on nuclear talks and between Israel and Palestine on finding a sustainable solution for the Palestinian issue.

The new vision of Turkish foreign policy was, also, not limited to the political spectrum. Turkish trade policy followed the suit. According to Turkish Statistical Institute data, the share of Western countries (Germany, UK, Italy, France, US, Spain, Netherlands, Romania and Belgium – among the top twenty countries in Turkish export statistics) in Turkey's exports was 54,9 percent in the overall exports in 2004 and the share of these countries fell to 40,1 percent in 2010. Accordingly, the share of western countries (Germany, Italy, US, Switzerland, France, Spain, UK, Greece, Belgium, Romania, Netherlands and Poland - among the top twenty countries in Turkish import statistics) in

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[26] http://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-between-turkey-and-armenia.en.mfa Accessed on: November 15,2014

[27]http://www.todayszaman.com/tz-web/news-200431-istanbul-to-host-nato-meeting-with-focus-on-afghanistan.html Accessed on: September 16, 2014

[28]http://www.cnnturk.com/2007/dunya/11/02/iraka.komsu.ulkeler.girisimi.nasil.basladi/402105.0/ Accessed on: September 10, 2014

Turkey's imports was 49,6 percent in 2004 and the share of these countries fell to 40,3 percent in 2010. Whereas the share of these countries in Turkish trade fell, the share of other countries (eastern and southern countries) increased[29].

Conclusion

Following the World War I, the Turkish Republic was proclaimed on October 29, 1923, after Turkish War of Independence. Although the Republic was new, it carried the socio-cultural heritage of the Ottoman Empire. This heritage presented problems and opportunities for the founding elite: On the one hand, the construction of a nation state from a heterogeneous society was to become a long and painful process. On the other hand, the Ottoman legacy gave the new Republic the chance of outreach to various regions of the world upon the foundations of a common history and a common culture.

Following the World War II, Turkey found itself on the edge of a world structural divide between a liberal-democratic west led by the US and a communist east led by Russia. When the quest 'to construct the new Republic on the foundations of the liberal-democratic values and principles of the western community' combined with a practical threat coming from the East (the Soviet Union), the path towards Turkey's alignment with the West was opened. Turkey became a member of NATO in 1952 and signed the Ankara Agreement with the EEC. The structural divide during the Cold War was harsh and this engendered over-commitment of states to block policy. Since, Turkey's neighbours on its eastern and southern borders remained out of the NATO alliance and due to Turkey's insistence on pursuing block policy, Turkey's relations with its neighbours and further regions could not be improved during the Cold War period. Even, Turkey's over-affiliation with NATO, and more specifically US, policies created criticisms on Turkey as if Turkey was acting as 'the pawn of the West'. Thus, the Cold War turned to be an era where Turkey's strong commitment to NATO (and, in general, to Western alliance) hindered the development of Turkey's relations with the other regions of the world. In addition to limiting the room for maneuver of Turkish foreign policy, this brought an alienation between Turkey and other parts of the world with which Turkey had historical and cultural ties since the Ottoman Empire.

With the end of the Cold War, Turkey found itself amidst the historic systemic changes. For a long time, a distant outpost of NATO on the European periphery, moved to the centre of the problematic post-Cold War world

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[29] http://www.tuik.gov.tr/UstMenu.do?metod=temelist Accessed on: November 10, 2014; For further data on Turkish import and export statistics visit the webpage of TÜİK.

politics. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, power vacuum unfolded around Turkey's surrounding regions. Turkey was now surrounded by 13 of the 16 threat generating regions. The US changed its priority, and in the new era, concentrated was on Asia and the Middle East due to the fact that Western European countries were strong enough to solve the problems of Europe and there was no SU threat directed to the west. On the other hand, Western Europe was concentrated on determining the future of Europe that would be constructed upon liberal democratic values. Turkey, perceived as a country producing security for Europe, suddenly became a country that could carry instabilities into Europe. Turkey's relations with EU turned out to be paradoxical during the 1990s and became an illusion and at the same time a disillusion for Turkey: Turkey's aim to become a member fostered democratic reforms in the country; however, EU's reluctance to provide a strategic vision for Turkey's membership hindered the further development of relations. Whereas Turkey was expecting the support of its western allies against the problems it faced, emanating from the post-Cold War geopolitical realities and terrorism, but what it found was hars criticism in terms of democratization. Thus, EU's discourse and poicies were approached by Turkey in a way that EU was aiming the division of the country.

From the very beginning of the period, since the JDP first swept to power in 2002, Ahmet Davutoğlu's "strategic depth" became the backbone of Turkish foreign policy and besides it Turkish domestic politics. Davutoğlu's vision is inspired from constructivist approach and is practically finding the international dynamics appropriate to accomplish requirements of this strategy. According to Davutoğlu, Turkey "has to take on the role of an order-instituting country" in the surrounding regions, and, Turkey can "no longer remain as a country which only reacts to crises. Turkey has to become a country that "notices the crises before their emergence and intervenes in the crises effectively and gives shape to the order of its surrounding region"[30]. This has been defined as both a historical responsibility and a prerequisite to enable Turkey an efficient player in regional and international politics. The foreign policy vision of Turkey between 2002-2011 resembles West German foreign policy during the Cold War (starting with Willy Brandt) and German foreign policy during the post-Cold war period. West Germany and then re-unified Germany have felt responsibility on themselves regarding the economic-underdevelopment of Eastern Europe, political and socio-cultural problems (from democratic deficits to ethnic and religious conflicts) in this region.

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[30] http://arama.hurriyet.com.tr/arsivnews.aspx?id=11564384, Accessed on: May 4, 2014

Germany has aimed to contribute to solution of these problems and realize economic development in Eastern Europe, in other words, has tried to create a region of stability, peace and wealth as a historical responsibility. In return this would also enhance German economic development and security and would pave the way for Germany to play a more prominent role in European and international politics. Turkish foreign policy has followed the German path and has regarded to strengthen its relations with the surrounding regions both as a historical responsibility and a prerequisite to become an efficient regional and global actor. Within this framework there is a basic analogy between West German-German *Ostpolitik* and Turkey's *Ostpolitik*.

In order to achieve foreign policy goals and realize the requirements of *Ostpolitik*, Turkey has to provide the balance between security and democracy, zero-problem with neighbours, pro-active and pre-emptive peace diplomacy, multi-dimensional foreign policy and rhythmic diplomacy, which are the constitutive elements of Davutoğlu's strategic vision. Within the framework of pro-active diplomacy and multi-dimensional foreign policy, Turkey applied for UNSC (temporary) membership and pursued an active campaign process. To this end, rather than expressing general political guidelines, Turkey performed rhythmic diplomacy and negotiated with each country, group of countries and international organizations on issue-basis. In terms of establishing a balance between security and democracy Turkey made various constitutional amendments between 2002-2011. Within the framework of "zero-problem with neighbours", Turkey established mechanisms (strategic councils, ministerial meetings, technical cooperation) and signed agreements (with Iraq, Syria, Libya, Qatar, Lebanon, Armenia, and many other countries) to enable peace and stability in the surrounding regions. In order to strengthen stability and security, Turkey contributed to NATO mission in Afghanistan and hosted crucial meetings on Afghanistan's state-building process and started "Iraq's Neighbouring Countries Process" in 2003. The new vision of Turkish foreign policy was, also, not limited to the political spectrum and Turkish trade policy followed the suit. The share of eastern countries in Turkish trade (in terms of import and export data) increased between 2002-2011.

The new vision of Davutoğlu on Turkish foreign policy brought "axis shift" debate both in domestic and international circles. Regarding the JDP's foreign policy approach, frequent references are made to "a shift of axis", suggesting a drift away from the predominantly Western-orientation which has been the hallmark of Turkish foreign policy throughout the post-World War II period, toward a more "eastern-oriented" pattern of foreign policy behavior[31].

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[31] Ziya Öniş, "Multiple Faces of the "New" Turkish Foreign Policy: Underlying Dynamics and a

William Hale said "new policy puts Ankara in the position of a circus rider who is riding two horses at the same time". Hale said that Turkey's policy of "zero problems with neighbours" is better than its highly defensive and securitized foreign policy of the past, but he added, "I think at the moment it is extremely difficult for Turkey to have good relations with Syria and Israel and Palestine and Israel at the same time simply because of the gap between Israel and Palestine and, I am afraid, between Syria and Israel"[32]. However, the reply to these criticisms came from the former NATO Secretary-General Anders F. Rasmussen. Dismissing allegations claiming that Turkey has undergone "a shift of axis" in its foreign policy orientation, Rasmussen underlined the geographical and political reasons behind why Turkey has a role in the Middle East as well as in Europe. Rasmussen said that he believed Turkey can and should play an important role as a bridge between Central Asia and the Middle East and Europe and North America[33].

Kemal Kirişçi says "the political development, economic capabilities, dynamic social forces, and ability to reconcile Islam and democracy at home are the qualities that offer Turkey the possibility to develop and implement"[34] policies in the neighbouring regions and in the larger spectrum. Davutoğlu's vision is trying to sustain Turkey's strong ties with the West, but meanwhile is improving Turkey's relations with all parts of the world for a more comprehensive and multi-dimensional foreign policy course. Thus, Turkey's *Ostpolitik* has become a historical responsibility for Turkey and a prerequisite to make Turkey a regional and global power.so. West Germany and Germany following reunification could do this with its *Ostpolitik*. Turkey's foreign policy was doing the same between 2002-2011 activating its political, economic, historical and cultural dynamics and heritage.

Critique", *Insight Turkey*, Vol.13 No.1, 2011, p.47.

[32] "Zero-problem Policy as Challenging as Riding Two Horses, Says Expert", http://www.todayszaman.com/newsDetail.action;jsessionid=btiX2ifB9krNKHDzvRMzovPE?newsId=192692&columnistId=0, Accessed on: November 12, 2009.

[33] Turkey not Turning Back on West, Says NATO's Rasmussen, http://www.todayszaman.com/tz-web/news-200644-turkey-not-turning-back-on-west-says-natos-rasmussen.html, Accessed on: February 5, 2010

[34] Kemal Kirişçi, "Turkey's Foreign Policy in Turbulent Times", *Chaillot Paper*, 92, EU-ISS, Paris, September 2006, p.96.

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