

“ONE NATION, TWO STATES”:
TURKEY–AZERBAIJAN ECONOMIC RELATIONS
AND
THE RHETORIC OF TURKIC IDENTITY

BARIŞ İSKENDER

BOĞAZİÇİ UNIVERSITY

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Barış İskender

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ABSTRACT

“One Nation, Two States”:

Turkey–Azerbaijan Economic Relations

and

The Rhetoric of Turkic Identity

The rhetoric of “One Nation, Two States” has been dominating the official expressions of Turkey-Azerbaijan relations since the independence of the latter in 1991. Along the way, both countries have been cooperating in energy politics, regional disputes, and bilateral trade. However, it is not evident what role being Turkic plays in the commercial relations of Turkish businessmen in Azerbaijan. This study aims to carry out research that examines the impact of Turkic identity on the commercial dimension of Turkey-Azerbaijan brotherhood that is described with the official rhetoric of One Nation, Two States. After providing an historical account of the bilateral relations since 1991, the study analyzes them through the perspectives of realism, liberalism, and constructivism under the methodology of analytic eclecticism. To find out the impact of ideational factors on commercial links, interviews with Turkish diplomats and businessmen are conducted. At the end of the research, the study confirms the role of Turkic identity in initiating and facilitating the relations with the conclusion that they are mostly maintained by mutual interests in political dimension and compliance to liberal market dynamics in the commercial realm.

ÖZET

"Bir Millet, İki Devlet":

Türkiye–Azerbaycan Ekonomik İlişkileri

ve

Türklük Kimliği Söylemi

Azerbaycan'ın 1991 yılındaki bağımsızlığından itibaren "Bir Millet, İki Devlet" söylemi Türkiye-Azerbaycan ilişkilerinin resmi ifadelerine egemen olmaktadır. O zamandan bu yana, iki ülke enerji politikalarında, bölgesel çatışmalarda ve ikili ticarete iş birliği yapmaktadır. Yine de Türk olmanın Azerbaycan'da iş yapan Türk iş adamlarının ticari ilişkilerinde ne gibi bir rol oynadığı belirli değildir. Bu çalışma, Türkiye-Azerbaycan kardeşliğinin ticari boyutunda Türklük kimliğinin etkisini araştırmaktadır. İlişkilerinin 1991'den bu yana tarihçesini sunduktan sonra, çalışma ilişkileri realizm, liberalizm, ve konstrüktivizm üzerinden analiz etmektedir. Türklük kimliğinin ticarete olan etkisini ortaya çıkarmak için ise Türk diplomat ve iş adamlarıyla mülakat gerçekleştirilmiştir. Bu araştırmanın sonunda, çalışma Türk kimliğinin ilişkileri başlatıcı ve kolaylaştırıcı etkisini ortaya koyup, bu ilişkilerin çoğunlukla siyasi boyutta ortak çıkarların ve ticari boyutta liberal pazar dinamiklerine uyum sağlamakla sürdürüldüğü sonucuna varmaktadır.

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ABBREVIATIONS

BSEC	Black Sea Economic Cooperation
BTC	Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Oil Pipeline
BTE	Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum Natural Gas Pipeline
BTk	Baku-Tbilisi-Kars Railway
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CSCE	Conference for Security and Cooperation of Europe
DEIK	Foreign Economic Relations Board
EU	European Union
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
HLSC	High Level Strategic Cooperation Council
IMF	International Monetary Fund
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OECD	The Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development
OSCE	The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
SIT	Social Identity Theory
SCP	South Caucasus Pipeline
TANAP	Trans-Anatolian Natural Gas Pipeline Project
TAP	Trans-Adriatic Pipeline
TIKA	Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency
TP	Turkish Petroleum
UN	United Nations
WTO	World Trade Organization

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Under the advertisement for Türkiye İş Bankası, the customers of the Ozal cafe sip thick black coffee and read *Hürriyet*. Close your eyes. The heat and the language suggest Turkey. Yet the sea, with its oil rigs glittering in the distance is the Caspian . . . This is Baku, the capital of the former Soviet republic of Azerbaijan.¹

In the realm of international politics, some classifying phrases are adopted to honor specific bilateral relations. Namely, Anglo-American links are often referred to as the “Special Relationship” to underline the alliance.² Sentimental expressions like “blood is thicker than water” also adorn and enrich these bilateral ties by referring to ethnic or cultural connections between nations besides politics.³ Turkish diplomacy too has embraced similar discourses with respect to her relations with various states; the rhetoric of “One Nation, Two States” being among the most popular ones with its domination of official remarks of Turkey-Azerbaijan ties:

The brotherly Turkey is the first country, with which Azerbaijan established diplomatic relations in its independent history. Ties between our countries and nations have deep historical roots. “One nation, two states” principle has covered all spheres of Azerbaijan-Turkey relations that have no analogues in the world.⁴

Azerbaijan is not merely a state among states for us. We are one nation, two states who speak the same language, share a common historical past, and who are brothers not of words but of deeds.⁵

¹“Caspian cauldron: Azerbaijan. (election of president Adulfaz Elchibey),” *The Economist (US)*.

²The phrase was coined by Winston Churchill who used the term famously during his Missouri speech in 1946 in the beginning of the Cold-War era. See Kulenicz, “Anglo-American Relations in the Twentieth Century — was the Special Relationship Just a Myth?”

³The phrase is used by the U.S. Commodore Josiah Tattnall who disobeying orders during the Second Opium War saved the lives of British sailors with whom the captain felt a strong kinship and justified his actions with the expression above. See Langdon, “Josiah Tattnall - Blood is Thicker than Water.”

⁴Aliyev, press statement. See “Azerbaijan and Turkey ties: All-weather Friends.”

⁵Erdoğan, press statement. Translated by the author; original: “Azerbaycan bizim için sadece devletlerden biri değildir. Biz aynı dili konuşan, ortak bir tarihi geçmişini paylaşan, sözde değil özde kardeş, tek millet iki devletiz.” See “9,5 milyar dolarlık TANAP’ın temeli atılıyor.”

Does being One Nation, Two States play a role in economic and commercial relations between Turkey and Azerbaijan? Does being a Turkish ease doing business in Azerbaijan? If it eases, in which ways or industries does it provide an advantage? This research aims to find out answers to these questions.

Location of much of the world's political and economic power, Eurasia has been the chessboard of struggle for primacy among several players for approximately five hundred years.⁶ The disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991 has caused drastic frontier changes and a power void in the very center of this chessboard.⁷ Consequently, this power void provided Turkey with opportunities to re-establish her influence in the newly independent Turkic Muslim republics; Azerbaijan in Caucasus, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan in Central Asia.⁸

In this new era, using the advantage of historical and cultural affinities along with geographical proximity, Turkey attempted to increment its influence in the former Soviet region.⁹ Accordingly, linguistic and cultural affinity is considered to be a significant plus for Turkish entrepreneurs to forge commercial ties in the Turkic republics in comparison with their Western European or U.S competitors.¹⁰ Nonetheless, it not obvious to what extent shared Turkic culture symbolized with the Turkic rhetoric, some examples of which are covered above, facilitate the Turkish business operations in Azerbaijan, with whom Turkey's relations are the focal point of this paper. With this research, I aim to address the question of whether the rhetoric of a shared Turkic identity and culture, which has been frequently and emphasized

⁶Brzezinski, *The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and Its Geotragetic Imperatives*, xii.

⁷Brzezinski, *The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and Its Geotragetic Imperatives*, 87.

⁸Brzezinski, *The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and Its Geotragetic Imperatives*, 88-93.

⁹Kut, "The Contours of Turkish Foreign Policy in the 1990s," 10; Aydın, "Foucault's Pendulum: Turkey in Central Asia and the Caucasus," 1.

¹⁰Winrow, "Turkey and the Newly Independent States of Central Asia and the Transcaucasus," 213.

via numerous Turkic discourses from officials of both sides, has a positive influence on the commercial links between Turkey and Azerbaijan.

Before the disintegration of the Soviet Union, Turkish foreign policy did not concern itself about “Outside Turks” in order not to raise any conflict with the neighboring states; thus, keeping the harmonious relations and preserving the status quo with “Peace at home peace in the world” motto of Atatürk. Atatürk’s approach considered pan-Turkic adventures and spheres of influence risky and threatening for the country’s survival and progress.¹¹ According to Rubin, this approach can be described as Turkism in one country that consolidates the Turkish nation.¹² Denying any official interest in the “Outside Turks” especially those within the territory of the Soviet Union since signing the friendship treaty in 1921 and the establishment of the republic in 1923, not a direct relationship between Turkey and Central Asia and Caucasus has been observed until the Gorbachev period.¹³ Turkey even approached the Turkic republics after *glasnost* and *perestroika* policies in a meticulous way not to seem as trying to undermine the current USSR influence then.¹⁴

However, Turkey welcomed the emergence of Turkic republics with great euphoria when they secured independence from Moscow in the late 1991.¹⁵ The prime minister of Turkey then, Süleyman Demirel’s speech addressing the Turkic republics just before commencing his official visit to these countries except Tajikistan in May 1992 illustrates Turkey’s perspective toward the Turkic world:

Today is a historical date for the Turkic world, the brother countries spreading over a vast geography from the Adriatic to China, and having just obtained their independence, are facing the opportunity to be one ear, one heart. Fate has separated our brothers in these lands from us . . . Common language, culture, and faith constitutes bonds that clamp us to each other . . .

¹¹Rubin, “Turkey: A Transformed International Role,” 2.

¹²Rubin, “Turkey: A Transformed International Role,” 2.

¹³Aydın, “Kafkasya ve Orta Asya’yla İlişkiler,” *Türk Dış Politikası: Cilt 2: 1980-2001*, 366.

¹⁴Aydın, “Foucault’s Pendulum: Turkey in Central Asia and the Caucasus,” 2.

¹⁵Winrow, “Turkey and the Newly Independent States of Central Asia and the Transcaucasus,” 235.

Turkey is going to act as a bridge that is going to gather people from the same civilization, same culture, same faith, same togetherness who had remained separate for centuries. Of course, it is superbly rejoicing for us that these republics obtained their independence emerging after the collapse of the Soviet empire... We are not to manage these countries. We want them to stand on their own feet protecting their independence. We will provide them with any kind of moral support, any kind of morale support.¹⁶

In the same manner, Turgut Özal, president of Turkey then, also pointed out the enthusiastic Turkish viewpoint to the emergence of the Turkic Republics, before his first tour to these countries in 1993:

I am proud to be the first president of Turkey to visit these republics that have obtained their independence in Autumn of 1991. . . The brother republics whose obtaining independence, following the disintegration of the Soviet Union, we greeted with euphoria... Within the boundaries of possibilities in this new era Turkey took it as its political and moral duty to help and support the republics, with whom Turkey has common ties of history, culture, language, and religion.¹⁷

Hence, the dissolution of the Soviet Union has provided Turkey with an opportunity for a more active foreign policy on her periphery during the 1990s.¹⁸ Establishment of the BSEC with Turkey's initiative, signing agreements with Azerbaijan and Georgia to build the Baku-Ceyhan oil pipeline, or attending peacekeeping operations in Bosnia, Kosovo, and Albania are precedents of this active policy pursuit in these years.¹⁹ However, this approach regarding the newly emerging states is not a search for alternatives in Turkish foreign policy that has been West-oriented, on the contrary they are efforts to prove the value of Turkey to the West.²⁰ Accordingly, Kut argues that there was no revision of Turkish foreign policy principles or priorities with the collapse of the Union, but a change of the status quo in the

¹⁶Süleyman Demirel, press conference. Translated by the author. See Şimşir, *Azerbaycan: Azerbaycan'ın Yeniden Doğuş Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri*, 340-342. (Appendix A,1).

¹⁷Turgut Özal, press conference, Translated by the author. See Şimşir, *Azerbaycan: Azerbaycan'ın Yeniden Doğuş Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri*, 491-492. (Appendix A, 2).

¹⁸Kut, "The Contours of Turkish Foreign Policy in the 1990s," 8.

¹⁹Kut, "The Contours of Turkish Foreign Policy in the 1990s," 9.

²⁰Kut, "The Contours of Turkish Foreign Policy in the 1990s," 10.

neighboring regions prompted Turkey to pursue a pragmatic, cautious, and pro-cooperation foreign policy.²¹

Turkey is the first state to recognize Azerbaijan's independence in 1991. Since then, Ankara has fostered ties with Baku on a multifaceted and strategic level. While officially visiting each other's countries right after assuming the office became tradition for the top-level statesmen, intense high level visits are the main driving force of bilateral relations. The relations were crowned with more than 200 bilateral agreements in political, economic, and cultural areas. Ankara has provided significant amount of aid in the early years of the latter's independence and has taken a pro-Azerbaijani stance regarding the Karabakh issue. On the other hand, mutual interests have paved the way for the inauguration of the flagship projects; BTC, BTE, TANAP, and BTK recently which have forged the links between the two countries, also enhanced by a huge volume of reciprocal and mutual investments in various business sectors. During the 2000s, the relations evolved into an institutionalized form through various bilateral and trilateral strategic cooperation mechanisms. Put differently, the bilateral ties, which have been initiated by emotional euphoria have advanced since the 1990s in a very fast way, was upgraded to the level of strategic partnership to promote solidarity under the motto of One nation, Two States.

The scope of the research is based on Turkey-Azerbaijan relations between 1991, the year Azerbaijan declared its independence, and 2016. Within this timeline, the background of developments of bilateral relations in political, economic, and cultural terms is illustrated. As methodology, the bilateral relations are analyzed through an analytic eclecticism perspective. The analytic eclecticism approach

²¹Kut, "The Contours of Turkish Foreign Policy in the 1990s," 14.

examines global politics through eyes of three popular and contending paradigms; realism, liberalism, and constructivism; aiming to denote how elements of each paradigm affect others in overall politics. From a theoretical international relations perspective, the constructivist approach puts forward the thought that ideational factors such as identity and culture play a significant role in the international relations along with the material drives prioritized by realist and liberalist traditions. Therefore, these paradigms are evaluated together to provide us with a wider understanding of the dynamics of the Turkey-Azerbaijan relationship. In terms of collecting data for the research question, search of the place and vitality of Turkic culture on the commercial dimension, elite interviews are conducted with Turkish diplomats and businessmen who have had a first-hand experience of working in Azerbaijan.

The study begins by providing a theoretical background in Chapter 2; introducing analytic eclecticism approach with a brief coverage of realism, liberalism, and constructivism. Then, the bilateral relations of Turkey and Azerbaijan, for the period covering 1991-2016, through political, economic and cultural angles are elaborated in Chapter 3. Chapter 4 covers the primary contribution of this research; responses and reflections of Turkish businessmen and diplomats regarding the ideational elements on the commercial dimension. In the fifth chapter, I attempt to explain the bilateral relationships within the theoretical framework drawn in Chapter 2 and try to find linkages among the contending IR views while incorporating the insights gained from the interviewees. This chapter also attempts to present implications of the findings for recent Turkish foreign policy approaches. The paper ends with Conclusion chapter presenting an overall picture of

the Turkey-Azerbaijan relationship, and a summary of the major findings both from the interviews and analysis.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY BASED ON ANALYTICAL ECLECTICISM

The prescriptions directly derived from a single image are incomplete because they are based upon partial analyses. The partial quality of each image sets up a tension that drives one toward inclusion of the others . . . One is led to a search for the more inclusive nexus of causes . . .²²

This chapter purports to present the theoretical framework adopted to evaluate the bilateral relations of Turkey-Azerbaijan. The relationship is examined through an approach labelled as analytic eclecticism that incorporates the three favored theories of international relations; realism, liberalism, and constructivism into its process. The principal question this paper attempts to address about Turkish-Azerbaijani relations is whether an identity shared by two nations, a notion primarily concerned by constructivist theories, plays a role in the economic relations between these countries, as an aspect of IR discipline, which is popularly elaborated by realist and liberal traditions. Put differently, the question leads the research into explanations featuring ideational factors as well as material ones, and into processes that are difficult to capture in a purely realist, liberalist, or constructivist framework. That is why an eclectic approach is preferred for this study.

In order to provide a sequential and fluent reading, the three paradigms, realism, liberalism, and constructivism are respectively elaborated with their primary arguments about global politics. Then analytic eclecticism is introduced. Lastly, the Methodology section describes the technique utilized in search of an answer to the question asked by.

²²Waltz, *Man, the State and War: A Theoretical Analysis*, 230.

2.1 Realism

Realism conceives international relations as a power struggle among self-interested states.²³ According to realists, power is based on the material capabilities that a state controls.²⁴ Through power states can defend themselves and hope to survive in the international system.²⁵ Although power is primarily perceived as tangible military assets such as armored divisions or nuclear weapons, socio-economic capabilities owned by states are also latent powers that go into building military power.²⁶ States need money, technology, and personnel to build military forces, to fight wars, and to be able compete with rival states; in other words state wealth and population come to the forefront as factors to gain power besides winning wars.²⁷ Whenever states or people desire to realize any kind of long-term aim such as freedom, prosperity, security, or power itself by means of international politics, they realize their goal by striving for power.²⁸ The craving for power dictates a search not only for relative advantage but also to secure a political territory that maintains itself from the political intervention of others.²⁹ In order to remain free of foreign interventions, they have to organize themselves into capable states by means of which they can defend their interests.³⁰

In the realm of politics, statesmen think and act in terms of interest defined as power. Therefore, a realist view does not concern itself about motives, moral principles, and ideologies. They could only be reflexions of national policy based on

²³Walt, "International Relations: One World, Many Theories," 31.

²⁴Mearsheimer, "Structural Realism," 78.

²⁵Slaughter, "International Relations, Principal Theories," 1.

²⁶Mearsheimer, "Structural Realism," 78.

²⁷Mearsheimer, "Structural Realism," 78.

²⁸Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, 31.

²⁹Jackson and Sørensen, *Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches*, 73.

³⁰Jackson and Sørensen, *Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches*, 73.

a particular interpretation of national interest at a particular time.³¹ Put differently, “realists do stress ‘interest’ over ‘identity’.”³²

According to classical realism, state is the key actor in international relations as the primary decision maker whereas other entities such as international organizations, economic enterprises, pressure groups, or individuals may exert pressure in certain circumstances, but are subject to states that regulate these entities and determines the terms they can operate.³³

According to the founder of neorealism, Kenneth Waltz, international relations is decentralized and anarchic with no security assured.³⁴ In other words, it is a political structure in which actors are not arranged in hierarchical relations of authority and subordination.³⁵ Therefore, every state has to take care of itself.³⁶ In this atmosphere, states differ from each other with their varying capabilities.³⁷ Although, aims of states can vary from ambition to conquer the world to the desire to be left alone, the key motive assumed by states is to ensure their survival which is a prerequisite to achieve any other goals.³⁸ With this fundamental interest, states are assumed to concentrate on the distribution of power,³⁹ as states with great power tend to have greater influence in this anarchic system.⁴⁰

This competitive structure of the international arena can prompt states to engage in balancing behavior as a mechanism for survival,⁴¹ leading to the

³¹Carr, *The Twenty Years' Crisis 1919-1939: An Introduction to the Study of International Relations*, 87.

³²Gilpin, *Global Political Economy: Understanding the International Economic Order*, 20.

³³Brown and Ainley, *Understanding International Relations*, 30.

³⁴Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, 88.

³⁵Donnelly, *Realism and International Relations*, 16-17.

³⁶Guzzini, *Realism in International Relations and International Political Economy: The Continuing Story of a Death Foretold*, 127.

³⁷Jackson and Sørensen, *Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches*, 80.

³⁸Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, 91.

³⁹Korab-Karpowicz, “Political Realism in International Relations.”

⁴⁰Lamy, “Contemporary mainstream approaches: neo-realism and neo-liberalism,” 127.

⁴¹Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, 118,128; Guzzini, *Realism in International Relations and International Political Economy: The Continuing Story of a Death Foretold*, 127.

emergence of a balance of power.⁴² By forming alliances, states prevent great powers from attempts to impose their political will on others.⁴³

Despite the tendency to build alliances, realism also assumes that cooperation of states is still limited in this structure. Insecurity and uncertainty about each other's future intentions in case of a power increase of actors works against cooperation.⁴⁴ Likewise, a state worries about unequal gains that may favor others, thus become dependent on others through cooperative actions and exchanges of goods and services.⁴⁵ Referring to Mearsheimer's words; states do frequently cooperate in this world of relentless security competition; nevertheless, this cooperation is constrained by the dominant logic of security competition that cannot be eliminated by any amount of cooperation.⁴⁶

Within the context of international political economy (IPE), the outlook of mercantilism has much in common with realism.⁴⁷ Mercantilism accounts for the compulsion of nation-states to create and sustain wealth and power in order to protect the security and independence of the nation.⁴⁸ It is embraced by states that championed the idea of state building and intervention in the economy to build a secure nation-state.⁴⁹ For realists, the existence of mutually beneficial transactions is not enough to guarantee international cooperation, therefore states have to be concerned about the consequences of those interactions regarding national security.⁵⁰ Markets, left to their own dynamics, naturally lead to domestic and international

⁴²Brown and Ainley, *Understanding International Relations*, 43-44.

⁴³Brown and Ainley, *Understanding International Relations*, 43-44.

⁴⁴Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, 105;

⁴⁵Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, 106.

⁴⁶Mearsheimer, "The False Promise of International Institutions," 9.

⁴⁷Jackson and Sørensen, *Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches*, 162.

⁴⁸Balaam and Dillman, *Introduction to International Political Economy*, 54.

⁴⁹Balaam and Dillman, *Introduction to International Political Economy*, 54-55; Guzzini, *Realism in International Relations and International Political Economy: The Continuing Story of a Death Foretold*, 170.

⁵⁰Kirshner, "Realist Political economy: traditional themes and contemporary challenges," 39.

trade patterns, creating a situation of dependency.⁵¹ In order to prevent this trap, mercantilists believe in the solution of regulating markets putting the economic interests of nations ahead of the economic interests of the individual.⁵² According to this view, states have to be concerned about relative economic gains in the zero-sum game of international relations, because the material wealth accumulated by one state can serve as a basis for military and political power to be used against others.⁵³ Therefore, states need to take all the necessary measures to accumulate wealth by increasing exports and decreasing its imports,⁵⁴ a favorable balance of trade, and avoid economic dependency on other states.⁵⁵ Similarly, mercantilist policies designed to enhance the technological and economic wealth of states may be pursued to increase a state's political leverage and independence even in the absence of military-security considerations.⁵⁶ In addition to domestic interventions, states may economically create a balance against rival industrial powers or economic predators, by preferring to develop relations with states possessing complementary economies, or improving ties with economically less-threatening partners.⁵⁷ Equally important, the mercantilist view asserts that states seek to support national firms abroad along with nurturing them within their borders.⁵⁸ With this in mind, states can exploit FDIs as a tool to forge alliances and create a dependency that serves national ends.⁵⁹

⁵¹Balaam and Veseth, *Introduction to International Political Economy*, 29.

⁵²Balaam and Veseth, *Introduction to International Political Economy*, 30.

⁵³Jackson and Sørensen, *Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches*, 162.

⁵⁴Cohn, *Global Political Economy*, 59.

⁵⁵Jackson and Sørensen, *Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches*, 164.

Common strategies of mercantilist states include protection of infant industries, promotion of domestic industries, subsidies to increase the competitiveness of domestic producers and exports, applying tariffs and quotas to limit imports, resorting to alternative energy resources or suppliers to decrease energy dependency of states, bilateral agreements between states to keep the level of export and import for a desired level, complex government regulations regarding health, safety, licensing and labelling issues, loans, domestic infrastructure development programs, investment promotions, public ownership of particular industries, and promoting local companies abroad via Political mechanisms.

⁵⁶Heginbotham and Samuels, "Mercantile Realism and Japanese Foreign Policy," 190.

⁵⁷Heginbotham and Samuels, "Mercantile Realism and Japanese Foreign Policy," 192.

⁵⁸Heginbotham and Samuels, "Mercantile Realism and Japanese Foreign Policy," 192.

⁵⁹Heginbotham and Samuels, "Mercantile Realism and Japanese Foreign Policy," 192.

To sum up, the international system from a realist angle is an anarchic structure that is dominated by sovereign-nation states, each obeying to no higher authority than itself. In this system, competitive relations prevail between these actors in the pursuit of national interests. Hence, nation-states behave purposely in pursuit of power and material well-being. Regarded as the key actors, states are rational units that seek to maximize the benefits and minimize the costs of pursuing objectives, while they deem international relations to be a zero-sum game, in which one group's gain means the loss of another group.⁶⁰ Likewise, states regard each other with suspicion and anticipate danger.⁶¹ They reason that self-interest comes first and today's ally may become tomorrow's enemy.⁶² Furthermore, states aim to maximize their relative power positions over others through gaining greater military advantage over other states, to ensure that they are more secure than the others.⁶³ Moreover, states are concerned about the balance of power in a realist world, and they must be motivated primarily by relative gains when considering cooperation, that is each state desires to be better than the other state in any agreement.⁶⁴ Realists also recognize that states occasionally operate through institutions, which realists view as mechanisms for projecting the distribution of power; the most powerful states shape institutions according to their self-interests, in order to preserve and increase their share of world power.⁶⁵ Equally, alliances and coalitions are just means used by states to exercise their power in international relations.⁶⁶ Assuming power whether be it militarily, economically, or diplomatically⁶⁷ as the key to state defense

⁶⁰Cohn, *Global Political Economy*, 57.

⁶¹Mearsheimer, "The False Promise of International Institutions," 11.

⁶²Mearsheimer, "The False Promise of International Institutions," 11.

⁶³Mearsheimer, "The False Promise of International Institutions," 12.

⁶⁴Mearsheimer, "The False Promise of International Institutions," 12.

⁶⁵Mearsheimer, "The False Promise of International Institutions," 13.

⁶⁶Viotti and Kauppi, *International Relations and World Politics*, 32.

⁶⁷Slaughter, "International Relations, Principal Theories," 1.

and survival, realism remains as the oldest and the most prominent paradigm in international relations, dominating world affairs both by itself and its critics.⁶⁸ The next section elaborates the primary opposition to realist thought; liberalism, again one of the three pillars of analytic eclecticism.

2.2 Liberalism

The liberal tradition, whose origins can be traced back to Immanuel Kant's thoughts before becoming popular after the First World War, contends that the realist view of the world as an anarchic structure cannot account for progress in relations among nations whereas trade forges ties between nations and democratic norms contribute to peace.⁶⁹ Many liberals therefore believe that the rule of law, democracy, and multilateral institutions help sustain international cooperation.⁷⁰ Liberal theories can be grouped under three strands; one that champions democracy as the key to world peace, the one that conceives international institutions as mechanisms to overcome selfish state behavior and to enhance international cooperation, and the one that argues economic interdependence would discourage states from using force against each other.⁷¹

Democracy is seen as an element of the prescription of war, because the firm liberal assumption is that people do not want war but are led into it by militarist and autocratic leaders; therefore democratic systems can reflect the legitimate and peaceful aspirations of nations via leaders that are responsible to public.⁷² The costs

⁶⁸Legro and Moravcsik, "Is Anybody Still a Realist?," 5.

⁶⁹Snyder, "One World, Rival Theories," 56.

⁷⁰Snyder, "One World, Rival Theories," 56.

⁷¹Walt, "International Relations: One World, Many Theories," 32.

⁷²Brown and Ainley, *Understanding International Relations*, 21.

of war, borne by the general public outweigh the benefits to society while the public can otherwise enjoy trade with other states under peaceful conditions.⁷³ These assumptions build up the base of a fundamental proposition of liberal tradition; democracies rarely fight and threaten each other, and the very existence of liberal states makes for peace.⁷⁴ This concept is known as republican liberalism in IR literature. Based on a progress towards a more democratic world, republican liberals are optimistic that peace and cooperation eventually prevail in international system.⁷⁵

The second component of the prescription is the fostering of international structures; often labelled as liberal institutionalism or institutionalist liberalism in the IR world.⁷⁶ This strand also advocates establishment of the rule of law, which as Wilson put it, aims to turn the “jungle” of international politics into a “zoo”.⁷⁷ Liberal institutionalism focuses on the contribution of international organizations in cultivating collective security, managing conflict, and encouraging cooperation among states. This mechanism, by guaranteeing the security of others, is considered as a switch from the balance of power system that unsuccessfully intended to keep the peace among military powers.⁷⁸

Another significant aspect of liberalist thought; interdependence liberalism assumes that free trade draws states into a web of economic interdependence such that the material cost of the conflict is so great that war becomes unthinkable.⁷⁹ This vision also anticipates that trade and economic exchange facilitate the modernization of societies along with providing prosperity and weakening tyranny.⁸⁰

⁷³Doyle, “Liberalism and World Politics,” 1151.

⁷⁴Doyle, “Liberalism and World Politics,” 1151.

⁷⁵Jackson and Sørensen, *Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches*, 115.

⁷⁶Jackson and Sørensen, *Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches*, 110.

⁷⁷Jackson and Sørensen, *Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches*, 110.

⁷⁸Ikenberry, “Liberalism in a Realist World,” 207;

⁷⁹Cohn, *Global Political Economy*, 62.

⁸⁰Ikenberry, “Liberalism in a Realist World,” 207;

In their seminal book, *Power and Interdependence*, Nye and Keohane further develop the idea of cross-border interconnections by defining the concept of *Complex Interdependence* to portray a reality of world affairs under neoliberalism. According to their definition, interdependence in world politics refers to situations identified by reciprocal effects among actors in different countries.⁸¹ In other words, it is the state of mutual dependence, indicating a state of being significantly affected by external forces.⁸² However, they underline the fact that interdependences need not to be evenly balanced.⁸³ What they call asymmetries in dependence is likely to provide sources of influence for actors in their dealings with each other; less dependent actors can exploit the interdependence to bargain over an issue or affect other issues related to the counterpart.⁸⁴

Keohane and Nye define three characteristics of complex interdependence. First, they argue that multiple channels including non-state actors like transnational corporations connect societies along with the political ties established by states.⁸⁵ Therefore, non-state actors have become part of the foreign relations, creating a sensitivity for government policies towards one another.⁸⁶ Second, there is an absence of hierarchy among foreign issues; that they are not subordinate to military security any more.⁸⁷ Issues like energy, resources, population, environment, and use of the seas rank along with traditional security issues, giving rise to a more diverse foreign policy agenda.⁸⁸ Third, with the intensification of relations and mutual influence existing between countries in an environment of complex interdependence,

⁸¹Keohane and Nye, *Power and Interdependence*, 7.

⁸²Keohane and Nye, *Power and Interdependence*, 7.

⁸³Keohane and Nye, *Power and Interdependence*, 9.

⁸⁴Keohane and Nye, *Power and Interdependence*, 9.

⁸⁵Keohane and Nye, *Power and Interdependence*, 20.

⁸⁶Keohane and Nye, *Power and Interdependence*, 21.

⁸⁷Keohane and Nye, *Power and Interdependence*, 22.

⁸⁸Keohane and Nye, *Power and Interdependence*, 22.

military force is not opted as the major foreign policy instrument.⁸⁹ Keohane and Nye explain this characteristic of complex interdependence as follows:

Furthermore, employing force on one issue against an independent state with which one has a variety of relationships is likely to rupture mutually profitable relations on other issues. In other words, the use of force often has costly effects on nonsecurity goals.⁹⁰

Apparently, what they present as complex interdependence challenges the claims of the realist tradition. However, while they assume that militarily and economically strong states will dominate a variety of issues,⁹¹ under complex interdependence, militarily strong states will still find it difficult to exert their overall dominance to control outcomes of issues in which they are weak since the distribution of power resources in trade, oil may be quite different.⁹²

The liberal view assumes that when there is a high degree of interdependence, states will often establish international institutions to deal with common issues.⁹³ Referred to as the institutionalist strand of liberalism, reflections of this view include famous mechanisms like the UN, WTO, EU, OECD, and IMF. As Ikenberry underscores, the institutionalist view also assumes rational states to have the incentive to inaugurate international mechanisms that they think help establish credibility and commitments of states, facilitate flow of information, negotiate specific agreements, reduce transaction costs, and reduce the anarchy effects, all leading to mutually beneficial cooperation.⁹⁴ Therefore, states focus on absolute gains from cooperation rather than relative gains as argued by realists.⁹⁵

⁸⁹Keohane and Nye, *Power and Interdependence*, 21.

⁹⁰Keohane and Nye, *Power and Interdependence*, 24.

⁹¹Keohane and Nye, *Power and Interdependence*, 25.

⁹²Keohane and Nye, *Power and Interdependence*, 25.

⁹³Jackson and Sørensen, *Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches*, 47.

⁹⁴Ikenberry, "Liberalism in a Realist World," 214.

⁹⁵Lamy, "Contemporary mainstream approaches: neo-realism and neo-liberalism," 133.

The projection of liberalist thought in the IPE world is named economic liberalism. This concept, describing a market model not dominated by state intervention, opposes the subordination of economics to political agendas.⁹⁶

Famously championed by its founding father Adam Smith, economic liberalism considers the market as the primary source of cooperation, progress, and prosperity provided that political interference and government regulation that can lead to conflict do not occur.⁹⁷

Economic liberalism assumes that a market arises spontaneously, increasing economic efficiency, maximizing economic growth, therefore improving the well-being of people.⁹⁸ Ruled by individual choices instead of governmental or political dominance, the free trade market environment, independent of national borders, triggers specialization that increases efficiency and productivity.⁹⁹ Free movement of capital ensures the flow of investment to where it is most profitable to invest, allowing people to benefit from natural advantages such as resources and specialization in a global market.¹⁰⁰ Not the state, but individuals are the primary beneficiaries of this economic activity according to this thought.¹⁰¹ Hence, firms, entrepreneurs, and consumers are given the primacy of place within this perspective.¹⁰²

In this market model, directed by supply and demand factors, people are assumed to endeavor to maximize their material interests. Therefore, individuals behave rationally in an impersonal and politically-neutral manner, and purport to

⁹⁶Jackson and Sørensen, *Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches*, 165.

⁹⁷Jackson and Sørensen, *Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches*, 165.

⁹⁸Gilpin, *The Political Economy of International Relations*, 28.

⁹⁹Jackson and Sørensen, *Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches*, 165.

¹⁰⁰Woods, "International Political economy in an age of globalization," 249.

¹⁰¹Gilpin, *The Political Economy of International Relations*, 28.

¹⁰²Cohn, *Global Political Economy*, 78.

satisfy certain values at the lowest possible costs.¹⁰³ Put differently, regarding the choice of actors, ideas, personalities, ideologies, or historical traditions are not taken into the formula.¹⁰⁴ While the purpose of international economics activities is seen as utilizing world's scarce resources to maximize economic growth by liberals, performance indicators such as GDP growth, trade, and foreign investment are considered fundamental rather than relative gains among states.¹⁰⁵

To sum up, the liberal image of global politics is a complex tradition that takes a multiplicity of actors into account.¹⁰⁶ States are recognized as key actors in international relations but they are not the only significant ones, according to liberalists.¹⁰⁷ In contrast with realism, the liberal perspective perceives the state as a battleground of conflicting interests which is subject to pressures of domestic and transnational interest groups.¹⁰⁸ While neo-realists focus on the question of how to survive in this system, for neo-liberal institutionalists, the core question is how to provide cooperation in an anarchic and competitive international arena.¹⁰⁹ Therefore, the liberal tradition champions the idea of democratic norms, rule of law, international institutions, and complex trade networks to sustain international cooperation and peace.

There is one more significant perspective discussed in this paper, that challenges realism and liberalism. Constructivism, with its principal focus on ideational factors in global politics, and being the last primary pillar of analytic eclecticism, is outlined in the next section.

¹⁰³Gilpin, *The Political Economy of International Relations*, 28-29.

¹⁰⁴Woods, "International Political economy in an age of globalization", 250.

¹⁰⁵Cohn, *Global Political Economy*, 79.

¹⁰⁶Viotti and Kauppi, *International Relations and World Politics*, 33.

¹⁰⁷Viotti and Kauppi, *International Relations and World Politics*, 33.

¹⁰⁸Viotti and Kauppi, *International Relations and World Politics*, 33-34.

¹⁰⁹Lamy, "Contemporary mainstream approaches: neo-realism and neo-liberalism," 127.

2.3 Constructivism

Although the roots of constructivist ideas can be traced back to historical thinkers such as Vico, Kant, and Max Weber who underline the significance of meaning and understanding, the thought attracted attention through the end of the Cold War in the 1980s when the world was undergoing a drastic change.¹¹⁰ Constructivism is often referred to as *social theory* that concerns itself with how to conceptualize the interaction between agents and structures, not a *substantive theory* which offers specific claims about patterns in world politics.¹¹¹ Nicholas Onuf, who coined the term constructivism, frames the approach as follows:

Constructivism is not a theory as such. It does not offer general explanations for what people do, why societies differ, how the world changes. Instead, constructivism makes it feasible to theorize about matters that seem to be unrelated because the concepts and propositions normally used to talk about such matters are also unrelated.¹¹²

In the definition of national interests, realism does not prioritize the role of ideas, norms, and identity. Constructivism appears to have taken place in the literature of IR theories in direct opposition to realism,¹¹³ also challenging liberal conceptions.¹¹⁴ As defended by realism and liberalism, the structure or the environment in which actors or agents operate affects the behavior of actors. Constructivism, on the contrary, claims that actors or agents do not just react to their environment but affect the environment by constructing knowledge of the external world around them.¹¹⁵ Adherents of constructivism claim that what actors do in international relations, the interests they pursue, and the structures they operate within are defined by social

¹¹⁰Jackson and Sørensen, *Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches*, 210-211.

¹¹¹Barnett, "Social constructivism," 157.

¹¹²Onuf, "Constructivism: A User's Manual," 58.

¹¹³Barkin, "Realist Constructivism", 325.

¹¹⁴Viotti and Kauppi, *International Relations and World Politics*, 39.

¹¹⁵Viotti and Kauppi, *International Relations and World Politics*, 40.

norms and ideas rather than by objective and material conditions.¹¹⁶ Hence, international relations is not a physical and material object outside the human consciousness but an intellectual and ideational system, a set of thought and norms, arranged by certain people at a particular time and place.¹¹⁷ Alexander Wendt, a leading figure of constructivism, underscores the two tenets of the approach:

(1) that the structures of human association are determined primarily by shared ideas rather than material forces, and (2) that the identities and interests of purposive actors are constructed by these shared ideas rather than given by nature.¹¹⁸

The structure consists of ideas, and when the ideas within the IR structure change, the structure changes too.¹¹⁹ This fundamental argument of constructivism is famously captured by the often-referred phrase of Wendt: "*Anarchy is what states make of it.*".¹²⁰ Wendt's point of departure is the same as Waltz; the acceptance of the anarchic structure of international relations. But contrasting with the neorealist assumption that the anarchy leads to self-help, Wendt puts forward the idea that anarchy and distribution of power do not predict whether two states will be friends or foes, will recognize each other's sovereignty, or will be revisionist or status quo powers.¹²¹ He explains that structure is shaped by assigned meanings to it:

. . . if the United States and Soviet Union decide that they are no longer enemies, "the cold war is over." It is collective meanings that constitute the structures which organize our actions. Actors acquire identities-relatively stable, role-specific understandings and expectations about self-by participating in such collective meanings.¹²²

Put differently, via processes of interaction in the anarchic world, the identity and interest of states are formed.¹²³ For instance, the USA and Britain have evolved as

¹¹⁶Barkin, "Realist Constructivism", 326.

¹¹⁷Jackson and Sørensen, *Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches*, 209.

¹¹⁸Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 1.

¹¹⁹Jackson and Sørensen, *Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches*, 209.

¹²⁰Wendt, "Anarchy is what States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics," 395.

¹²¹Wendt, "Anarchy is what States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics," 396.

¹²²Wendt, "Anarchy is what States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics," 397.

¹²³Jackson and Sørensen, *Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches*, 216.

friends, while others are enemies, or many states within the EU are former enemies who have learned to cooperate.¹²⁴ As Tannenwald points it out, “The starting premise is that the material world is indeterminate and is interpreted within a larger context of meaning. Ideas thus define the meaning of material power.”¹²⁵

Within the realm of ideational elements, identity is also considered as a core concept to understand many of the important issues of world politics today.¹²⁶ Neither realism nor liberalism does allow for the role of identity in international anarchy where the ultimate goal is security. But constructivism challenges these traditions with the following motto: Identity does matter.¹²⁷ For instance, it is argued that the US relations with Canada and France is different from its relations with Egypt or China not just due to security reasons but due to common identity shared with the former two.¹²⁸ Moreover, Ruggie asserts that the U.S security policy and definition of interests before and during the Cold-War era are shaped by identity factors.¹²⁹ In the same way, Kowert, analyzing the relation between identity and choices people make, underlines that ideas in the world of our making are central to accounts of choices people make.¹³⁰ Put differently, our choices depend on who we are, which serves as a guide to what we want and to how we wish the world to be constructed.¹³¹ Likewise, the international order is not only the major states’ power and / or material interests, but also their identities which affect their definition of interests.¹³² Beliefs define material needs and it is the perception of value in an

¹²⁴Jackson and Sørensen, *Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches*, 216.

¹²⁵Tannenwald, “Ideas and Explanation: Advancing the Theoretical Agenda,” 19.

¹²⁶Abdelal, Herrera, Johnston, and McDermott, “Treating Identity as a Variable,” 1.

¹²⁷Brown and Ainley, *Understanding International Relations*, 50.

¹²⁸Brown and Ainley, *Understanding International Relations*, 50.

¹²⁹Ruggie, *Constructing the World Polity: Essays on international institutionalization*, 203.

¹³⁰Kowert, “Completing the Ideational Triangle: Identity, Choice, and Obligation in International Relations,” 30.

¹³¹Kowert, “Completing the Ideational Triangle: Identity, Choice, and Obligation in International Relations,” 32.

¹³²Ruggie, *Constructing the World Polity: Essays on international institutionalization*, 14.

object that constitutes the motive to pursue it.¹³³ Moreover, the identity of the same state can change and pull its interests along.¹³⁴

Another related topic, *collective identity* is what Wendt sees as an extension of the boundaries between the *self* to include the *other*.¹³⁵ Collective identity, according to Lancaster and Foddy, merges the identities and roles played by the self and the other into a single one.¹³⁶ Collective identity enables to define the welfare of the other as part of the self in an altruistic way.¹³⁷ If a state helps another state, because it identifies with the other state, even when its own security is not threatened but still perceives a threat to the self, then it is acting from a collective interest.¹³⁸ Altruistic actors can still be rational, but they calculate their interests on a group basis.¹³⁹

Wendt expresses that collective identities are usually relation specific and cannot be generalized to overall foreign policy of states, issue-specific such as against a common threat, and prone to be in tension with egoistic identities of the parts.¹⁴⁰ He underlines some systemic processes as facilitators for the formation of collective identities. Interdependence, whether intersubjective or material, strengthened by increasing trade and capital flows or a common threat, leads actors to a common fate, increases sensitivity to each other, and can accelerate actors to identify with each other.¹⁴¹ Societal convergence in terms of domestic values, which can result from rising interdependence but also from efforts of one society to learn from the other which the former one thinks is a better model in terms of democratic

¹³³Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 123.

¹³⁴Ruggie, *Constructing the World Polity: Essays on international institutionalization*, 14.

¹³⁵Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 229.

¹³⁶Lancaster and Foddy, as cited in Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 229.

¹³⁷Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 229.

¹³⁸Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 240.

¹³⁹Sugden, as cited in Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 229.

¹⁴⁰Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 337.

¹⁴¹Wendt, "Collective Identity Formation and the International State," 389-390.

norms, can eventually influence the identity and interests of societies, leading to a “we” perspective.¹⁴² Strategic practice is another facilitator detected by Wendt. He argues that through repeated acts of cooperation, actors begin to learn from each other, change their intersubjective knowledge, and may begin to identify with each other to see themselves as a “we” bound by certain norms.¹⁴³ Within the strategic practice, discourses such as “European Identity” is a facilitator that may manipulate shared meanings and may affect identities and interests.¹⁴⁴

Collective identity is referred to as *social identity* within Social Identity Theory (SIT) in social psychology.¹⁴⁵ Developed by well-known European psychologists in 1960s and 1970s, particularly, Henri Tajfel, John Turner, and Serge Moscovici, SIT focuses on mechanisms that trigger the individual to identify with a group¹⁴⁶ and groups to adopt specific identities.¹⁴⁷ Hogg and Abrams define social identity as a person’s knowledge that he or she belongs to a social category or group.¹⁴⁸ Through a social process, people who are similar to the self are categorized with the self, labelled as in-group, whereas people differing from the self are labelled as out-group.¹⁴⁹ The in-group out-group categorization lead the in-group to be judged positively as opposed to the negative evaluation of the out-group.¹⁵⁰ Tajfel and Turner champion the idea that in relevant intergroup situations, individuals do not interact based on their individual characteristics or interpersonal relationships, but as

¹⁴²Wendt, “Collective Identity Formation and the International State,” 390.

¹⁴³Wendt, “Collective Identity Formation and the International State,” 390.

¹⁴⁴Wendt, “Collective Identity Formation and the International State,” 391.

¹⁴⁵In recent years, SIT has captured attention of distinguished scholars including Alexander Wendt, Jonathan Mercer, Rawi Abdelal, Paul Kowert, and Deborah Larson.

¹⁴⁶A group comprises of two or more individuals who belong to a common social category such as race, nationality, class, sex, occupation, religion, or ethnicity, See Larson, “How Identities Form and Change: Supplementing Constructivism with Social Psychology,” 64.

¹⁴⁷Larson, “How Identities Form and Change: Supplementing Constructivism with Social Psychology,” 63.

¹⁴⁸Hogg and Abrams, as cited in Stets and Burke, “Identity Theory and Social Identity Theory,” 225.

¹⁴⁹Stets and Burke, “Identity Theory and Social Identity Theory,” 225.

¹⁵⁰Stets and Burke, “Identity Theory and Social Identity Theory,” 225.

members of their group in a defined relation to members of other groups.¹⁵¹

Moreover, SIT assumes that in-group bias, the tendency to favor the in-group over the out-group in evaluations and behaviors are remarkably existent in intergroup interactions.¹⁵² From a social psychology viewpoint, people tend to show favoritism to their group because social categories have reference to the self.¹⁵³ When collective identity is salient,¹⁵⁴ people tend to remember more positive information about in-group members,¹⁵⁵ perceive and treat in group members to some extent like the Self, feeling empathy with their troubles, taking pride in their successes, and generously sharing resources with them.¹⁵⁶ Likewise, as Voci points out, in-group members are likely to be perceived as more trustworthy than out-group members.¹⁵⁷ Dovidio et. al also claims, in term of behavioral outcomes, people are more helpful toward in-group members than toward out-group members.¹⁵⁸

So far, the IPE projections of realist and liberal thought presented above are within a rationalist and materialist stream. Yet, constructivists claim that there is so much more to the politics of the world economy than material incentives.¹⁵⁹ Economies might vary substantially for nonmaterial causes. As Chwioroth notes market-constraints explanations can fail to recognize that material trends are socially mediated and that actors need to rely on ideas to provide such trends with

¹⁵¹Tajfel and Turner, "The Social Identity Theory of Intergroup Behavior," 10.

¹⁵²Tajfel and Turner, "The Social Identity Theory of Intergroup Behavior," 13.

¹⁵³Larson, "How Identities Form and Change: Supplementing Constructivism with Social Psychology," 64-65.

¹⁵⁴*Salience* is a term used by social identity theorists to indicate the activation of an identity in a situation. See Stets and Burke, "Identity Theory and Social Identity Theory," 229.

¹⁵⁵Howard and Rothbart, as cited in Dovidio, Gaertner & Saguy, "Commonality and the Complexity of 'We': Social Attitudes and Social Change," 5.

¹⁵⁶Aron et.al, "Including others in the self," 122-123.

¹⁵⁷Alberto Voci, "The link between identification and in-group favouritism: Effects of threat to social identity and trust-related emotions," 267.

¹⁵⁸Dovidio, Gaertner and Saguy, "Commonality and the Complexity of 'We': Social Attitudes and Social Change," 5.

¹⁵⁹Abdelal, "Constructivism as an approach to international Political economy," 63.

meaning.¹⁶⁰ Sociological perspectives, as championed by constructivists, can offer a general theoretical orientation that can challenge or complement rationalism.¹⁶¹ As Abdelal states, “social facts influence patterns of political economy directly as socially constructed coordination devices; they also influence how agents interpret the material reality around them.”¹⁶² Constructivist IPE claims that the market is not a natural fact but a social structure.¹⁶³ Market is a structure in which participants operate with social purposes that may arise from cultural or international norms and national identities.¹⁶⁴ As Abdelal puts it:

Societies’ collective identities and cultural norms lead them to their own interpretations of the purposes of economic activity . . . and the meaning of their economic interdependence with others. Collective identities thus influence how societies and governments interpret their place in the world economy. These *sui generis* social facts define the reasons for engaging in some types of economic activity, and not others . . . Much as post-Soviet Lithuania interpreted economic dependence on Russia as a security threat, while dependence on the European Union was an opportunity . . .¹⁶⁵

Yet, it is quite important to note that constructivism in the IPE world does not deny the significance of material facts, power and economic incentives, but norms, cultures, and identities are what endow meaning to these material facts and what IPE actors react to accordingly.¹⁶⁶

Studying the ideational factors in the creation of regional trade agreements (RTAs), Duina contends that, “the pursuit of free trade in any given region is a social endeavor... a widespread desire for regional free trade pursued in very particular local conditions.”¹⁶⁷ Although neoliberalism and the principle of free trade offer a

¹⁶⁰Chwieroth, “Shrinking the State: Neoliberal Economists and Social Spending in Latin America,” 23.

¹⁶¹Katzenstein, Keohane, and Krasner, “International Organization and the Study of World Politics,” 675.

¹⁶²Abdelal, “Constructivism as an approach to international Political economy,” 63.

¹⁶³Abdelal, “Constructivism as an approach to international Political economy,” 66.

¹⁶⁴Abdelal, “Constructivism as an approach to international Political economy,” 72.

¹⁶⁵Abdelal, “Constructivism as an approach to international Political economy,” 72.

¹⁶⁶Abdelal, “Constructivism as an approach to international Political economy,” 73.

¹⁶⁷Duina, *The Social Construction of Free Trade: The European Union, NAFTA, and Mercosur*, 3-4.

blueprint for market economies, Duina argues that it is the social actors in practical life that make markets in specific contexts.¹⁶⁸ In a given market environment, buyer's and seller's expectations need to be met. For example, consumers and producers need to share similar views about what a yogurt, or a beer is, and they must feel that the business is safe, orderly, and fair.¹⁶⁹ Likewise Odell points out to the importance of ideational factors in business negotiations;

If the real world, is one of bounded rationality, identifying such key beliefs and their effects becomes a productive way to advance knowledge about, and the practice of, economic bargaining.¹⁷⁰

With respect to national identity, Abdelal builds up his point on the constructivist ground that societies' collective identities lead them to their own understanding of economic relations, economic institutions, and the meaning of economic interdependence with other states.¹⁷¹ In other words, national identity and nationalism play a determining role in whether economic relations with other states are a form of cooperation or discord. Of course, material interests matter to states, but national identities affect how government interpret those material interests.¹⁷²

To cite his central claim:

Most significant, nationalism specifies a direction for foreign economic policy, away from the nation's "other" and often toward another, broader cultural space. Nationalisms lead governments to interpret their economic dependence on some states as a security threat but on other states as mutually beneficial exchange.¹⁷³

¹⁶⁸Duina, *The Social Construction of Free Trade: The European Union, NAFTA, and Mercosur*, 4.

¹⁶⁹Duina, *The Social Construction of Free Trade: The European Union, NAFTA, and Mercosur*, 4.

¹⁷⁰Odell, *Negotiating the World Economy*, 3.

¹⁷¹Abdelal, *National Purpose in the World Economy: Post Soviet States in Comparative Perspective*, 1-2.

¹⁷²Abdelal, *National Purpose in the World Economy: Post Soviet States in Comparative Perspective*, 20.

¹⁷³Abdelal, *National Purpose in the World Economy: Post Soviet States in Comparative Perspective*, 2.

Various studies have been carried out to examine a wide range of constructivist claims within the realm of political economy. In the early 1980s, John Odell pointed out the role of policy beliefs that are argued to shape the U.S monetary behavior.¹⁷⁴ He stated that “behavior depends not on reality but on how reality is perceived and interpreted ... Substantive ideas held by top policy makers and advisers [are] decisive or necessary elements of explanation”.¹⁷⁵ Kathleen McNamara, in her oft-cited work *The Currency of Ideas*, rejects the assumption that liberal market forces solely direct governments’ policy change and delineates the role of shared experiences and changes in policy-makers’ beliefs in the European monetary integration process.¹⁷⁶ Another prominent work is the Chwiero’s article¹⁷⁷ that examines the correspondence between the IMF staff who adhered to neoliberal norms coming to positions of authority and their prescription to liberalize the capital controls in emerging markets. Another case study, carried out by Yoshiko Herrera,¹⁷⁸ examines the Sverdlovsk region of the Russian Federation to illustrate the relation between regional understandings of the economy, and movements for greater sovereignty. She claims that regional understandings are critical to the development of regional interests including greater sovereignty,¹⁷⁹ and there was no fixed set of economic interests that caused the sovereignty movement, but perceptions like inequality and unjust treatment stimulated constitutional reforms and economic

¹⁷⁴ See Odell, “The U.S. and the emergence of flexible exchange rates: an analysis of foreign policy change”.

¹⁷⁵ Odell, as cited in Cohen, “The multiple traditions of American IPE”, 33.

¹⁷⁶ See McNamara, *The Currency of Ideas*.

¹⁷⁷ See Chwiero, “Testing and Measuring the Role of Ideas: The Case of Neoliberalism in the International Monetary Fund”.

¹⁷⁸ Herrera, “Imagined Economies: Constructivist Political Economy, Nationalism, and Economic-based Sovereignty Movements in Russia”.

¹⁷⁹ Herrera, “Imagined Economies: Constructivist Political Economy, Nationalism, and Economic-based Sovereignty Movements in Russia,” 122.

interests in the support of the Urals Republic.¹⁸⁰ Hence, economic advantages and disadvantages are as imagined by regional economies or nations.¹⁸¹ And it is the actors' interpretations of the economy that constructs economic interests as fluid and forms into basis for political action.¹⁸²

Likewise, Hall examines the influence of discursive strategies on economic policies of South Korea during the Asian financial crisis.¹⁸³ His central argument is that three actors; U.S Treasury, IMF, and South Korean Government engaged in discursive practices that engendered discursive structures that constituted the identity and the interests of the actors, and designated social meanings to primary practices of the Asian development model as causes of the crises.¹⁸⁴ Hence, combined with the conditions that occurred with the crisis, the discursive attacks have generated a normative environment for neoliberal policy formation in Korea where the Asian model was defined as corrupt and inefficient whereas liberation of markets were thought ethical.¹⁸⁵ It is the neoliberal ideas that reinforced Korean leader Kim's identity as a reformer, and re-shaped Korea's economic and political agenda.¹⁸⁶

In conclusion, referring to Emanuel Adler, constructivism claims that the manner in which the material world shapes and is shaped by human action and interaction depends on the dynamic normative and epistemic interpretation of the material world.¹⁸⁷ Roughly, the end of the Cold War indicated that global politics is not a fixed structure, independent of human cognition and action like the natural

¹⁸⁰Herrera, "Imagined Economies: Constructivist Political Economy, Nationalism, and Economic-based Sovereignty Movements in Russia," 127.

¹⁸¹Herrera, "Imagined Economies: Constructivist Political Economy, Nationalism, and Economic-based Sovereignty Movements in Russia," 132.

¹⁸²Herrera, "Imagined Economies: Constructivist Political Economy, Nationalism, and Economic-based Sovereignty Movements in Russia," 132.

¹⁸³See Hall, "The Discursive Demolition of the Asian Development Model".

¹⁸⁴Hall, "The Discursive Demolition of the Asian Development Model," 72-73.

¹⁸⁵Hall, "The Discursive Demolition of the Asian Development Model," 95.

¹⁸⁶Hall, "The Discursive Demolition of the Asian Development Model," 95.

¹⁸⁷Adler, "Seizing the Middle Ground: Constructivism in World Politics," 322.

world, but a system whose intersubjective rules are made by human practices that humans are given meaning by.¹⁸⁸ Therefore, global politics from a constructivist perspective is conceived as a dynamic structure constituted by actors who over time shape their own social context that in turn constructs the behaviors, interests, and identities of states.¹⁸⁹ Thus, concepts such as sovereignty, interests, and anarchy are terms actors give meaning to, not unchanging aspects of reality.¹⁹⁰ While power is central to the realist tradition, it is the *intersubjectivity* concept that is central to constructivism.¹⁹¹ As Nicholas Onuf, who coined the term constructivism, states, the fundamental proposition of constructivism is that

human beings are social beings . . . social relations construct people . . . Conversely, we make the world what it is, from the raw materials that nature provides by doing what we do with each other and saying what we say to each other.¹⁹²

2.4 Analytic eclecticism

Discrete approaches often referred to as paradigms or traditions attempt to provide invaluable insights for global politics. Adherents of specific paradigms build their stance on particular assumptions and assign primacy to particular kinds of causal factors rather than others in their explanations of world affairs. On the other hand, several distinguished scholars reflect on the limitations of singular theoretical perspectives to decipher world politics.¹⁹³

¹⁸⁸Guzzini, "A Reconstruction of Constructivism in International Relations," 155.

¹⁸⁹Viotti and Kauppi, *International Relations and World Politics*, 40.

¹⁹⁰Viotti and Kauppi, *International Relations and World Politics*, 40.

¹⁹¹Barkin, "Realist Constructivism," 327.

¹⁹²Onuf, "Constructivism: A User's Manual," 59.

¹⁹³Sil and Katzenstein provide examples from the works of key scholars, some of which are also cited in this paper: Abdelal, "Constructivism as an approach to international political economy," 63; Katzenstein, Keohane, and Krasner, "International Organization and the Study of World Politics," 682; Waltz, *Man, the State and War: A Theoretical Analysis*, 230.

Sharing the views of these oft-cited scholars, in their book *Beyond Paradigms: Analytic Eclecticism in the Study of World Politics*, Sil and Katzenstein promote the idea of ‘going beyond paradigms’ by recognizing and depicting relationships between concepts, observations, and causalities constructed in different analytic perspectives.¹⁹⁴ Without discarding the claims of paradigms, *Analytic Eclecticism* explores substantive relations and clusters of analyses formulated in separate paradigms to reveal “hidden connections among elements of seemingly incommensurable paradigm-bound theories”.¹⁹⁵ It evidently engages existing social science theories, but with the purpose of systematically drawing together elements of diverse theories in ways that can shed new light on real-world issues of policy and practice.¹⁹⁶ On the contrary, Sil and Katzenstein maintain that analytic eclecticism is not a synthesis or replacement of paradigms, but a demonstration of concrete connections among seemingly discrete approaches.¹⁹⁷

The eclectic approach focuses on complex interactions among the distribution of material capabilities (privileged by realist tradition), interests and gains pursued by individual and collective actors (privileged by liberal tradition), and the ideational factors that influence how actors perceive the world and their identities within it (privileged by constructivist tradition).¹⁹⁸ Hence, analytic eclecticism finds its playground within the triad of realism, liberalism, and constructivism which Sil and Katzenstein consider as the most established and most visible contenders for paradigmatic dominance, each having distinct priorities assigned to assumptions in IR world,¹⁹⁹ and having meaningful differences in how they approach

¹⁹⁴Sil and Katzenstein, *Beyond Paradigms: Analytic Eclecticism in the Study of World Politics*, 2.

¹⁹⁵Sil and Katzenstein, *Beyond Paradigms: Analytic Eclecticism in the Study of World Politics*, 2.

¹⁹⁶Sil and Katzenstein, *Beyond Paradigms: Analytic Eclecticism in the Study of World Politics*, 212.

¹⁹⁷Sil and Katzenstein, *Beyond Paradigms: Analytic Eclecticism in the Study of World Politics*, 3.

¹⁹⁸Sil and Katzenstein, *Beyond Paradigms: Analytic Eclecticism in the Study of World Politics*, 3.

¹⁹⁹Sil and Katzenstein, *Beyond Paradigms: Analytic Eclecticism in the Study of World Politics*, 26.

the problems.²⁰⁰ Sil and Katzenstein assumes that eclectic scholarship or eclectic causal stories will incorporate elements of at least two, preferably all three of these contending paradigms.²⁰¹ Each discrete paradigm, as the eclectic approach assumes, has generated a wide range of considerable arguments, some of which converge with arguments produced in other paradigms on specific issues.²⁰² In the triad formed by realism, liberalism, and constructivism, Sil and Katzenstein illustrate points of convergence across these paradigms.²⁰³

As mentioned before, both realism and liberalism assume that states are self-interested, egoistic and rational entities in an anarchic structure. This commonality is presented by Sil and Katzenstein as a convergence point of realism and liberalism as follows:

The realist assumption that a state's material interests and resources are unproblematic is not inconsistent with the neoliberal premise that states are self-interested rational actors motivated by natural gains. This overlap permits some convergence in substantive analyses . . . around issues that realists may assign to the domain of 'low' politics but consider worth investigating nonetheless.²⁰⁴

Likewise, Ruggie claims that the two traditions stipulate their assumptions on a shared view of international relations comprised of self-regarding units who are largely responsive to material interests.²⁰⁵

The second convergence point according to the approach emerges between realism and constructivism. The convergence, referred to as realist constructivism, contends that norm-guided behavior can emerge from material interests, and rational action can be oriented towards socially constructed ideals.²⁰⁶ To cite Barkin:

²⁰⁰Sil and Katzenstein, *Beyond Paradigms: Analytic Eclecticism in the Study of World Politics*, 25.

²⁰¹Sil and Katzenstein, *Beyond Paradigms: Analytic Eclecticism in the Study of World Politics*, 209.

²⁰²Sil and Katzenstein, *Beyond Paradigms: Analytic Eclecticism in the Study of World Politics*, 26.

²⁰³Sil and Katzenstein, *Beyond Paradigms: Analytic Eclecticism in the Study of World Politics*, 31.

²⁰⁴Sil and Katzenstein, *Beyond Paradigms: Analytic Eclecticism in the Study of World Politics*, 31.

²⁰⁵Ruggie, *Constructing the World Polity: Essays on International Institutionalization*, 3.

²⁰⁶Sil and Katzenstein, *Beyond Paradigms: Analytic Eclecticism in the Study of World Politics*, 32.

The realist constructivism would look at the way in which power structures affect patterns of normative change in international relations and, conversely, the way in which a particular set of norms affect power structures.²⁰⁷

Barkin expresses that neither pure realism nor pure idealism can account for a political change, but an interplay of these views.²⁰⁸ Norms like human rights are generally accepted in relations among states, but power still matters in their interactions.²⁰⁹

Similarly, Henry Nau puts forward the idea that the U.S foreign policy cannot be understood without considering constructivist factors such as national identity along with realist explanations. Regarding the Cold War, Nau argues that “in the end, national identities, not just the balance of power, decided the Cold-War. After 1970, relative military power [between the U.S and the Soviet Union] changed little and so explains little about the events of 1991.”²¹⁰ He continues to explain the international system such that:

Today, the world’s great industrial powers share similar democratic national identities and appear to eliminate the balancing of power from their relationships altogether. Conflict or convergence of national identities is therefore a powerful regulator of military competition among independent nations...And identity changes can reduce or increase threats even if there are no power changes...France with hundreds of nuclear weapons is not a military threat to the United States; North Korea with a few nuclear weapons is.²¹¹

The last range of possibilities for convergence is where constructivism and liberalism meet. As mentioned in previous sections, both perspectives champion the idea of shared norms and common principles to influence the behavior of states. Sil and Katzenstein consider this point as a commonality that primarily emphasize the role of

²⁰⁷Barkin, “Realist Constructivism,” 337.

²⁰⁸Barkin, “Realist Constructivism,” 337.

²⁰⁹Barkin, “Realist Constructivism,” 337.

²¹⁰Nau, *At Home Abroad: Identity and Power in American Foreign Policy*, 5.

²¹¹Nau, *At Home Abroad: Identity and Power in American Foreign Policy*, 6.

ideas in the change of state behavior and identity.²¹² As Haas puts it, constructivism rejects the approach of realism, and neorealism, and retains affinities to liberal tradition by paying attention to ideas, value-oriented behavior, pluralism and institutionalism.²¹³ What Jackson and Nexon call as liberal-constructivism aims to illustrate the common points between the two paradigms; that is the right distribution of norms, identities, discourses, and rules can limit the significance of power politics.²¹⁴ Admitting that power relations cannot be completely neglected from international relations, they argue that it is the divergent claims of liberalism and constructivism that can help mitigate the negative effects of the anarchic structure by cooperation.²¹⁵

In short, Sil and Katzenstein's approach champions explanations that combine mechanisms and causal logics drawn from at least two contending paradigms.²¹⁶ In doing so, Sil and Katzenstein argues that the very framing of questions like what factors explain the emergence of situation x requires a relaxation of boundaries of existing paradigms in IR discipline.²¹⁷ And this relaxation or expanding the repertoire of assumptions and concepts, analytic eclecticism is asserted to enable the IR scholars to add new layers of complexity to phenomena that paradigm-bound research must necessarily oversimplify.²¹⁸ As Sil and Katzetstein state, "what distinguishes eclecticism is the exploration of wide range of causal factors, normally examined in isolation by contending views."²¹⁹

²¹²Sil and Katzenstein, *Beyond Paradigms: Analytic Eclecticism in the Study of World Politics*, 33.

²¹³Haas, "Does Constructivism Subsume Neo-functionalism?," 22.

²¹⁴Jackson and Nexon, "Paradigmatic Faults in International-Relations Theory," 924.

²¹⁵Jackson and Nexon, "Paradigmatic Faults in International-Relations Theory," 924-925.

²¹⁶Sil and Katzenstein, *Beyond Paradigms: Analytic Eclecticism in the Study of World Politics*, 214.

²¹⁷Sil and Katzenstein, *Beyond Paradigms: Analytic Eclecticism in the Study of World Politics*, 61.

²¹⁸Sil and Katzenstein, *Beyond Paradigms: Analytic Eclecticism in the Study of World Politics*, 219.

²¹⁹Sil and Katzenstein, *Beyond Paradigms: Analytic Eclecticism in the Study of World Politics*, 208.

2.5 Methodology

Regarding the principal question this paper asks, the effect of constructivist elements on the realist and liberalist assumptions, the research is required to resort to some data-collection methods. While material dynamics of a bilateral relationship are easily quantifiable, with the help of statistics, intergovernmental agreements etc., ideational factors, building up the constructivist dimension of the methodology, are less so; they can be discovered through discourses analysis and interviews.

As the work of Abdelal et al. points out, discourse analysis and individual interviews are considered as common techniques to analyze identity.²²⁰ Certain discourses that states adopt function as a significant principle of coherence for statehood, which is implicitly reflected, according to Epstein, in the practice of diplomacy and the language used to describe international relations.²²¹ Such statements can be “France said that” or “Australia said this.”²²² Hence, studying the language with resources such as public pronouncements, archives of governments, relevant organizations, letters or memoirs of key individuals, press reports and interviews serves as a tool to indicate the existence of specific intersubjective understandings and meanings.²²³ Discourse analysis begins by identifying the discourses occurring in a specific area of international politics, and it may not be restricted to states. Other relevant actors such as NGOs and firms may also take

²²⁰ Abdelal et.al, “Treating Identity as a Variable,” 2.

²²¹ Epstein, “Who speaks? Discourse, the subject and the study of identity in international politics”, 341-342.

²²² Epstein, “Who speaks? Discourse, the subject and the study of identity in international politics”, 342.

²²³ Klotz and Lynch, *Strategies for Research in Constructivist International Relations*, 18-19.

place in the discourse study.²²⁴ The analysis is supposed to lead to the qualitative contextualization of texts and practices to delineate social meanings.²²⁵

When one wants to know how an individual experiences some phenomenon, interviewing has a primacy among different methods.²²⁶ As Yin points out, case study interviews are open-ended in nature, therefore the interviewer can ask respondents about the facts of a matter as well their opinions and perceptions about the events.²²⁷ Likewise, open-ended questions provide the subjects with the opportunity to talk about identity in their own words, rather than being forced to choose among alternatives that subjects may not feel describe them accurately.²²⁸ Open-ended interviews allow respondents to present their own notions of who they are, what matters to them and why, and how they determine who belongs to a particular group, without being categorized by researcher's own biases and interpretations.²²⁹

The primary assumption of interviews is that individuals who are interviewed possess a Turkic identity. Yet, it may be part of the game that some people interviewed or observed may not feel strong identification with this social group.²³⁰ In addition, the motivation factor is crucial for individuals to act, denoting just holding a particular identity does not necessarily mean that an individual will act in a specific way because of the identity.²³¹ Therefore, the motivation to transform

²²⁴Epstein, "Who speaks? Discourse, the subject and the study of identity in international politics", 342.

²²⁵Abdelal et. al, "Introduction," *Measuring Identity: A Guide for Social Scientists*, 7.

²²⁶Brinkman, *Qualitative Interviewing: Understanding Qualitative Research*, 47.

²²⁷Yin, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*, 90.

²²⁸Sylvan and Metskas, "Trade-offs in Measuring Identities: A Comparison of Five Approaches," 83.

²²⁹Abdelal et al., "Introduction," *Measuring Identity: A Guide for Social Scientists*, 5.

²³⁰Abdelal et al., "Introduction," *Measuring Identity: A Guide for Social Scientists*, 3.

²³¹Abdelal et al., "Introduction," *Measuring Identity: A Guide for Social Scientists*, 3.

identity into action cannot be neglected.²³² And it is the responsibility of this paper to find out the motivation pillar along with the identity factor. With these in mind, this research looks for clues and the emphasis on the Turkic identity in bilateral relations, as this dimension has been underlined by politicians countlessly since the 1990s. By clues, it is meant to find out whether the rhetoric of identity plays a role in the commercial realm as an initiator or facilitator. Moreover, this study specifically looks for evidence that sees ideational elements as a significant part of the bilateral dynamis. For this purpose, open-ended interviews are conducted with relevant businessmen,²³³ diplomats, or bureaucrats as they are assumed to have the first-hand experience and knowledge of political and economic pillars of Turkey-Azerbaijan relations, and place of the cultural affinity in the picture.

Regarding the limitations, as Abdelal et al. argues, when studying identity and its impacts on behavior, one needs to show that certain behavioral options are not existent when a specific identity is not adopted by actors.²³⁴ For example, when Azerbaijani businessmen work with Western partners, does the lack of a shared Turkic identity have a negative or limiting effect on the commercial relations, compared to cases where the same Azerbaijani businessmen work with Turkish firms? This comparative measurement is beyond the scope of this project. However, such a wider comparative scope would shed a deeper light on dynamics of the business world in Azerbaijan and provide additional insights for expectations of Azerbaijan market and Turkish entrepreneurs. As the rhetoric of One Nation, Two States could be evaluated through a comparative lens, from a theoretical view, including the interaction of businessmen from other countries with their Azerbaijani

²³²Abdelal et al., "Introduction," *Measuring Identity: A Guide for Social Scientists*, 4.

²³³The word "businessmen" as used in this study refers to all business executives regardless of their gender.

²³⁴Abdelal et al., "Treating Identity as a Variable," 8.

counterparts would provide the research with more data to analyze the impact of ideational factors and perceptions on commercial links.

Moreover, identities are not seen as fixed and static notions by the constructivist tradition. However, this paper also does not concern itself with the possible minor or major evolutions of Turkic identity, which points out to another limitation of this paper. Likewise, the degree to which a group accepts a specific social identity, and the degree to which a state recognizes a social identity, or whether a particular identity is seen as a positive or negative attribute are also measurable indicators.²³⁵ Again, these measurements are beyond the current scope, even though measurements can definitively lead to a more comprehensive identity study. In addition, SIT focuses on the identity of groups rather than identifications occurring at a personal level. As illustrated by Stets and Burke, the basis of self-classification is different in two theories; SIT and Identity Theory.²³⁶ This means that factors of individual identification such as personal roles are not primarily targeted at in case of a group-level evaluation. For instance, an Azerbaijani lawyer's perception of Turkic identity and his interaction with Turkish clients is not compared to that of an Azerbaijani businessman towards Turkish customers for this project. Furthermore, the status factor, a hierarchy of perceived prestige between groups as put by Tajfel and Turner²³⁷, that may affect the behavior of members of groups, is left out of the discussion for the present paper. However, this project does not compare the prestige of different Turkish companies operating in Azerbaijan and measure the influence on their commercial relations. Ultimately, this paper primarily focuses on collective

²³⁵ Abdelal et al., "Treating Identity as a Variable," 11.

²³⁶ Stets and Burke, "Identity Theory and Social Identity Theory," 226.

²³⁷ Tajfel and Turner, "The Social Identity Theory of Intergroup Behavior," 11-12.

Turkic identity and aims to detect the impact of this identity on the commercial relations.

By preferring analytic eclecticism, the study leaves parsimony which is vital for theory-building and hypothesis testing. But the question addressed by this study naturally leads the researcher to take diverse factors privileged by diverse paradigms into account and find out the causalities between seemingly contending views. Yet, analytic eclecticism also has its limitations. First, it takes the three paradigms into account while omitting other paradigms such as Marxism and the English school that is popular outside the United States.²³⁸ Therefore, its causal explanations, though considering contending assumptions, is still limited to three traditions.

Although interviews with open-ended questions tend to elicit the most elaborate answers, the method contains some challenges and limitations.²³⁹ The main disadvantage of open-ended techniques is that analyzing and comparing the responses different subjects provide can be difficult.²⁴⁰ Moreover, as Yin lists, bias due to poorly constructed questions, response bias such as tendency to provide answers that are socially accepted, inaccuracies due to poor recall, reflexivity such that respondent tells what interviewer wants to hear.²⁴¹

Aware of these limitations, this paper pursues to find out if there is a positive impact of Turkic identity on the commercial relations between Turkey and Azerbaijan. The following chapter elaborates on the bilateral political, economic, and cultural ties between Turkey and Azerbaijan.

²³⁸Sil and Katzenstein, *Beyond Paradigms: Analytic Eclecticism in the Study of World Politics*, 25.

²³⁹Powell and Guadagno, "An Examination of the Limitations in Investigative Interviewers' Use of Open-Ended Questions," 383.

²⁴⁰Sylvan and Metskas, "Trade-offs in Measuring Identities: A Comparison of Five Approaches," 85.

²⁴¹Yin, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*, 86.

CHAPTER 3

AN EVALUATION OF TURKEY-AZERBAIJAN RELATIONS

This chapter aims to illustrate the major aspects of Turkey-Azerbaijan relations in political, economic, and cultural terms, between the years of 1991, the year Turkey officially recognized Azerbaijan, and 2016. However, before diving into the details of the bilateral relations, it seems appropriate at this point to portray the international environment and the changing trends of Turkish foreign policy with the end of the Cold War for a comprehensive presentation of the relations from a wider perspective.

During the Cold War era, Turkey was a part of the Western defense line against the expansion of Soviet influence into the East Mediterranean and Middle East. Ankara's primary foreign policy efforts revolved around ensuring a place within Western political institutions such as what is known today as European Union, and commitment to NATO alliance.²⁴² Except for the crises in its relations with Greece and Cyprus, Turkey remained in the backwaters of international politics throughout the Cold War.²⁴³ In other words, Turkey pursued a relatively passive or reactive foreign policy during the era.²⁴⁴

The end of the Cold War has altered Turkey's international environment profoundly as the security threat from the Soviet Union, the main cause of Turkey's alliance with the West, ended, and Turkey was surrounded by militarily and economically smaller neighbors in the Black Sea region, central Asia, and Transcaucasia.²⁴⁵ The disintegration of the Union in 1991 has caused drastic frontier

²⁴²Kirişçi, "The End of the Cold War and Changes in Turkish Foreign Policy Behaviour".

²⁴³Kirişçi, "The End of the Cold War and Changes in Turkish Foreign Policy Behaviour".

²⁴⁴Öniş and Yılmaz, "Between Europeanization and Euro-Asianism: Foreign Policy Activism in Turkey during the AKP Era," 7.

²⁴⁵Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774*, 135.

changes and a power void in Eurasia. However, the collapse of the Soviet Bloc also sparked off a debate about the future position of Turkey's foreign policy; some commentators argued that NATO would lose its importance to alternative security mechanisms,²⁴⁶ therefore, Turkey's strategic importance as a regional actor and as an ally of the West has declined.²⁴⁷ This line of argument, as Hale presents, suggested that Turkey would seek for new opportunities in post-Soviet republics to replace the close ties with the West.²⁴⁸ On the other hand, oft-cited experts such as Paul Henze claimed that Turkey's foreign policy choice to develop relations with former Soviet republics or Middle Eastern countries is not contradictory or competitive for Europe, but complementary.²⁴⁹ Likewise, this second line of argument asserted that Turkey's strategic importance to the West is enhanced in the post-Cold War period because of the potential help it can offer regarding the newly independent states of the Caucasus and Central Asia.²⁵⁰ Another prominent scholar, Öniş suggested that Turkey should look simultaneously to the East and the West in defining her identity as Turkey possesses a common identity with newly emerging Turkic republics that extends her European self-definition.²⁵¹ A similar expression belongs to then undersecretary of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Özdem Sanberk:

Turkey, by benefiting from the opportunity emerging on its east, can approach more to its European Union objective, can accelerate its ties with Caucasia and Central Asia countries, via the developing relations with the European Union. We can go to the West blowing our sails with the winds of the East, and to the East with the winds of the West; hence maximize our interests.²⁵²

²⁴⁶See Sayari, "Turkey: The Changing European Security Environment and the Gulf Crisis".

²⁴⁷Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774*, 135; Lesser and Larrabee, *Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty*, 1.

²⁴⁸Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774*, 136.

²⁴⁹Henze, "Turkey: Toward the Twenty-First Century," 2.

²⁵⁰Henze, "Turkey: Toward the Twenty-First Century," v; Lesser and Larrabee, *Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty*, 1.

²⁵¹Öniş, "Turkey in The Post-Cold War Era: In Search of Identity," 48-49.

²⁵²See Azer, *Babadan Oğula Güney Kafkasya*, 422.

Moreover, it is contended that upon the collapse of the Soviet bloc, Turkey has risen to a status of a regional actor given its size, population, position, and the Cold War experience.²⁵³ This significance is not only owing to the geopolitical position of Turkey but also its becoming a reference point for the newly independent post-Soviet countries with its developing democracy and liberalizing economy.²⁵⁴

On the other hand, although the post-Cold War order has brought up some opportunities for Turkey, security and instability risks also increased in Turkey's periphery. Regional and domestic conflicts rose in and among some of the newly independent republics, and influenced the formation of Turkish foreign policy in this new era.²⁵⁵ In addition, as Sönmezoğlu reminds us, although it has lost its sovereignty on former Soviet territories, Russia has re-established its influence on the Soviet geography in a short period after the dissolution.²⁵⁶ Namely, Russia's *near abroad policy* that turned Russia's eyes to the former Soviet regions again, including the Caucasus and Central Asia, aims to promote Russia's security, military and economic interests by wielding influence on the newly independent states.²⁵⁷ According to this policy, Moscow had to assume a privileged role in the former Soviet territory due to historical, military, and economic reasons.²⁵⁸ Multilateral institutions such as the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) were regarded as mechanisms to serve this policy.²⁵⁹ These developments briefly indicate that in the post-Soviet era, Turkey still needs to take the Russian factor into account when formulating a foreign policy towards the new republics.

²⁵³Sander, "Yeni Bir Bölgesel Güç Olarak Türkiye'nin Dış Politika Hedefleri," 607.

²⁵⁴Kirişçi, "Uluslararası Sistemdeki Değişmeler ve Türk Dış Politikasının Yeni Yönelimleri," 615.

²⁵⁵Aydın, "Kafkasya ve Orta Asya'yla İlişkiler," *Türk Dış Politikası: Cilt 2: 1980-2001*, 366.

²⁵⁶Sönmezoğlu, *Son Onyillarda Türk Dış Politikası: 1991-2015*, 309.

²⁵⁷Sönmezoğlu, *Son Onyillarda Türk Dış Politikası: 1991-2015*, 313.

²⁵⁸Kut, "Yeni Türk Cumhuriyetleri ve Uluslararası Ortam," 20.

²⁵⁹Sönmezoğlu, *Son Onyillarda Türk Dış Politikası: 1991-2015*, 313.

In short, the emergence of the Caucasus and Central Asian republics has provided a new dimension for Turkish foreign policy as Turkey has now interests in the region that it did not have during the Cold War.²⁶⁰ Therefore, Turkish foreign policy, which used to be passive and submissive during the bipolar era, has become assertive and influential on international political developments.²⁶¹ As Oral Sander puts it, what is new for Turkish foreign policy in this disorder is Turkey's beginning to evaluate its regional security and cooperation interests by favoring them over the global interest of the Cold War.²⁶²

Besides being merely a new dimension for Turkish foreign policy as underlined in the first chapter, Turkey welcomed the emergence of the Turkic republics with great euphoria. Oft-cited phrases like Demirel's "the Turkic world stretching from the Adriatic Sea to the Great Wall of China" or Özal's "Twenty First century will belong to the Turks" vividly depict the mental map of the political elite regarding the changing international conjuncture in the early 1990s. Likewise, Ercüment Konukman's words, minister of state then, shed some light on the Turkey's mood of euphoria: "All the Turkic power in the World should act together by means of economic and cultural cooperation. When this is realized, A Turkic world consisting of a 200 million population will emerge."²⁶³

Furthermore, in the new world order, the U.S and the Western powers were worried with the power vacuum in Central Asia which might have been filled by Iran-sponsored radical Islamic fundamentalism.²⁶⁴ As an alternative against this

²⁶⁰Lesser and Larrabee, *Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty*, 5.

²⁶¹Kirişçi, "Uluslararası Sistemdeki Değişmeler ve Türk Dış Politikasının Yeni Yönelimleri," 616.

²⁶²Sander, "Yeni Bir Bölgesel Güç Olarak Türkiye'nin Dış Politika Hedefleri," 608.

²⁶³Ercüment Konukman, as cited in Sert, *The Idea of a Turkic World from The Adriatic To the Wall of China: Relations Between Turkey and Turkic Republics during the 1990s*, 73.

²⁶⁴Bal, "Turkish Model as a Foreign Policy Instrument in Post Cold War Era: The Cases of Turkic Republics and the Post September 11th Era," 330.

danger, the Western world put forward the idea of Turkish Model to be embraced by new Turkic republics, that principally laid emphasis on democracy and secularism in a Muslim society, a liberal market economy, and cooperation with the West.²⁶⁵ As a matter of fact, Turkey was officially declared as a model for the Turkic republics by President George Bush during Prime Minister Demirel's visit to Washington:

Turkey is indeed a friend, a partner of the United States, and it's also a model to others, especially those newly independent republics of Central Asia . . . I see Turkey as a role model for the region around . . . Turkey is an island of stability and is being looked to by many as an example of what can be accomplished—what can be gained through adhering to democracy and the free market.²⁶⁶

It should be noted that the Turkic leaders then also embraced the idea of a Turkish Model to receive the support of the West in the post-independence period, and leaders of Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and most notably Elchibey from Azerbaijan praised Turkey's role as a guidance for them.²⁶⁷

Transcaucasia, located to the south of Caucasus Mountains, bounded on the north by Russia, on the east by the Caspian Sea, on the south by Turkey and Iran, and on the west by the Black Sea, is the region that covers the lands of three independent states today; Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan. Also called Southern Caucasus or Trans Caucasus²⁶⁸ as preferred by the Russians, the region, that Turkey has deep-rooted historical and cultural ties with, captures international attention thanks to its energy reserves and being on energy transit routes between Central Asia and the West,²⁶⁹ also serving as a bridge between Turkey and Central Asia. The Ministry of

²⁶⁵Bal, "Turkish Model as a Foreign Policy Instrument in Post Cold War Era: The Cases of Turkic Republics and the Post September 11th Era," 330-331.

²⁶⁶Inter Press Service, February 12, 1992, as cited in Dal and Erşen, "Reassessing the "Turkish Model" in the Post-Cold War Era: A Role Theory Perspective," 264.

²⁶⁷Dal and Erşen, "Reassessing the "Turkish Model" in the Post-Cold War Era: A Role Theory Perspective," 264-265.

²⁶⁸The geographic term "Trans Caucasus" meaning beyond the Caucasus Mountains represents the Russian viewpoint to the region. Hence Turkish diplomats and Ministry of Foreign Affairs prefer the term Southern Caucasus to denote Turkish perspective to the region.

²⁶⁹Sönmezoglu, *Son Onyillarda Türk Dış Politikası: 1991-2015*, 333.

Foreign Affairs defines the primary aspects of Turkish foreign policy toward the Southern Caucasus as strengthening the independence and sovereignty of the countries, enhancing the regional cooperation for political and economic stability, and supporting their integration efforts with the West.²⁷⁰ Following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Turkey was among the first countries to formally recognize the independence of Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Armenia. Ankara aimed to develop good relations with these states and achieved a momentum in the relations except with the latter one, according to the ministry page.²⁷¹ Armenia's negative attitude towards Turkey and its occupation of the disputed enclave Nagorno-Karabakh were considered as the underlying reasons of this setback.²⁷² Furthermore, Turkey has closed its borders with Armenia due to Armenia's occupations of the Azeri lands in 1993.²⁷³ Pertaining to the regional disputes such as Nagorno-Karabakh, Abkhazia and South Ossetia, Turkey takes sides with peaceful resolutions and means while preserving the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Azerbaijan and Georgia.²⁷⁴ In this regard, Turkey also wants to normalize the relations with Armenia while satisfying the terms above.²⁷⁵

After the end of the World War I, the borders of Turkey with its South Caucasian neighbors have been fixed by the following treaties; Treaty of Alexandropol (1920) with Armenia, Treaty of Moscow (1921) with the Soviet Union, and Treaty of Kars (1921) with Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Georgia. The borders that Turkey has with the region today are still the same borders fixed with these treaties. One critical aspect of the Treaty of Moscow is that it posits the

²⁷⁰Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Turkey's Relations with Southern Caucasus Countries*.

²⁷¹Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Turkey's Relations with Southern Caucasus Countries*.

²⁷²Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Turkey's Relations with Southern Caucasus Countries*.

²⁷³Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Turkey's Relations with Southern Caucasus Countries*.

²⁷⁴Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Turkey's Relations with Southern Caucasus Countries*.

²⁷⁵Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Turkey's Relations with Southern Caucasus Countries*.

Nakhichevan region an exclave, autonomous territory under the auspices of Azerbaijan under the condition that Azerbaijan does not relinquish the protectorate to any third party.²⁷⁶ Similar terms have been confirmed in the Treaty of Kars as Article V states that the Turkish Government, and the Soviet Governments of Armenia and Azerbaijan are agreed on the autonomy of Nakhichevan under the protection of Azerbaijan.²⁷⁷ Evidently, as a signatory, these terms have made Turkey a counterparty regarding the legal status of Nakhichevan. In the same way, these treaties entitle Turkey as a guarantor of the region along with Russia and other signatories.²⁷⁸

Azerbaijan, among the other newly independent Turkic Republics after the breakup of the Soviet Union, is geographically the closest one to Turkey, and the only one to have a common frontier with it, in the Nakhichevan autonomous province. In terms of linguistics, Azeri language is known to have a close resemblance to Turkish, more than do the Turkic languages of Central Asia.²⁷⁹ According to Azerbaijani foreign ministry, besides minorities, Turkic ethnic groups have composed the majority of the population along with their Turkic language since the first centuries of the AD, reaching a ratio of approximately 90% today.²⁸⁰ Throughout recent history, examples of Azerbaijani statesmen and intellectuals championing the Turkic elements of their identity and culture have been observed. President of Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan (1918-1920) Mammad Amin Rasulzade repeatedly emphasized the nationality of Azerbaijanis as Turk in his

²⁷⁶*Treaty of Moscow.*

²⁷⁷*Treaty of Kars.*

²⁷⁸ Azer, Babadan Oğula Güney Kafkasya, 462.

²⁷⁹Landau, *Pan-Turkism: From Irredentism to Cooperation*, 197.

²⁸⁰Republic of Azerbaijan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Ethnic Minorities: Cultural Diversity in The Republic of Azerbaijan.*

works.²⁸¹ Azerbaijani poets Mirza Alakbar Sabir (1862-1911) promoting the pervasion of Turkic language in education, and Ahmad Javad (1892-1937) with his famous Turkist poem “The Fluttering Black Sea” that reflects the yearning of Azerbaijanis for the Ottoman Turks, are among the key Azerbaijani intellectuals often referred to underline the cultural ties between Turkish people and Azerbaijani Turks.

The following sections portray Turkey’s development of relations with this geographically and linguistically closest Turkic state; “brother” Azerbaijan as called by Turkish public opinion and political elite. The examined period of relations which is between 1991-2016 is divided into two periods under the next section; from 1991 to 2002 and from 2002 to 2016. Adopting the methodology of Sönmezoğlu who divided his analysis of Turkish foreign policy after the collapse of the Soviet Union until 2015 into two periods, with the Justice and Development Party (AKP) coming to power in 2002, this study does the same. The reason as stated by Sönmezoğlu is the rule of the AKP is uninterrupted with its accession to power in 2002 until today, which also means its foreign policy perception is defined and applied without any interruption.²⁸² The next section starts with the political aspects of Turkey-Azerbaijan relations.

3.1 Political relations

To begin with an historical background regarding the twentieth century, the first official contract between Turkey, still the Ottoman Empire then, and Azerbaijan

²⁸¹Şimşir, *Azerbaycan: Azerbaycan'ın Yeniden Doğuş Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri*, 21.

²⁸²Sönmezoğlu, *Son Onyillarda Türk Dış Politikası:1991-2015*, 1.

representatives occurred in 1918 when Azerbaijan declared its independence upon the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917. As an attempt to save Baku from Bolshevik control,²⁸³ Turkish armies led by Enver Pasha attacked Russia on the Caucasus front motivated with a Pan-Turkic ideology behind.²⁸⁴ Consequently, Baku was saved from the Bolsheviks. However, the Armistice of Mudros forced Turkish forces to withdraw from Azerbaijan.²⁸⁵ And in 1920, upon the Soviet Russia troops marching to Azerbaijan, the young Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan collapsed leading to the establishment of the Soviet Socialist Republic of Azerbaijan.²⁸⁶ Şimşir notes that between 1920 and 1923, Ankara Government sought some ways to establish formal ties with the Soviet Azerbaijan by sending Memduh Şevket Esendal as a representative, but these attempts remained weak against the Soviet influence.²⁸⁷ Moreover, the Ankara Government and Bolshevik Russia signed the treaty of brotherhood in 1921 (Treaty of Moscow), which states that the contracting parties promise to never allow the formation or presence of groups that lay claim to the government of the other contracting party within their territories.²⁸⁸ With this treaty Turkey promised not to support Pan-Turkist movements, while pushing aside the issue of “outside Turks”.²⁸⁹

Likewise, the Republic of Turkey, after being established in 1923, has abstained from developing relations with Azerbaijan along with other Turkic republics due to the guidance by Atatürk’s maxim “Peace at home, peace in the world” and focusing on domestic society instead of expansion of influence abroad.²⁹⁰

²⁸³Şimşir, *Azerbaycan: Azerbaycan'ın Yeniden Doğuş Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri*, 30.

²⁸⁴Cornell, *Azerbaijan Since Independence*, 18.

²⁸⁵Cornell, *Azerbaijan Since Independence*, 27.

²⁸⁶Cornell, *Azerbaijan Since Independence*, 29.

²⁸⁷Şimşir, *Azerbaycan: Azerbaycan'ın Yeniden Doğuş Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri*, 62.

²⁸⁸*Treaty of Moscow*.

²⁸⁹Aydın, “Kafkasya ve Orta Asya'yla İlişkiler,” *Türk Dış Politikası: Cilt 2: 1980-2001*, 366.

²⁹⁰Cornell, *Azerbaijan Since Independence*, 363.

Later on, Turkey's West-oriented foreign policy and disconnection with its Turkic brothers throughout the Cold-War Era is succinctly pointed out by Mustafa Aydın:

Ever since the establishment of the Turkish Republic in 1923, its leaders, conscious of the dangers of any kind of pan-Turkist adventures such as the policies of the last days of the Ottoman Empire, had consistently denied any interest in so-called "outside Turks," especially those within the Soviet Union. Thus, when confronted with the opportunity... after Gorbachev's glasnost and perestroika policies ... Turkey still observed a policy meticulously designed to avoid giving any perception of seeking to undermine the existing USSR.²⁹¹

3.1.1 The 1990s

The *Perestroika* and *Glasnost* policies promoted by Gorbachev in the Soviet Union were a prelude for Azerbaijan's opening to Turkey.²⁹² Prior to these opening approaches, relations with Azerbaijan used to be carried out via Moscow, whom did not look with favor on neither direct contact with Azerbaijan nor any interest from Turkey in it.²⁹³ Nevertheless, with the policies, Soviet Union began to permit its republics to contact directly with the outside world in economic and cultural aspects.²⁹⁴ Prime Minister of Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic, Ayaz Muttalibov made an official visit to Turkey in January 1990 together with an envoy,²⁹⁵ which was the first prime minister level visit from Azerbaijan to Turkey after seventy-five years approximately.²⁹⁶ The welcoming ceremony in Istanbul happened under the flags of Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic and the Soviet Union hoisted side by side while Muttalibov, whose visit was known and approved by Moscow, was hosted

²⁹¹ Aydın, "Foucault's Pendulum: Turkey in Central Asia and the Caucasus," 2.

²⁹² Şimşir, *Azerbaycan: Azerbaycan'ın Yeniden Doğuş Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri*, 71.

²⁹³ Azer, *Babadan Oğula Güney Kafkasya*, 380.

²⁹⁴ Şimşir, *Azerbaycan: Azerbaycan'ın Yeniden Doğuş Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri*, 72.

²⁹⁵ Before 1990, the only high-level visit to Baku was Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel's visit in 1967 within the framework of an official visit to the Soviet Union.

²⁹⁶ Şimşir, *Azerbaycan: Azerbaycan'ın Yeniden Doğuş Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri*, 71.

at a ministerial level.²⁹⁷ As Aydın says above, the accompaniment of the Soviet Officials during the visit confirms Turkey's pursuit of a careful policy regarding its relations with the Soviet Union and Azerbaijan.

During his visit, Muttalibov had meetings with President Turgut Özal, Foreign Minister Mesut Yılmaz, and other ministers, along with Turkish business organizations such as Turkey-Azerbaijan Business Council of Foreign Economic Relations Board (DEIK). These meetings were accompanied by Soviet officials in Turkey. Muttalibov and Turkish ministers explicitly stated the purpose of this visit was to improve bilateral economic and cultural ties.²⁹⁸ In addition, Mesut Yılmaz and official papers such as *Newspot* argued that this process will also contribute to further enhancement of Turkish-Soviet relations as an additional factor.²⁹⁹ The visit ended up with signing of four protocols to launch and improve economic, commercial, scientific, and cultural exchanges,³⁰⁰ therefore signaling the initiation of formal bilateral relations.

In the following weeks, Turkish public opinion and foreign policy viewpoint concerning Azerbaijan were preoccupied with the escalating strife between Armenians and Azeris stemmed from the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute. The spreading of the ongoing skirmishes to Baku, Moscow's dispatching military forces to quell the unease on January 19, and being updated with the frequent death news of dozens from Baku for the next couple of weeks, resulted in sentimental repercussions in newspapers one after another such as "Blood is shed in brother Azerbaijan... Turkish

²⁹⁷Aydın, "Foucault's Pendulum: Turkey in Central Asia and the Caucasus," 2.

²⁹⁸Şimşir, *Azerbaycan: Azerbaycan'ın Yeniden Doğuş Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri*, 73-76.

²⁹⁹Şimşir, *Azerbaycan: Azerbaycan'ın Yeniden Doğuş Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri*, 73-74.

³⁰⁰Şimşir, *Azerbaycan: Azerbaycan'ın Yeniden Doğuş Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri*, 74-78.

blood...”,³⁰¹ “Red army opened fire at Azeris”,³⁰² “Red army leave Azerbaijan, Tears at Assembly”,³⁰³ and “Baku is bleeding”.³⁰⁴ The events, which Turkish public perceived as Soviet wildness in Azerbaijan, were furiously protested by masses in major cities like Istanbul and Ankara, followed by the ones in Izmir, Konya, Kayseri, Trabzon, Mersin along with Kars and Igdir where the Azeri population is quite dense.³⁰⁵

Likewise, columnists of the popular newspapers then were also occupied by the Baku events. During this period, various views were reflected. From *Türkiye* newspaper, Ergun Göze contended that Azerbaijan was not an internal affair of Russia as Turkey was a legal stakeholder guaranteed by the Treaty of Kars.³⁰⁶ On the other hand, Altan Öymen from *Milliyet* complained about the biased broadcasting of the Western media institutions that demonstrated the Armenians as victims of the Azeris whereas the reality was the exact opposite.³⁰⁷ Likewise, Sami Kohen from the same newspaper, criticizing the biased viewpoint of the Western media, claimed that the intervention of Moscow has created the independence movement led by the angry public in Azerbaijan, and the events were not a dispute between Azeris and Armenians anymore.³⁰⁸ In a similar manner, Ergun Balci from *Cumhuriyet*, wrote that the tragedy in Baku could be seen beyond a conflict of two ethnic groups; a nationalist expression of the unease in Azerbaijan of the Soviet policies.³⁰⁹

³⁰¹Translated by the author; original: “Can Azerbaycan’da Kan Akiyor Kan...Türk Kani...,” Göze, *Türkiye*.

³⁰²Translated by the author; original: “Kızilordu Azerilere Ates Acti,” *Hürriyet*.

³⁰³Translated by the author; original: “Kızilordu Azerbaycan’dan çıksin, Mecliste Gözyaslari,” *Milliyet*.

³⁰⁴Translated by the author; original: “Baku Kan Agliyor,” *Cumhuriyet*.

³⁰⁵Şimşir, *Azerbaycan: Azerbaycan’ın Yeniden Doğuş Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri*, 134-149.

³⁰⁶Göze, “Azerbaycan Rusya’nın İç Meselesi Değildir”.

³⁰⁷Öymen, “Görünmeyen Gerçekler”.

³⁰⁸Kohen, “Daha Yeni Başlıyor”.

³⁰⁹Balci, “Azerbaycan ve Ötesi”.

Furthermore, columnists like Necati Özfatura argued that the ultimate victory would be Azeris' and Azerbaijan is an issue of Turkey rather than an internal affair of the Soviet Union, therefore Turkey should send military aid to the Azerbaijani Turks.³¹⁰

To follow the developments in Baku, a crisis desk was formed at Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Ankara. Foreign Minister Mesut Yılmaz was also regularly updated by the Soviet Union ambassador to Ankara, Albert Chernyshov about the course of events in Baku.³¹¹ During these meetings, Yılmaz uttered Turkey's willingness to send humanitarian aid to Baku³¹² and his concerns for a misperception like Turks are slaughtering Armenians to be used for pro-Armenian campaigns³¹³ In addition, foreign ministry officials during this period spent effort to persuade the Western officials and journalists that the cause of the events was not the difference of religious belief.³¹⁴

In contrast to the sentimental headlines in Turkish media, Turkish officials assessed the Soviet intervention with caution and considered what happens in Baku as internal affairs of the Soviet Union. During his speech at the national assembly on January 23, 1990, Mesut Yılmaz, although sharing the deep sorrow of Azerbaijan that was invaded by the Armenians, underlined that the Soviet Union was a crucial neighbor to Turkey and the government was scrutinizing the developments within the framework of the domestic affairs of the Soviet Union, plus Turkey needed to be cool headed and long-sighted.³¹⁵

³¹⁰Özfatura, "Nihai Zafer Azerbaycanlıların Olacaktır".

³¹¹Şimşir, *Azerbaycan: Azerbaycan'ın Yeniden Doğuş Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri*, 121.

³¹²Şimşir, *Azerbaycan: Azerbaycan'ın Yeniden Doğuş Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri*, 104.

³¹³"Sınırdaki Alarm".

³¹⁴Azer, *Babadan Oğula Güney Kafkasya*, 371-372.

³¹⁵Şimşir, *Azerbaycan: Azerbaycan'ın Yeniden Doğuş Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri*, 114-116.

Yılmaz's speech vividly depicts that Turkish politicians adopted a calm and Soviet-centered approach to the Baku conflict. The intervention was deemed to be the domestic affairs of its neighbor, despite the emphasis of brotherhood with Azerbaijan, whose justifiability pertaining to the Armenian dispute was recognized by Turkey, according to Yılmaz's discourse. Similar declarations were made by top officials during the developments; President Turgut Özal expressed the view that guns should not be used, and that dialogue is required to end the dispute, while also noting that the events are the internal affairs of the Soviet Union.³¹⁶ Minister of state and government spokesman then, Mehmet Yazar also stated that the incidents should be resolved through humanitarian and peaceful ways.³¹⁷ As Bülent Aras expresses, Turkey adopted a low-key policy during the events of 1990 Baku, which had little to do with promoting pan-Turkism as Turkey did not even have a desire for Azerbaijanis to seek refuge in Turkey.³¹⁸

At this point, it seems noteworthy to mention that the initial response to the developments by President Özal was quite shocking for Turkish and Azeri people; when he was first asked about his thoughts on the conflicts, he told the journalists that "They [Azeris] are Shia, we are Sunni, therefore Azeris should resort to Iran",³¹⁹ despite explaining later on that his words were misunderstood.³²⁰ Apparently, Özal's initial reaction contradicts with the Turkic brotherhood discourse adopted towards Azerbaijan as well as with the sentimental Turkish public opinion. Nevertheless, this exceptional statement does not seem to reflect the overall opinion of Turkish politicians regarding the developments in Azerbaijan.

³¹⁶ Ayın Tarihi, January 24, 1990.

³¹⁷ Ayın Tarihi, January 24, 1990.

³¹⁸ Aras, *Political Economy of Cooperation Between Turkey and Azerbaijan: An Analysis of Turkey's Mid to Long Term Regional Policy*, 40.

³¹⁹ Azer, *Babadan Oğula Güney Kafkasya*, 375-376.

³²⁰ Şimşir, *Azerbaycan: Azerbaycan'ın Yeniden Doğuş Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri*, 175.

What is more, Turkey's cautious discourse and policy were also admitted and repeated by Ebulfaz Elchibey in an interview with the well-known Turkish journalist Mehmet Ali Birand during the Baku crackdown: "Turkey is meticulous but it is not forgetting us. This is what pleases us the most".³²¹

As the tension in Baku began to cool down, Turkey brought up the idea of opening a consulate in Baku, to discuss it with the Soviet officials, as there was no official representation office of Turkey in Azerbaijan since 1938.³²² Based on the co-decision of foreign ministers, Yılmaz and Shevardnadze during a meeting on February 14, 1990, Turkey decided to open its consulate general in Baku on January 7, 1991, under its Moscow embassy after 52 years. According to the Turkish diplomat Bilâl Şimşir, the Turkish Government preferred a consulate general rather than a consulate to keep the representation at a high-level.³²³

The second visit at the prime minister level from Azerbaijan occurred on September 14, 1990, when Prime Minister Hasan Hasanov, who was the successor of Muttalibov visited Turkey during which the parts signed various agreements and protocols. The documents signed in Ankara were regarding opening the Turkish-Soviet border gate, launching air transportation between Istanbul and Baku, topics related with the communications and talks between the governments of Ankara and Baku, naval freight, and Turkey-Azerbaijan border trade development.³²⁴ Evaluating his visit to Turkey in an interview with *Milliyet* newspaper, Hasanov underlined that he experienced more brotherhood and friendship than he expected.³²⁵

³²¹Translated by the author; original: "Türkiye dikkatli fakat bizi unutmuyor. Bizi en çok memnun eden de bu zaten".

³²²Şimşir, *Azerbaycan'ın Yeniden Doğuş Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri*, 207.

³²³Şimşir, *Azerbaycan'ın Yeniden Doğuş Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri*, 208.

³²⁴Şimşir, *Azerbaycan'ın Yeniden Doğuş Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri*, 213-214.

³²⁵ "Azerbaycan'dan Çağrı".

In March 1991, the first president-level visit of Turkey to Azerbaijan occurred as part of Turgut Özal's Soviet Union visit. During this visit documents regarding opening borders, and cooperation in the tourism industry were signed between the two parties.³²⁶ At the end of the visit, a joint declaration was released, again underscoring the potential cooperation in commercial, economic, cultural, and social areas.³²⁷ This visit, according to Aydın, without addressing the sensitive issue of independence, allowed Turkey to test the limits of the cooperation with Soviet Republics without incurring Soviet Russia's reaction.³²⁸

On August 30, 1991, Azerbaijan declared its independence.³²⁹ Turkish officials were still careful about the developments. Murat Sungar, then the ministry spokesman, congratulated brother Azerbaijan, but added that the ministry was following the developments with the desire that peaceful negotiations would prevail regarding the perestroika process of Soviet Russia.³³⁰ The same day, Undersecretary Özdem Sanberk also emphasized that Turkey was monitoring the developments with a Moscow-centered eye as relations with Moscow was more important to Ankara than the relations with the Soviet Republics, which was the source of Turkey's caution.³³¹ A few days later, then prime minister, Mesut Yılmaz made a statement similar to that of Sungar; expressing that the developments in Azerbaijan would be evaluated with regard to the developments in the Soviet Union, and Turkey would be the first country to recognize Azerbaijan.³³² At this point, it is important to add that

³²⁶Şimşir, *Azerbaycan: Azerbaycan'ın Yeniden Doğuş Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri*, 217-218.

³²⁷Şimşir, *Azerbaycan: Azerbaycan'ın Yeniden Doğuş Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri*, 218.

³²⁸Aydın, "Foucault's Pendulum: Turkey in Central Asia and the Caucasus," 3.

³²⁹Aydın Tarihi, August 30, 1991.

³³⁰Şimşir, *Azerbaycan: Azerbaycan'ın Yeniden Doğuş Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri*, 222.

³³¹Şimşir, *Azerbaycan: Azerbaycan'ın Yeniden Doğuş Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri*, 222.

³³²Aydın Tarihi, September 4, 1991.

no recognition request was made from Baku to Ankara as of September 4th, according to ministry officials.³³³

On the other hand, Turkish media was divided by contrasting views with respect to the recognition of Azerbaijan and other Turkic states. While some views seemed much eager and enthusiastic to establish formal ties with Baku, others were on a more meticulous line. For instance, *Günaydın* newspaper wrote that why Turkey, recognizing the newly independent Baltic states, was not making any move to recognize Azerbaijan and other Turkic states was a matter of curiosity.³³⁴ Likewise, the editorial writer of *Milliyet*, Altan Öymen argued that Turkey had nothing to do but to proceed for the Turkic republics in the way proceeded for the Baltic Republics.³³⁵ Similarly, Murat Yeşil was criticizing the Ministry of Foreign Affairs by stating that Turkey should not leave Azerbaijan alone and disappoint the millions of captive Turks in the Turkic republics as national sentiments were much more important than the discretion of the ministry.³³⁶ On the contrary, the discretion of Turkey was also endorsed by various journalists. Among them, Cengiz Çandar put forward the idea that the independence of Azerbaijan would put Turkey in a difficult position.³³⁷ In the same way, Güngör Mengi wrote that the bold move of Azerbaijan raised surprise and concerns in Turkey and it was our duty to protect our brothers in Azerbaijan from the wrong steps that might lead to new agonies.³³⁸ In addition, Sami Kohen's reflections were kind of a summary of the official approach; Turkey would be happy and supportive for the independence of the Turkic republics without any doubt, and it had to take an active attitude towards the new formations and

³³³ Ayın Tarihi, September 4, 1991.

³³⁴ See *Günaydın*, September 4, 1991.

³³⁵ Öymen, "Bugün," September 4, 1991.

³³⁶ Yeşil, September 6, 1991.

³³⁷ Çandar, September 31, 1991.

³³⁸ Mengi, September 31, 1991.

opportunities in the Caucasus and the Central Asia, but it also needed to pay attention to the general political formations in the Soviet Union.³³⁹ In short, although with contrasting views, the independence of Azerbaijan and other Turkic republics occupied the Turkish public opinion that was paying close attention to what was happening in Baku for a certain amount of time.

Upon the developments in the Soviet territories, the ministry decided to send fact-finding missions to Central Asian Turkic republics including Azerbaijan along with another group to Georgia, Armenia, Moldova and Ukraine in order to form a new policy towards these states.³⁴⁰ According to Aydın, these missions helped Turkey move rapidly before the rest of the world as the first country to recognize these states following the breakup of the Union.³⁴¹

On November 9, 1991, Turkey became the first state to recognize the Republic of Azerbaijan.³⁴² The recognition of Azerbaijan was before and separate from the recognition of other Turkic republics in Central Asia. The decision of recognition was welcomed by enthusiastic crowds and cheerful demonstrations in the streets of Baku, with both the officials and public expressing their gratitude for Turkey.³⁴³ The diplomatic relations were established in January 1992, and the consulate general in Baku was upgraded to the embassy level.³⁴⁴

After the independence of Azerbaijan, the first formal visit of the President Muttalibov was to Turkey on January 23, 1992; denoting the significance of Turkey in Azerbaijan's foreign policy. The statements made by both sides; Muttalibov and

³³⁹ Kohen, as cited in Şimşir, *Azerbaycan: Azerbaycan'ın Yeniden Doğuş Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri*, 228-229.

³⁴⁰ Şimşir, *Azerbaycan: Azerbaycan'ın Yeniden Doğuş Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri*, 238.

³⁴¹ Aydın, "Foucault's Pendulum: Turkey in Central Asia and the Caucasus," 3.

³⁴² Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Relations between Turkey and Azerbaijan*.

³⁴³ "Azerbaycan'da bayram var".

³⁴⁴ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Relations between Turkey and Azerbaijan*

Özal underlined the specialty of the visit, and their firm belief that historical relations would be advanced in every aspect.³⁴⁵ The parties signed a friendship and cooperation agreement during this visit, and Turgut Özal stated that with this agreement, it is expected to improve the political, economic, and social cooperation on the basis of mutual trust with brother Azerbaijan.³⁴⁶

In February, Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel visited the United States. During his meetings, including the one with President George Bush, Demirel discussed the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict with officials. He conveyed the message that U.S should not take a pro-Armenian side, and should not encourage Armenia regarding the conflict, otherwise a more serious regional conflict can emerge like the ones in Middle East.³⁴⁷

The first foreign minister-level visit to Baku happened when Hikmet Cetin started his tour to newly independent Azerbaijan and Central Asian republics between in March 1992.³⁴⁸ An important aspect of this visit was that it happened under the shadow of Karabakh conflict that was enflamed during these times. Prior to this visit, Minister Çetin stated that Turkey is ready to do anything to solve Karabakh conflict and can mediate between the parts upon request.³⁴⁹ During his stay in Azerbaijan, this time Çetin underlined that Karabakh is Azerbaijan's land and no international solution could take place without Azerbaijan's consent.³⁵⁰ On March 6, 1992, he made another statement regarding the conflict and expressed that an immediate cease fire needed to be declared and desired for a peaceful solution within

³⁴⁵ Ayın Tarihi, January 23, 1992.

³⁴⁶ Şimşir, *Azerbaycan: Azerbaycan'ın Yeniden Doğuş Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri*, 295.

³⁴⁷ Ayın Tarihi, February 13, 1992.

³⁴⁸ Azer, *Babadan Oğula Güney Kafkasya*, 428.

³⁴⁹ Ayın Tarihi, February 3, 1992.

³⁵⁰ Ayın Tarihi, February 29, 1992.

the framework of UN and The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE).³⁵¹

By the way, the Armenian side progressively acquired the total control of the disputed Karabakh region and expanded their control in the nearby provinces of the area,³⁵² and severe incidents such as Khojaly, accelerated further public demonstrations that has been going on furiously for some time.³⁵³ On March 6, 1992, President Muttalibov, who pursued a pro-Russian foreign policy,³⁵⁴ had to resign from the office³⁵⁵ as a result of the escalating mass demonstrations that considered him as a failure against the Armenian attacks.³⁵⁶ However, Turkey did not just contact the Baku government during Muttalibov period, but established relations with the opposition; Popular Front of Azerbaijan led by Ebulfaz Elchibey along with the president of Nakhichevan Autonomous Region Parliament, Heydar Aliyev.

Two months later, Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel's tour of all the Turkic republics took place. Before he commenced the tour, Demirel made a press statement addressing the Turkic republics:

...Today is a historical date for the Turkic world, the brother countries spreading over a vast geography from the Adriatic to China, and having just obtained their independence, are facing the opportunity to be one ear, one heart . . . Fate has separated our brothers in these lands from us . . . Common language, culture, and faith constitutes bonds that clamp us to each other . . . Turkey is going to act as a bridge that is going to gather people from the same civilization, same culture, same faith, same togetherness who had remained separate for centuries. Of course, it is superbly rejoicing for us that these republics obtained their independence emerging after the collapse of the Soviet empire... We are not to manage these countries. We want them to stand on their own feet protecting their independence. We will provide them with any kind of moral support, any kind of morale support.³⁵⁷

³⁵¹ Ayın Tarihi, March 6, 1992.

³⁵² Kamel, *1923'ten Günümüze Türk Dış Politikası ve Diplomasisi*, 193.

³⁵³ Azer, *Babadan Oğula Güney Kafkasya*, 434.

³⁵⁴ Sönmezoğlu, *Son Onyıllarda Türk Dış Politikası:1991-2015*, 336.

³⁵⁵ Ayın Tarihi, March 6, 1992.

³⁵⁶ Kamel, *1923'ten Günümüze Türk Dış Politikası ve Diplomasisi*, 193.

³⁵⁷ Süleyman Demirel, press conference. Translated by the author. See Şimşir, *Azerbaycan: Azerbaycan'ın Yeniden Doğuş Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri*, 340-342. (Appendix A,1).

Demirel's speech also addressed the debates regarding Pan-Turkism. Although Pan-Turkist propensities took place in some press organs, distinguished politicians, diplomats, scholars, and observers gathered around the observation that Turkish foreign policy towards the Turkic republics was not driven by sentimental and nationalist incentives. As a firsthand expression, Demirel succinctly stated that theirs is not a Pan-Turkism movement but a cooperation in cultural, economic, and social terms.³⁵⁸ Besides, he expressed that these Turkic republics would not consent to another "Big Brother" after a "Big Brother".³⁵⁹ Correspondingly, according to Öniş, the opening of Turkish foreign policy to Turkic republics does not imply the development of or any interest in Pan-Turkism, the idea that Turkic people prevail in the region from Turkey to the border of China, but it is the common interest of these republics that can unite the Turkic nations in the region.³⁶⁰ Similarly, Jacob Landau expresses that by 1980s and early 1990s, Pan-Turkism has been steadily moving away from its earlier aggressive stand, towards an objective of solidarity and cooperation among Turkish-Turkic populations.³⁶¹ Another distinguished scholar, Ersanlı also argues that irredentism did not prevail in Turkish foreign policy, and the famous rhetoric exchanged with Azerbaijan One Nation, Two States sets a clear indication for the lack of irredentist ideas.³⁶² Rather, according to Ersanlı, moral support gained from the Turkic population in Eurasia, and economic and commercial leaps, in which this support is thought to be an advantage, consists the primary factors of Turkey's pragmatic gravitation towards the Turkic world.³⁶³ Former diplomat Azer, who has been actively involved in the establishment process of ties

³⁵⁸Şimşir, *Azerbaycan: Azerbaycan'ın Yeniden Doğuş Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri*, 365.

³⁵⁹Şimşir, *Azerbaycan: Azerbaycan'ın Yeniden Doğuş Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri*, 365.

³⁶⁰Öniş, "Turkey in The Post-Cold War Era: In Search of Identity," 60.

³⁶¹Landau, *Pan-Turkism: From Irredentism to Cooperation*, 194.

³⁶²Ersanlı, "Türkiye'nin Dış İlişkilerinde Türkcülük ve Avrasya," 148.

³⁶³Ersanlı, "Türkiye'nin Dış İlişkilerinde Türkcülük ve Avrasya," 153.

with Azerbaijan, also emphasizes that Pan-Turkism was a pipe dream, and the primary objective regarding the Turkic world, which he claims to mean merely a cultural solidarity for Turkey, was to utilize the ethnic and linguistic ties for mutual benefits.³⁶⁴ In sum, as Aydın argued in his oft-cited article:

Although cultural, linguistic, and religious affinities were initial stimulants of closer ties, Ankara's new attitude toward the region was based more on pragmatic economic and foreign policy considerations than on simple nationalist rhetoric or sentimental concerns.³⁶⁵

During his visit to Baku, like other politicians and officials, Demirel also used to the term 'brother' to lay emphasis on the strong ties with Azerbaijan.³⁶⁶ He also underlined that Azerbaijan's struggle was right with respect to the Karabakh Conflict and they are not alone in the world anymore.³⁶⁷ Furthermore, he remarked that they hope the conflict would be resolved fairly and rightly on international grounds.³⁶⁸ By the way, three agreements were signed in Baku regarding the following areas; air transportation, technical and scientific cooperation, and radio and television broadcasting cooperation.³⁶⁹ As a note, when Demirel visited Baku, the presidential elections of Azerbaijan were not held yet. Hence, he was accompanied by the Acting President Yakup Memedov.

Meanwhile, on March 23, 1992, the Chairman of the Supreme Assembly of the Autonomous Republic of Nakhichevan, Heydar Aliyev visited Ankara and held meetings with President Özal and Prime Minister Demirel.³⁷⁰ During Aliyev's stay,

³⁶⁴Azer, *Babadan Oğula Güney Kafkasya*, 428.

³⁶⁵Aydın, "Foucault's Pendulum: Turkey in Central Asia and the Caucasus," 4.

³⁶⁶Şimşir, *Azerbaycan: Azerbaycan'ın Yeniden Doğuş Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri*, 343-344.

³⁶⁷Şimşir, *Azerbaycan: Azerbaycan'ın Yeniden Doğuş Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri*, 343-344.

³⁶⁸Şimşir, *Azerbaycan: Azerbaycan'ın Yeniden Doğuş Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri*, 345.

³⁶⁹Şimşir, *Azerbaycan: Azerbaycan'ın Yeniden Doğuş Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri*, 374-375.

³⁷⁰Aydın Tarihi, March 23, 1992.

Demirel and Aliyev signed a Turkey-Nakhichevan cooperation protocol to satisfy the latter's urgent needs with a \$100 million loan to be used in agriculture, industry, consumer goods, transportation, telecommunication, construction, and tourism sectors.³⁷¹ However, this was not the first protocol to be signed between the parties, as several ones were signed in the years 1990-1991, mostly regarding building a bridge on Aras River and opening the borders.³⁷² When Aliyev visited Ankara, the presidential elections were not held in Azerbaijan yet, so his visit caught the attention of media in this respect. For example, *Milliyet*'s headline presented Aliyev as Ankara's favored one, prospective president along with *Hürriyet* and *Türkiye*.³⁷³ In short, even before he became president later, Aliyev has already captured the attention of Turkish media as a strong candidate. In addition, both sides made statements regarding the legal status and the protection of the Nakhichevan region. Demirel stated that if any change occurs regarding the status of the region, Turkey has a voice in this.³⁷⁴

In May, two developments occupied Turkish foreign policy regarding Nakhichevan. On May 4, Aliyev claimed that Armenians bombarded Sederek town, which is within the boundaries of the region.³⁷⁵ On May 18, Suleyman Demirel, immediately returning from Hungary, called for an urgent meeting for the council of ministers upon the news of attack from Sederek.³⁷⁶ Various statements were made from officials in this strained atmosphere. Aliyev, warning Turkey against the severity of the attacks and a potential Armenian invasion, demanded help from

³⁷¹Şimşir, *Azerbaycan: Azerbaycan'ın Yeniden Doğuş Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri*, 409.

³⁷²Şimşir, *Azerbaycan: Azerbaycan'ın Yeniden Doğuş Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri*, 404-405.

³⁷³"Ankara'nın Gözdesi Aliyev".

³⁷⁴Aydın Tarihi, March 25, 1992.

³⁷⁵Aydın Tarihi, May 4, 1992.

³⁷⁶Aydın Tarihi, May 18, 1992.

Ankara.³⁷⁷ Deputy Prime Minister Erdal İnönü underlined that Turkey cannot allow for a border change and an expansionist policy of Armenia, whose outcome could be serious for Armenia too, and the West needed to do what is required for a peaceful solution of the conflict.³⁷⁸ Likewise, Acting Foreign Minister Onur Kumbaracıbaşı implying that Turkey had the right of intervention as a guarantor of the treaties of 1921, would not permit for a border change.³⁷⁹ Upon the soaring pressure both from the opposition and the public opinion, Demirel stated that military intervention was not on the table as a movement unsupported by the international community would do harm to both Turkey and Nakhichevan.³⁸⁰ In a similar manner, Foreign Minister Çetin expressed that their intention to solve the crises was via an active diplomacy.³⁸¹ In addition, resorting to arms, as he said, would be the last thing to do.³⁸² On the other hand, regarding the rising tension both in Nakhichevan and Ankara, the CIS Marshal Yevgeny Shaposhnikov threatened the sides with "a third world war" in case a third country interfered in the Azeri-Armenian conflict, which was not taken very seriously by the Ankara Government.³⁸³ On May 25, Demirel visited Yeltsin with whom he discussed the Azeri-Armenian conflict both in Nakhichevan and Karabakh. At the end of the visit, the two countries declared a joint statement that calls for an immediate truce and underscored that the borders could not be changed by military power.³⁸⁴

The second important event in May regarding the bilateral relations was the inauguration of the bridge that connects Turkey and Nakhichevan.³⁸⁵ With the

³⁷⁷ Ayın Tarihi, May 19, 1992.

³⁷⁸ Ayın Tarihi, May 18, 1992.

³⁷⁹ Şimşir, *Azerbaycan: Azerbaycan'ın Yeniden Doğuş Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri*, 419.

³⁸⁰ Ayın Tarihi, May 19, 1992.

³⁸¹ Ayın Tarihi, May 21, 1992.

³⁸² Şimşir, *Azerbaycan: Azerbaycan'ın Yeniden Doğuş Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri*, 420.

³⁸³ Azer, *Babadan Oğula Güney Kafkasya*, 445.

³⁸⁴ Azer, *Babadan Oğula Güney Kafkasya*, 447.

³⁸⁵ Ayın Tarihi, May 28, 1992.

participation of Demirel, Inonu, Kamberov, and Aliyev; the Hasret bridge was opened. Demirel put emphasis on the point that the two families of the Turkic nation embraced each other with this ‘brotherhood’ bridge.³⁸⁶ Likewise, Aliyev stated that the ceremony and the visit had shown the Turkic solidarity to the whole world again.³⁸⁷

After Muttalibov, the leader of the Azerbaijani Popular Front Abulfaz Elchibey was elected as the next president of Azerbaijan.³⁸⁸ He was known for a pro-Western, pro-Turkey, and nationalist political attitude.³⁸⁹ Moreover, his government put emphasis on the Turkic identity regarding the re-building national identity of Azerbaijan. Hence, Turkish leaders welcomed the victory of Elchibey. His being a strong advocate of the “Turkish Model” also boosted Turkish ambitions.³⁹⁰ To depict his perception of Turkey with his own words:

Who is our friend? Of course, it is the brother Turkey before anyone else... We are one nation two states. Therefore, Turkey should be a transporter and an example, a way and a bridge to get closer to Europe.³⁹¹

While Elchibey’s statement convey the famous One Nation, Two States discourse to define the bilateral links, it also signals the expectation of Azerbaijan from Turkey in the first years of independence; serving as a bridge to connect Azerbaijan with the Western world.

After becoming the president, Elchibey’s first visit was to Turkey on June 25, 1992, within the context of Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) summit

³⁸⁶ Ayın Tarihi, May 28, 1992.

³⁸⁷ Ayın Tarihi, May 28, 1992.

³⁸⁸ Ayın Tarihi, June 9, 1992.

³⁸⁹ Sönmezoglu, *Son Onyıllarda Türk Dış Politikası: 1991-2015*, 336.

³⁹⁰ Lesser and Larrabee, *Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty*, 104.

³⁹¹ Translated by the author; original: “Kimdir bizim dostumuz? Tabii ki herkesten önce Türkiye’dir. Biz bir millet iki devletiz. Bundan dolayı, Türkiye Avrupa ile yakınlaşmak için bir aracı, bir örnek, bir yol ve bir köprü olmalıdır.” See Tahirzade, “Elçibey’le 13 Saat,” 151.

meeting in Istanbul.³⁹² Right after his arrival, Elchibey visited the mausoleum of Atatürk, Anitkabir, and signed the Honor Book with the following words:

The Commander of the Great Turks, I am very honored to visit you and on behalf of myself and my whole nation. Your Soldier.³⁹³

During his visit, Elchibey also delivered a speech at The Grand National Assembly of Turkey. During his speech, he often referred to and praised Atatürk, and the democratic Turkey he founded, which he repeatedly claims to take as a role model for the development of Azerbaijan.³⁹⁴ The emphasis of Elchibey on the Turkic world, Atatürk, and Turkey during the speech was interrupted by the enthusiastic applause of the members of the parliament.³⁹⁵ Elchibey's pro-Atatürk views were already known to the Turkish people. For instance, when the Turkish public watched Elchibey, during an interview with the journalist Mehmet Ali Birand regarding the events of the Black January, for the first time on TV, long before he was elected as president, on the wall behind him was a picture of Atatürk.³⁹⁶ During the visit, he also had a meeting with Demirel touching on the current Karabakh problem and areas of further bilateral cooperation.³⁹⁷

After the visit, a joint declaration was released. The declaration underlined the significance of establishment of democracy Turkey attaches to the development of Azerbaijan, along with often repeated emphasis on economic, cultural, and political solidarity.³⁹⁸ On August 10, 1992, Azerbaijan Foreign Minister Tevfik

³⁹² Ayın Tarihi, June 24, 1992.

³⁹³ Translated by the author; original: "Büyük Türk'ün Büyük Kumandanı. Kendim ve tüm milletim adına seni ziyaret etmekten büyük şeref duydum. Senin Askerin." See Şimşir, *Azerbaycan: Azerbaycan'ın Yeniden Doğuş Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri*, 446.

³⁹⁴ The Grand National Assembly of Turkey Parliamentary Minutes, June 24, 1992.

³⁹⁵ The Grand National Assembly of Turkey Parliamentary Minutes, June 24, 1992.

³⁹⁶ Azer, Babadan Oğula Güney Kafkasya, 377.

³⁹⁷ Şimşir, *Azerbaycan: Azerbaycan'ın Yeniden Doğuş Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri*, 447-448.

³⁹⁸ Şimşir, *Azerbaycan: Azerbaycan'ın Yeniden Doğuş Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri*, 448.

Kasimov came to Turkey.³⁹⁹ For the first time, the two states signed a military training agreement, which, according to Şimşir, was a symbol of Azerbaijan's independence as no similar agreement were signed during the Muttalibov era.⁴⁰⁰ In addition, Azerbaijan demanded more concrete support from Turkey such as soldiers and helicopter aid, but did not get a positive result from Ankara.⁴⁰¹ Behind Ankara's refusal of these requests laid Moscow which Turkey did not want to antagonize.⁴⁰² Elchibey's second visit to Ankara happened thanks to the first Turkic Summit in October 1992. The Ankara Summit, hosted by Özal was inaugurated with the participation of Elchibey, President Nursultan Nazarbayev from Kazakhstan, President Askar Akayev from Kyrgyzstan, President Islam Kerimov from Uzbekistan, and President Saparmurad Niyazov from Turkmenistan.⁴⁰³ Şimşir summarizes the primary goals of the first summit; the Turkic republics would open their embassies in Ankara and the six Turkic presidents would sit around a table to discuss the common problems and areas of cooperation.⁴⁰⁴ Moreover, President Turgut Özal's opening speech succinctly illustrates Ankara's expectations from the Turkic world:

...Turkey cared about not being late on embracing the re-emerging sovereign and independent brother republics... It was Turkey who first contacted the sovereign brother republics, who made the first official visits, who recognized them first, and who opened the first embassies over there. We are rightly proud of this... During our visits, we signed a series of documents...laid the legal foundation of multi-faceted bilateral relations such as our commercial, economic, cultural, scientific etc....However, I think we are still at the bottom of the ladder...I assume that, at this Summit Meeting, we can primarily give thought to economic cooperation...To collaborate for multilateral cooperation will be in favor of our brother peoples with no doubt...Our goal should be lifting the economic barriers and ultimately to

³⁹⁹ Ayın Tarihi, August 10, 1992.

⁴⁰⁰ Şimşir, *Azerbaycan: Azerbaycan'ın Yeniden Doğuş Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri*, 451.

⁴⁰¹ Sönmezoglu, *Son Onyıllarda Türk Dış Politikası: 1991-2015*, 336.

⁴⁰² Uzer, *Identity and Turkish Foreign Policy: The Kemalist Influence in Cyprus and the Caucasus*, 174.

⁴⁰³ Ayın Tarihi, October 30, 1992.

⁴⁰⁴ Şimşir, *Azerbaycan: Azerbaycan'ın Yeniden Doğuş Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri*, 455.

establish a free-trade order... We should improve the current infrastructure [railways, highways, maritime lines, telecommunication connections]... We should rapidly examine the possibilities of the transfer of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan oil through Turkey to Mediterranean and Europe... We should commence the parallel operation of the transfer of natural gas from Turkmenistan and other countries through Turkey to Europe via pipelines... Our people [Turkic people] pin their hopes on us. We cannot disappoint their great expectations and great hopes...⁴⁰⁵

Özal's speech draws the outline of the economic benefits Turkey pursues by enhancing ties with the Turkic world. Likewise, upon the Summit, regarding the economic potential, he repeated that "We cannot disappoint our people. We have the same language, culture, and history. Then I think our aims can also be the same."⁴⁰⁶ With the end of the First Turkic Summit, the Ankara Declaration was released that laid emphasis on areas of economic cooperation as underlined by Özal along with the shared history and culture of the Turkic states, solidarity and cooperative relations among these brother states, rule of international law and peaceful resolutions regarding the regional disputes, their faith in democracy, secularism, human rights and the market economy.⁴⁰⁷

After the Turkic World Summit, Elchibey did not leave Turkey. Several documents were signed for cooperation between Turkey and Azerbaijan in commercial, economic, transportation, tourism, scientific research areas while Elchibey opened the Azerbaijan Embassy in Ankara after 71 years. In his meeting with President Özal, Elchibey repeatedly uttered the one nation motto,⁴⁰⁸ while he emphasized that Azerbaijan was grateful to Turkey as Azerbaijani flag waves in the skies of Ankara.⁴⁰⁹

⁴⁰⁵Turgut Özal, Ankara Summit Opening Speech. Translated by the author. See Şimşir, *Azerbaycan: Azerbaycan'ın Yeniden Doğuş Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri*, 459-467. (Appendix A,3).

⁴⁰⁶Translated by the author; original: "İnsanlarımızın umutlarını bosa çıkaramayız. Dilimiz bir, kültürümüz bir, tarihimiz bir. O zaman isimiz gücümüz de bir olabilir diye düşünüyorum."

⁴⁰⁷*Ankara Declaration*.

⁴⁰⁸Şimşir, *Azerbaycan: Azerbaycan'ın Yeniden Doğuş Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri*, 478.

⁴⁰⁹Ayın Tarihi, November 2, 1992.

Meanwhile, one interesting event took place and raised the tension. As Ankara believed that President Petrossian of Armenia was open for a dialogue, Turkey sold 100,000 tons of grain and decided to sell 300 million kilowatts of electricity to Armenia. However, the deal was cancelled after a strong reaction from Azerbaijan as Foreign Minister Kasimov criticized the deal as a stab in the back.⁴¹⁰

Between 1990 and 1992, there were 86 agreements, protocols, joint declarations signed between Turkey and other Turkic republics.⁴¹¹ Among these, Azerbaijan takes the first place with 37 official documents signed.⁴¹²

In March 1993, the Azerbaijan Energy Minister Sabit Baroglu came to Ankara and the parties, with the participation of the Prime Minister Demirel and Hikmet Çetin, signed an outline agreement to build a Baku-Ceyhan oil pipeline.⁴¹³ The pipeline was designed to be implemented from Baku, via Tiflis, Georgia, to Ceyhan, a Turkish Mediterranean port. The project is usually referred to as the BTC project.

The BTC project was a major progress or a centerpiece as Hale puts it, in Turkey's Southern Caucasus policies since it provides Ankara an important role in the Caspian oil politics and reduce Russia's leverage over the Caspian states by creating an alternative route for Azerbaijan oil exports, other than a route through Russian territory.⁴¹⁴

President Özal visited Baku on April 13, 1993 within a tour of Turkic Republics. His visit coincided with the re-flaming of the Armenian-Azeri conflict.

⁴¹⁰Uzer, *Identity and Turkish Foreign Policy: The Kemalist Influence in Cyprus and the Caucasus*, 176.

⁴¹¹Ministry of National Education, *Türkiye ile Türk Cumhuriyetleri ve Türk Toplulukları Arasında Yapılan Anlaşmalar, ilişkiler ve Faaliyetler*, 13-476.

⁴¹²Ministry of National Education, *Türkiye ile Türk Cumhuriyetleri ve Türk Toplulukları Arasında Yapılan Anlaşmalar, ilişkiler ve Faaliyetler*, 13-14.

⁴¹³Ayın Tarihi, March 9, 1993.

⁴¹⁴Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774*, 213.

While Foreign Minister Hikmet Çetin, who accompanied Özal on his trip, repeated the government's view of opting a peaceful and political resolution for a truce instead of a military intervention of Turkey, the president criticized the government for behaving too soft, and claimed that Turkey needed to show its teeth and needed to consider the option of military intervention.⁴¹⁵ In Baku, Özal, this time adopting a softer tone, underscored that Armenia's policies were not acceptable and the relevant great states needed to understand this as the conflict could grow into a bigger one in Caucasia.⁴¹⁶ And repeating Turkey's support for Azerbaijan, he expressed that everybody knew their closeness to Azerbaijan, which means that they supported Azerbaijan regarding these issues.”⁴¹⁷ In addition, he gave a speech at the Parliament of Azerbaijan, stating that borders could not be changed by force, Turkey sought the support of international community including the U.S, UNSC, and European Community in favor of Azerbaijan, and Turkey would not pursue any policy that could give offence to Azerbaijan.⁴¹⁸

Özal's unexpected death in April was met with deep sorrow by Azerbaijan which declared a one-day mourning. President Elchibey and the president of the Nakhichevan parliament Aliyev attended the funeral ceremony along with the president of Armenia, Levon Ter Petrosyan. With Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel's initiatives, Armenian and Azeri side got together for the first time to discuss the solutions methods for Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. According to *Hürriyet*, with Demirel's efforts for a truce plan, Elchibey and President of Armenia

⁴¹⁵ Kohen, “Özal Özbekistan'da. ‘Dişimizi Göstermek Gerekir.’”.

⁴¹⁶ *Cumhuriyet*, April 14, 1993.

⁴¹⁷ *Cumhuriyet*, April 14, 1993.

⁴¹⁸ Şimşir, *Azerbaycan: Azerbaycan'ın Yeniden Doğuş Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri*, 515-516.

Ter-Petrosian agreed on international resolution talks participated by Turkey, Russia, the U.S, Armenia, and Azerbaijan.⁴¹⁹

During Elchibey's tenure, Azerbaijan did not ratify the CIS accession treaty that was signed before Elchibey.⁴²⁰ Moreover, his preferences for promoting Azerbaijan energy resources has been in favor of Turkey.⁴²¹ Altogether, according to analysts, these policies of Baku prompted Moscow to take a pro-Armenian side regarding the Karabakh dispute.⁴²² On June 4, 1993, a rival of Elchibey, ex-colonel Suret Husseinov, who was acting with covert Russian support, seized the town of Ganja, marched to Baku and overthrew Elchibey's government, forcing him to take refuge in Nakhichevan.⁴²³

The turmoil in Azerbaijan was given a wide coverage by the Turkish mass media. Headlines such as "Rebellion in Ganja",⁴²⁴ "Ganja captured by rebels",⁴²⁵ "The riot of Ganja cannot be quelled",⁴²⁶ occupied the papers for days. Furthermore, the media saw the riot as a pro-Russian act. A 12 June-dated *Milliyet* news mentions that the men of Husseinov furnished Ganja streets with Soviet flags.⁴²⁷ Likewise, *Cumhuriyet* wrote that against Elchibey, Azerbaijan mafia, Moscow and Yerevan took place along with Heydar Aliyev who joined this group.⁴²⁸ With the end of the riot and, the newspapers reflected the removal of Elchibey administration from power as coup d'état, rebels seizing the power, and dictatorship in Azerbaijan.⁴²⁹ In

⁴¹⁹ "Elçibey-Petrosyan el sıkıştı". *Hürriyet*, April 22, 1993.

⁴²⁰ Sönmezoğlu, *Son Onyıllarda Türk Dış Politikası: 1991-2015*, 336.

⁴²¹ Sönmezoğlu, *Son Onyıllarda Türk Dış Politikası: 1991-2015*, 336.

⁴²² Sönmezoğlu, *Son Onyıllarda Türk Dış Politikası: 1991-2015*, 336.

⁴²³ Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774*, 213-214.

⁴²⁴ "Gence'de İsyan".

⁴²⁵ "Gence asilerin eline geçti".

⁴²⁶ "Gence isyanı bastırılmıyor".

⁴²⁷ "Suret Hüseyinov'un adamları Gence'yi Sovyet bayraklarıyla donattı".

⁴²⁸ "Ebulfez Elçibey yolun sonuna geldi".

⁴²⁹ See the headlines of *Cumhuriyet*, *Milliyet*, *Türkiye*, *Hürriyet* for 1993, June 22.

short, according to the Turkish media, the overthrow of Elchibey was a crippling blow to Turkey's Azerbaijan policy.⁴³⁰

Former diplomat Candan Azer thinks that the riot against Elchibey was rooted in the Caspian oil about which Moscow could not accept being excluded.⁴³¹ In addition, Kamel contends that like Muttalibov, Elchibey also was considered a failure against the Armenians regarding the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute, which precipitated the pro-Russian riot of Husseinov.⁴³² During the riot, and Elchibey's refuge, Azer argues that Turkey abstained from looking like intervening in the domestic affairs of Azerbaijan, to prevent a potential resentment of Azeri politicians that could harm Turkey's interests.⁴³³ Correspondingly, on June 9, 1993, the ministry released a statement that mentioned the riot against the legitimate president Elchibey, who represents the will of the Azeri people, as undemocratic, unlawful, and against the values of the international community, and hoped for a reconciliation of this internal affair of Azerbaijan.⁴³⁴ With another statement on June 18, 1993, the ministry condemned the illegitimate riot again, and stated that it could not accept the illegal removal of Elchibey from power.⁴³⁵ Furthermore, Turkey made attempts at the relevant OSCE committees and the OSCE took a resolution that underlines the rule of democracy and law against the illegitimate attempts by force to affect legitimate leaders.⁴³⁶ Yet, various circles both within and outside Turkey interpreted

⁴³⁰Aras, *Political Economy of Cooperation Between Turkey and Azerbaijan: An Analysis of Turkey's Mid to Long Term Regional Policy*, 45.

⁴³¹Azer, *Babadan Oğula Güney Kafkasya*, 479.

⁴³²Kamel, *1923'ten Günümüze Türk Dış Politikası ve Diplomasisi*, 191.

⁴³³Azer, *Babadan Oğula Güney Kafkasya*, 477.

⁴³⁴Şimşir, *Azerbaycan: Azerbaycan'ın Yeniden Doğuş Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri*, 558-559.

⁴³⁵Şimşir, *Azerbaycan: Azerbaycan'ın Yeniden Doğuş Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri*, 566.

⁴³⁶Şimşir, *Azerbaycan: Azerbaycan'ın Yeniden Doğuş Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri*, 589.

the Elchibey's removal from power as Ankara's failure to keep a friendly Baku government in power.⁴³⁷

On June 24, 1993, The National Assembly of Azerbaijan handed over Elchibey's authority to the assembly president Heydar Aliyev.⁴³⁸ Meanwhile, President Demirel was already in touch with Aliyev. During the time the Turkish media was occupied with the news of Aliyev suspending the oil agreement,⁴³⁹ He sent Undersecretary Sanberk to Aliyev to ensure that the oil pipeline project was not negatively affected by the turmoil in Baku.⁴⁴⁰ According to the news, Aliyev reassured Demirel that the agreement would not be cancelled and Turkey would be the route for the export Azerbaijan oil as well as it would retain its rights to explore oil in the Caspian Sea.⁴⁴¹ Similarly, according to Azer, who had a private meeting with Aliyev in Nakhichevan before he became president, Aliyev told that they did not cancel the oil pipeline agreement but suspended the process just to examine the agreement more carefully.⁴⁴² In addition, Sanberk's visit, together with the news that Demirel leaned towards Aliyev's demand of financial support, were seen as a rapprochement between Ankara and Aliyev after a brief period of coldness due to Ankara's pro-Elchibey stance.⁴⁴³ During the shift of power from Elchibey to Aliyev, although Turkey repeatedly emphasized the legitimacy of Elchibey government against the rebels, Ankara began to change its attitude toward Aliyev when political elite realized that Aliyev's would be a permanent government.⁴⁴⁴ In fact, with respect to the referendum that determined Elchibey's political future in Azerbaijan,

⁴³⁷ Aydın, "Kafkasya ve Orta Asya'yla İlişkiler," *Türk Dış Politikası: Cilt 2: 1980-2001*, 404.

⁴³⁸ Aydın Tarihi, June 24, 1993.

⁴³⁹ "Bakü'de Petrol Karmaşası".

⁴⁴⁰ Şimşir, *Azerbaycan: Azerbaycan'ın Yeniden Doğuş Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri*, 600.

⁴⁴¹ Kohen, "Bakü'den Güvence"; "Aliyev'den Demirel'e Güvence".

⁴⁴² Azer, *Babadan Oğula Güney Kafkasya*, 485.

⁴⁴³ "Bakü ile Buzlar Eriyor"; "Demirel'den Aliyev'e Ekonomik Destek".

⁴⁴⁴ Aydın, "Kafkasya ve Orta Asya'yla İlişkiler," *Türk Dış Politikası: Cilt 2: 1980-2001*, 405.

Demirel stated that whoever wins the referendum, it would be valid for Turkey as it was the stability of Azerbaijan that was important to Turkey.⁴⁴⁵ According to Şimşir, with the referendum, Elchibey was removed from the political arena and Aliyev was now the counterpart for Ankara.⁴⁴⁶

Meanwhile, the Karabakh conflict was on the stage again. As before, the Turkish media reflected its pro-Azeri concerns upon the Armenian attacks on several provinces of Azerbaijan. Headlines such as “Azerbaijan is being strangled”,⁴⁴⁷ “Armenians engulfing Azerbaijan”,⁴⁴⁸ “Azerbaijan falling into pieces, God bless us!”⁴⁴⁹

In the early times of his tenure, Aliyev pursued a rather negative attitude towards Turkey for a very short amount of time, but this situation has changed with Russia’s pro-Armenian policies, and Aliyev continued from where Elchibey has left in terms of relations with Ankara.⁴⁵⁰ For instance, in addition to suspending the agreement signed before, he discharged 1600 military experts from Turkey serving in Azerbaijan and commenced visa requirement for Turkish citizens.⁴⁵¹ Although his government has ratified the CIS accession treaty, and signed a common security treaty with Russia, yet Aliyev did not allow the entrance of Russian soldiers into Azerbaijan.⁴⁵² In addition, as Azer points out, who had a private meeting with Aliyev in Nakhichevan, Aliyev thought that the solution for the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict passed through Russia without whose support Aliyev assumed no progress could be made regarding the dispute.⁴⁵³ Moreover, Aliyev, after being elected as president,

⁴⁴⁵“Türkiye Bakü için Savaşa Giremez”.

⁴⁴⁶Şimşir, *Azerbaycan: Azerbaycan'ın Yeniden Doğuş Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri*, 610.

⁴⁴⁷“Azerbaycan Boğazlanıyor”.

⁴⁴⁸“Ermeniler Azerbaycan'ı yutuyor”.

⁴⁴⁹Birand, “Azerbaycan Bölünüyor Allah Yardımcımız Olsun!”.

⁴⁵⁰Sönmezoglu, *Son On yıllarda Türk Dış Politikası: 1991-2015*, 337.

⁴⁵¹Aydın, “Kafkasya ve Orta Asya'yla İlişkiler,” *Türk Dış Politikası: Cilt 2: 1980-2001*, 405.

⁴⁵²Sönmezoglu, *Son On yıllarda Türk Dış Politikası: 1991-2015*, 337.

⁴⁵³Azer, *Babadan Oğula Güney Kafkasya*, 465.

gave a share to the Russian Lukoil firm from the exploitation of Azerbaijan oil by the Western companies including British Petroleum.⁴⁵⁴ Again Aliyev stated that this did not mean pushing relations with Turkey to the backwater of Azerbaijan foreign policy.⁴⁵⁵ Additionally, during several official and non-official meetings, Aliyev repeatedly reassured the Turkish side that rapprochement with Russia and membership for CIS do not mean moving away from Turkey.⁴⁵⁶ On the contrary, he told Turkish foreign ministry officials that a peaceful solution for the Karabakh dispute was not possible without Turkey's help.⁴⁵⁷ In fact, compared to Elchibey's, Aliyev's presidency has been an advantage for Turkey as during his tenure, Baku was less likely to be hostile to Russia or to Iran, which may have pushed Turkey in a very difficult position vis-à-vis its Caucasus policies.⁴⁵⁸ On the other hand, in a short amount of time, Ankara understood that Aliyev does not prioritize Turkey in Baku's foreign policy by default in contrast with Elchibey government.⁴⁵⁹ Yet, Aliyev's achievement of some degree of domestic stability and the 1994 cease-fire with Armenia provided Turkey with new opportunities in the mid 1990s.⁴⁶⁰ Put differently, although Elchibey's removal caused a temporary setback for Turkey, Aliyev proved to be a more independent-minded leader who pursued a pro-Western course and made moves to strengthen ties to Ankara.⁴⁶¹ Especially after 1994, Ankara can be said to become a strategic rather than a natural partner for Azerbaijan.⁴⁶²

⁴⁵⁴ Azer, *Babadan Oğula Güney Kafkasya*, 508.

⁴⁵⁵ Azer, *Babadan Oğula Güney Kafkasya*, 508.

⁴⁵⁶ Azer, *Babadan Oğula Güney Kafkasya*, 498.

⁴⁵⁷ Azer, *Babadan Oğula Güney Kafkasya*, 498.

⁴⁵⁸ Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774*, 214.

⁴⁵⁹ Aydın, "Kafkasya ve Orta Asya'yla İlişkiler," *Türk Dış Politikası: Cilt 2: 1980-2001*, 405.

⁴⁶⁰ Hill, Kirisci, and Moffatt, "Retracing the Caucasian Circle: Considerations and Constraints for U.S., EU, and Turkish Engagement in the South Caucasus," 16.

⁴⁶¹ Lesser and Larrabee, *Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty*, 105.

⁴⁶² Ediger and Durmaz, "The New Geopolitical Game in the Caspian Region: Azerbaijan-Turkey Energy Relations," 135.

Like his predecessors, Heydar Aliyev made his first formal visit to Turkey, on February 8, 1994. With the occasion of this visit, the parties signed seventeen separate documents. According to Şimşir, this was not an ordinary incident, and it indicated that during the Aliyev era as well, bilateral relations would accelerate on multilateral terms.⁴⁶³ Again, Şimşir underlines that the content of agreements cover significant issues; the parts would support each other's territorial integrity via the mechanism the UN embraces, cooperation on trade, customs, education, culture etc., and re-confirmation of the Kars Treaty.⁴⁶⁴ In addition, Sönmezoglu argues that this visit of Aliyev commenced a strong fellowship between the two presidents.⁴⁶⁵ Like Elchibey, Aliyev made a speech at the Turkish Parliament.⁴⁶⁶ He thanked for Turkey's support and help during the difficult times of Azerbaijan, thanked to Demirel whom he referred to as brother. Like Elchibey, Aliyev also emphasized that they would take example and benefit from Turkey's democratic development started by Atatürk. Drawing attention to the common history, culture, language, and religion of Turkey and Azerbaijan, Aliyev underlined that Turkey was their closest friend and brother.⁴⁶⁷ One noteworthy point is that Aliyev visited Turkey nine times just in 1994, during which time he would popularize the famous motto of Elchibey; One Nation, Two States.⁴⁶⁸

On September 20, 1994, the oil agreement that has been named by Aliyev as the "Contract of the Century" was signed between thirteen companies from eight countries; Azerbaijan, USA, Great-Britain, Russia, Turkey, Norway, Japan, and

⁴⁶³Şimşir, *Azerbaycan: Azerbaycan'ın Yeniden Doğuş Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri*, 675.

⁴⁶⁴Şimşir, *Azerbaycan: Azerbaycan'ın Yeniden Doğuş Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri*, 678-681.

⁴⁶⁵Sönmezoglu, *Son Onyıllarda Türk Dış Politikası: 1991-2015*, 338.

⁴⁶⁶The Grand National Assembly of Turkey Parliamentary Minutes, February 9, 1994.

⁴⁶⁷The Grand National Assembly of Turkey Parliamentary Minutes, February 9, 1994.

⁴⁶⁸The Grand National Assembly of Turkey Parliamentary Minutes, February 9, 1994.

Saudi Arabia.⁴⁶⁹ Turkish Petroleum (TP) represented Turkey in this deal.⁴⁷⁰ The purpose of the consortium was to develop the offshore Azeri Chirag and Deep Water Guneshli oil fields, which was the first field project of TP outside Turkey. In fact, the agreement was planned to be signed during the Elchibey period but the rebellion that overthrew Elchibey administration happened just one week before the scheduled date of the signing ceremony.

Although Aliyev came to power, Azerbaijan was not still free of domestic turmoil. On October 5, 1994, the newspapers wrote that former Defense Minister Rahim Gaziyeu and his three associates escaped from jail on September 21, and vice president of the parliament and the head of Intelligence Agency of Presidency were shot to death on September 29.⁴⁷¹ Upon the catching of the alleged criminals, who were thought to be associates of special forces called OMON, OMON teams laid siege to a building of chief public prosecutor and confronted with army forces. Right after these developments, Aliyev declared a state of emergency.⁴⁷² Later on, troops of the prime minister, Suret Husseinov, who rioted against Elchibey before, took over the Ganja again, this time against Aliyev, and Aliyev called on the wide public mass to defend the country against the rebels.⁴⁷³ With the support of the public, Aliyev quelled the riot in a very short amount of time.⁴⁷⁴ On the other hand, the foreign ministry released a pro-Aliyev statement and expressed that the government would continue to support the legitimate government of Azerbaijan, with whom it is tied with brotherhood ties.⁴⁷⁵

⁴⁶⁹President of Azerbaijan, *Contract of Century*.

⁴⁷⁰Ayın Tarihi, September 20, 1994.

⁴⁷¹“Bakü’de olağanüstü hal”.

⁴⁷²“Bakü’de olağanüstü hal”.

⁴⁷³“Azerbaycan’da iç savaş başladı”.

⁴⁷⁴“Azeriler darbeye geçit vermedi”.

⁴⁷⁵Şimşir, *Azerbaycan: Azerbaycan'ın Yeniden Doğuş Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri*, 689.

This was not the latest riot in Baku. This time special police forces, OMON, rioted against and demanded the resignation of Aliyev.⁴⁷⁶ One interesting point is that President Demirel informed Aliyev about the plotted coup attempt at the last moment, preventing the coup taking place.⁴⁷⁷ When the two leaders were in Copenhagen for a conference, Demirel urged Aliyev to return to Baku immediately, and Aliyev cancelled his trips to struggle with the uprising.⁴⁷⁸

After a few days, Aliyev quelled this riot too.⁴⁷⁹ Demirel, who was in Pakistan then, talked to Aliyev twice on the phone in the 5-day period of the rebellion, and expressed Turkey's support for Aliyev while Prime Minister Çiller and Foreign Minister Murat Karayalçın sent messages of support to Baku.⁴⁸⁰ On the other hand, high-ranking state officials including some ministers and officials of Turkish National Intelligence Organization (MIT) were rumored to be involved in the OMON scandal.⁴⁸¹ With this in mind, Tansu Ciller's trip to Baku in April 1995 was to win back Aliyev's trust to clear his suspicions that state ministers were involved in the revolt.⁴⁸²

On March 28, 1995, an interview with Aliyev took place in the *Hürriyet* newspaper.⁴⁸³ In the interview, Aliyev states that he promised to Demirel to pass the oil pipeline through Turkey and to increase Turkey's share from the oil consortium signed recently. Correspondingly, Prime Minister Tansu Çiller visited Baku to sign the contract that increases Turkey's share of the Caspian oil consortium from 1,75%

⁴⁷⁶“Azerbaycan: Özel polis güçleri ayaklandı”.

⁴⁷⁷Çeviköz, “Turkey in a Reconnecting Eurasia: Foreign Economic and Security Interests,” 14.

⁴⁷⁸Özkök, “Bir darbe girişiminin perde arkası”.

⁴⁷⁹Aydın Tarihi, March 17, 1995.

⁴⁸⁰Şimşir, *Azerbaycan: Azerbaycan'ın Yeniden Doğuş Sürecinde Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri*, 719-720.

⁴⁸¹Aras, *Political Economy of Cooperation Between Turkey and Azerbaijan: An Analysis of Turkey's Mid to Long Term Regional Policy*, 87.

⁴⁸²Aras, *Political Economy of Cooperation Between Turkey and Azerbaijan: An Analysis of Turkey's Mid to Long Term Regional Policy*, 88.

⁴⁸³“Aliyev, sözünü tutacak”.

to 6,75%.⁴⁸⁴ At the signing ceremony, Çiller underscored that Turkey would continue to defend Azerbaijan's rights in the international area and would not allow for any changes of Azerbaijan's borders.⁴⁸⁵

President Süleyman Demirel visited Azerbaijan on December 7, 1995 just after the victory of Heydar Aliyev at Azerbaijan elections, emphasizing the unconditional support for the Aliyev government. In addition, during this visit, Demirel and Aliyev touched the issues of Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, Baku-Ceyhan oil pipeline, and the development of commercial relations which the sides did not find satisfactory.⁴⁸⁶ Five months later, this time Prime Minister Mesut Yılmaz visited Aliyev on April 14, 1996.⁴⁸⁷ Yılmaz assured Aliyev that Turkey would not allow the independence of Karabakh and would not open the Alicant border gate with Armenia unless the Armenians withdraw from Azerbaijani lands.⁴⁸⁸ In June 1996, the parties signed a military cooperation agreement.⁴⁸⁹

Heydar Aliyev's visit on May 5, 1997 to Turkey resulted in the signing of eight documents. According to Azerbaijani sources, this visit was a new level at the bilateral relations of friendship and fraternity.⁴⁹⁰ The parts signed a declaration of strategic partnership.⁴⁹¹ This declaration re-stated the consensus that the Azerbaijani oil would be transported via Turkey and demand of the immediate withdrawal of Armenia from the Karabakh region.⁴⁹² In addition, Aliyev repeated his view that Turkey was the closest country to them, a friend, and a brother.⁴⁹³ He also thanked

⁴⁸⁴ "Petrol Anlaşması İmzalandı".

⁴⁸⁵ Ayın Tarihi, April 12, 1995.

⁴⁸⁶ "Demirel'in Dostluk Ziyareti".

⁴⁸⁷ Ayın Tarihi, April 14, 1995.

⁴⁸⁸ "Yılmaz'dan Aliyev'e güvence".

⁴⁸⁹ Sönmezoglu, *Son Onyıllarda Türk Dış Politikası: 1991-2015*, 339.

⁴⁹⁰ Aliyev Heritage. *Azərbaycan-Türkiyə İlişkileri*.

⁴⁹¹ "Aliyev savunma anlaşması peşinde".

⁴⁹² "Aliyev savunma anlaşması peşinde".

⁴⁹³ The Grand National Assembly of Turkey Parliamentary Minutes, 06.05.1997.

Turkey for its efforts to realize the 1994 truce. On the other hand, at his speech at the Turkish Parliament, Aliyev stated with sorrow that some Turkish citizens and Turkish political parties were included in 1995 coup attempt against Aliyev.⁴⁹⁴ However, according to Sönmezoglu, this visit completely melted the hidden ices which were caused before by Aliyev's portrait in Turkish public opinion as a pro-Russian politician, and Turkish involvement in the coup attempt.⁴⁹⁵ In addition, Sönmezoglu argues that the Russian-Armenian rapprochement precipitated the re-development of Ankara-Baku relations.⁴⁹⁶

After a few months, when Foreign Minister Ismail Cem visited his counterpart Hasanov in Baku on September 7, 1997, Hasanov explicitly expressed that the Karabakh issue was closely related with the Baku-Ceyhan oil pipeline and Turkey should prefer brotherhood over money as he told they heard the rumors that Turkey intended to open borders with Armenia for trade.⁴⁹⁷

The Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline (BTC) continued to be a hot topic between the parts when Aliyev came to Istanbul for the OSCE Summit on November 18, 1999.⁴⁹⁸ In Istanbul, package deals for the pipeline's construction were signed by President Demirel, Aliyev, and Shevardnadze plus President Clinton as witness.⁴⁹⁹ In addition, separate protocols were signed with Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan to transport their oil from the Caspian Sea via Turkey to the energy markets.⁵⁰⁰

As part of the tradition, the next president of Turkey, Ahmet Necdet Sezer paid his first official visit to Azerbaijan on July 11, 2000,⁵⁰¹ which indicated the

⁴⁹⁴ "Darbeye Türk Siyasileri Karıştı".

⁴⁹⁵ Sönmezoglu, *Son Onyillarda Türk Dış Politikası: 1991-2015*, 339.

⁴⁹⁶ Sönmezoglu, *Son Onyillarda Türk Dış Politikası: 1991-2015*, 339.

⁴⁹⁷ "Bakü-Ceyhan boru hattına Ermenistan engeli".

⁴⁹⁸ Ayın Tarihi, November 18, 1999.

⁴⁹⁹ Ayın Tarihi, November 18, 1999.

⁵⁰⁰ "Hazar Akdeniz'e bağlanıyor".

⁵⁰¹ Ayın Tarihi, July 20, 2000.

importance of Turkey attaches to Azerbaijan. Sezer gave a speech at the dinner hosted by Aliyev and underlined the specialty of the privileged relations between the two states while calling Aliyev as his brother and Azerbaijan as Turkey's brother like his predecessors.⁵⁰² Expressing that it was natural for their people who have common culture, history, and language to embrace each other with sincere emotions, Sezer stated that their goal then should be to carry this solidarity to economic and commercial areas as well as cultural and societal areas.⁵⁰³ Like Demirel, Sezer also emphasized the urgent necessity to accelerate bilateral trade and the materialization of the BTC project. As expected, he touched the issue of the Karabakh dispute and reiterated Turkey's side with a peaceful resolution to the Armenian occupation of Azerbaijan lands.⁵⁰⁴ Lastly, along with oil, Sezer also declared their intentions to start negotiations on bringing Azerbaijani gas to Turkey.⁵⁰⁵

The parts worked on the gas issue at Aliyev's next visit on March 12, 2001. During Aliyev's stay, the parts signed 9 deals including the buying of natural gas along with protocols of ministerial-level cooperation.⁵⁰⁶ The gas agreement was considered as an important step towards the enhancement of the Turkey-Azerbaijan energy relations as the legal base for the idea of constructing a gas pipeline between the parts was prepared.⁵⁰⁷ In addition, according to the same source, Turkish officials noted that the gas deal with Azerbaijan was the lowest price Turkey achieved so far when compared with deals signed with Russia and Iran.⁵⁰⁸ Besides, the presidents

⁵⁰²Sezer, *Azerbaycan Cumhurbaşkanı Haydar Aliyev'in onurlarına verdiği, akşam yemeğinde yaptıkları konuşma*.

⁵⁰³Sezer, *Azerbaycan Cumhurbaşkanı Haydar Aliyev'in onurlarına verdiği, akşam yemeğinde yaptıkları konuşma*.

⁵⁰⁴Sezer, *Azerbaycan Cumhurbaşkanı Haydar Aliyev'in onurlarına verdiği, akşam yemeğinde yaptıkları konuşma*.

⁵⁰⁵Ayın Tarihi, July 11, 2000.

⁵⁰⁶"Sezer: Azeri halkinin yanındayız".

⁵⁰⁷"Baku ile enerjide ikinci aşama".

⁵⁰⁸"Baku ile enerjide ikinci aşama".

discussed the progress within the Minsk Group and while Sezer expressed that they would support a solution that the brother Azerbaijan desires,⁵⁰⁹ Aliyev demanded further military cooperation with Turkey and wanted Turkish soldiers to be positioned in Azerbaijan.⁵¹⁰

A few months later, On October 21, Ismail Cem paid a visit to Baku within his Asia tour to discuss the latest developments regarding the U.S operation towards Afghanistan.⁵¹¹ However, as in previous meetings, energy issues and Turkey's aid to Azerbaijan took its place on the table.⁵¹² Meanwhile, tension was exacerbating between Azerbaijan and Iran as the latter wanted a higher share from the Caspian energy resources.⁵¹³ Turkey was not insensitive to the issue; the Chief of Staff then, Hüseyn Kivrikoglu visited Baku accompanied by ten F-16 planes.⁵¹⁴

3.1.2 The 2000s

As Aras and Akpınar put it, the economic crises and the political unrest in the 1990s have prevented Turkey from having an effective role in the Southern Caucasus while the role of "model" country that was ascribed to Turkey was also inconclusive.⁵¹⁵ As a reason, Turkey lacked the necessary resources, Turkic leaders realized that they no longer needed Ankara to establish relations with the West, and the West understood the fears of Iran's influence were quite exaggerated.⁵¹⁶

⁵⁰⁹"Sezer: Azeri halkinin yanındayız".

⁵¹⁰Sönmezoğlu, *Son Onyillarda Türk Dış Politikası: 1991-2015*, 340.

⁵¹¹Ayın Tarihi, October 21, 2001.

⁵¹²Ayın Tarihi, October 21, 2001.

⁵¹³Sönmezoğlu, *Son Onyillarda Türk Dış Politikası: 1991-2015*, 341.

⁵¹⁴"Tahran'a F-16'lı gözdağı".

⁵¹⁵Aras and Akpınar, "The Relations between Turkey and the Caucasus," 54.

⁵¹⁶Dal and Erşen, "Reassessing the "Turkish Model" in the Post-Cold War Era: A Role Theory Perspective," 267.

In the new millenium, Turkish foreign policy primarily focused on the developments in Middle East starting with the U.S invasion of Iraq, besides paying a great attention to its relations with the EU.⁵¹⁷ The relatively non-interest of the AKP governments in the region was also prompted by PKK terrorism, the Kurdish issue, Cyprus and other domestic debates.⁵¹⁸ Therefore, the Caucasus region has moved away from topping the foreign policy agenda of Turkey, becoming more like an energy-related subject with the Turkey's desire to emerge as an energy hub both to satisfy its own need and serve as a transit route from the East to the West.⁵¹⁹

On the other hand, under AKP, Turkey has attempted to become a key regional actor by pursuing a more active role in the Balkans, the Middle East, and the Caucasus with a good neighborhood policy.⁵²⁰ Among the AKP policymakers, Ahmet Davutoğlu emerged as a key influence in Turkish foreign policy. As Hale puts it, Ahmet Davutoğlu's thesis claims that Turkey, due to its geographical position, possesses a "strategic depth", that it has not yet benefited from, therefore, Turkey should leave the threat-based approach for an active engagement in its periphery, aiming to become a central country rather than a being a mere bridge between the West and the East.⁵²¹ To quote Davutoğlu, "Turkey's national interest lies in the proper utilization of its geography."⁵²² Hence, Turkey should contribute to regional peace, security, and prosperity to create a positive environment which it would benefit from, and to rise to a proactive position in the international arena.⁵²³ With this in mind, Turkey has been attempting to solve regional disputes through

⁵¹⁷Sönmezoğlu, *Son Onyıllarda Türk Dış Politikası:1991-2015*, 700.

⁵¹⁸Aydın, "Turkey's Caucasus Policies," 181.

⁵¹⁹Sönmezoğlu, *Son Onyıllarda Türk Dış Politikası:1991-2015*, 700-701.

⁵²⁰Winrow, "Turkey, Russia and the Caucasus: Common and Diverging Interests," 3.

⁵²¹Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774*, 137.

⁵²²Davutoğlu, "Turkey's Foreign Policy Vision: An Assessment of 2007," 92.

⁵²³Davutoğlu, "Turkey's Foreign Policy Vision: An Assessment of 2007," 96.

intense diplomacy and multilateral initiatives,⁵²⁴ while Ankara strongly championed the implementation of regional energy, transportation, and cultural policies.⁵²⁵

Although the general lines of Turkish foreign policy vis-à-vis the Caucasian states remained unchanged in the 2000s, instead of laying emphasis on the historical and cultural ties with the region, AKP government preferred to focus on the development of economic links especially on pipeline politics.⁵²⁶ As Ziya Öniş contends, in the AKP era, Turkish foreign policy towards the region has become even more pragmatic and grounded more on the mutual economic interests although amicable relations lasted.⁵²⁷

Due to Heydar Aliyev's health problems, his son, Ilham Aliyev took his father's place in October 2003. Yet, before replacing his father, Ilham Aliyev, who was the prime minister then, also visited Turkey in September 2003. This was his first foreign visit.⁵²⁸ Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan held a press conference with Aliyev and stated that they would support the democratic development of Azerbaijan, as well as continue to back the Azerbaijan regarding the Karabakh problem, and underlined that there was not a transportation project that included Armenia, upon a question from the press.⁵²⁹ Turkey's political support for the Baku governments continued during Ilham Aliyev's tenure, as Ankara thought that stability in Azerbaijan would be better preserved by the continuity of the regime and thus supported, alongside Washington, Heydar Aliyev's son ascending to power.⁵³⁰

⁵²⁴Winrow, "Turkey, Russia and the Caucasus: Common and Diverging Interests," 3.

⁵²⁵Davutoğlu, "Turkey's Foreign Policy Vision: An Assessment of 2007," 96.

⁵²⁶Aydın, "Turkey's Caucasus Policies," 181.

⁵²⁷Öniş and Yılmaz, "Between Europeanization and Euro-Asianism: Foreign Policy Activism in Turkey during the AKP Era," 18.

⁵²⁸"Cumhurbaşkanı olacağım".

⁵²⁹"Cumhurbaşkanı olacağım".

⁵³⁰Aydın, "Turkey's Caucasus Policies," 189.

Ilham Aliyev also went as far to allow direct flights from Baku to Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus in a time Turkey needed international support for its case.⁵³¹

Following his assuming of the presidency, Ilham Aliyev came to Turkey again, on April 13, 2004.⁵³² He held separate meetings with President Sezer, Prime Minister Erdoğan, and Foreign Minister Abdullah Gül, to provide the support of Ankara with respect to the Karabakh issue, and to elaborate the BTC project and other energy issues.⁵³³ He made a speech at the TBMM during which he repeatedly emphasized that the solidarity of Turkey and Azerbaijan was the source of their power, and that no regional cooperation could occur without Turkey or Azerbaijan.⁵³⁴ Expressing the rightful and legitimate position of Azerbaijan towards Armenia, he concluded his words by wishing for a perpetual solidarity of Turkey-Azerbaijan which he described as One Nation, Two States like his father accentuated famously before.⁵³⁵ According to Mustafa Balbay, a prominent analyst, international community puts pressure on Turkey to open its borders with Armenia, and Aliyev wanted to hear itself that opening of borders could not happen unless Armenia withdraws from Azerbaijani territory, which Turkey explicitly stated.⁵³⁶

Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan paid a visit to Azerbaijan on June 29, 2005.⁵³⁷ Making a speech at the Azerbaijan parliament, Erdoğan expressed that what was left for Armenia after the Minsk progress was to withdraw from the Azeri lands immediately through a peaceful process.⁵³⁸ Like his predecessors, Erdoğan also underlined that their interests in the region are mutual, what Azerbaijani people

⁵³¹ Aydın, "Turkey's Caucasus Policies," 189.

⁵³² Ayın Tarihi, April 13, 2004.

⁵³³ "Ermenistan çekilsin".

⁵³⁴ The Grand National Assembly of Turkey Parliamentary Minutes, April 4, 2004.

⁵³⁵ The Grand National Assembly of Turkey Parliamentary Minutes, April 4, 2004.

⁵³⁶ Balbay, "Gündem," April 15, 2004.

⁵³⁷ Ayın Tarihi, June 30, 2005.

⁵³⁸ "Ermenistan mesajı".

wanted was what was important for Turkey, and Turkey would support any solution that benefits the Azerbaijani people.⁵³⁹ He also reassured Azerbaijan that no one [EU] could dictate to them to open borders with Armenia.⁵⁴⁰

On July 13, 2006, the BTC oil pipeline was inaugurated with the opening ceremony in Ceyhan with the participation of Sezer, Erdoğan, Aliyev, Saakashvili, along with several local and foreign top representatives including deputy prime minister of England, John Prescott.⁵⁴¹ Referring to the BTC as the “project of the century”, President Sezer stated that the project serves as a gateway to bring the Caspian oil to the world markets and contributes to the aim of Turkey that desires to be an energy transit country and energy trade center.⁵⁴² In addition, he uttered that the project would contribute to the peace and prosperity of the region that Turkey has deep cultural ties with.⁵⁴³ In the same way, Prime Minister Erdoğan defined the BTC as the world’s greatest energy project and the most significant component of the East-West energy corridor while carrying a vital importance for the EU accession process.⁵⁴⁴ The project was the top achievement for both sides after many years of delay thanks to Russian opposition, financing problems, and disputes over transit fees.⁵⁴⁵

With the pipeline, Turkey has become a major exporter of the Caspian oil. The line, that has been loading approximately 1,2 million barrels per day since 2009, is owned by a consortium led by BP with a 30,1% share, followed by 25% SOCAR,

⁵³⁹“Ermenistan mesajı”.

⁵⁴⁰“Ermenistan mesajı”.

⁵⁴¹ Ayn Tarihi, July 13, 2006.

⁵⁴² Sezer, *Address by H.E. Ahmet Necdet SEZER President of The Republic of Turkey at the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Pipeline Official Inauguration Ceremony*.

⁵⁴³ Sezer, *Address by H.E. Ahmet Necdet SEZER President of The Republic of Turkey at the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Pipeline Official Inauguration Ceremony*.

⁵⁴⁴ “21. yüzyilin ipek yolu”.

⁵⁴⁵ Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774*, 214.

and Turkish Petroleum (6,53%) plus a number of other oil companies from various countries.⁵⁴⁶

In 2007, the construction of the Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum Natural Gas Pipeline (BTE) was also completed and Azerbaijan began to fuel the BTE pipeline as of July in the same year.⁵⁴⁷ With the implementation of BTE, Azerbaijan became a gas exporter as well as an oil exporter.⁵⁴⁸ Turkey and Georgia were the first countries to import Azeri gas.⁵⁴⁹ Compared to BTC, this gas pipeline's role is more important to diversify the energy supplies to Turkey. The line, also known as South Caucasus Pipeline, is operated by BP with a share of 28,8%, AzSCP with 10%, and TPAO with 19% plus a consortium of other gas companies, has a throughput of about 21,4 million cubic meters of gas per day as of early 2017.⁵⁵⁰

The bilateral relations during the mid-2000s can be said to experience a period of stagnation thanks to the Middle East topping the foreign policy agenda of Ankara.⁵⁵¹ Yet, from a discursive point of view, not much has changed. President Abdullah Gül too made his first foreign official visit to Baku on November 7, 2007, and his declarations reflected that of previous political elite as follows:

We [Turkey and Azerbaijan] are really one nation, two states, in fact more than that... Turkey would not find peace unless the bleeding wound of Azerbaijan [Karabakh] is healed... we can show this fraternity with bigger economic cooperation and projects... Because they [Turkish businessmen] see here [Azerbaijan] as their own countries, homes thanks to the opportunities you provided, they made great investments here... We are so bound in cultural area that I speak Turkish, you too speak Turkish, we understand each other... With all these I am greatly proud.⁵⁵²

⁵⁴⁶ BP Azerbaijan, *Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Pipeline*.

⁵⁴⁷ Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources, *Natural Gas Pipelines and Projects*.

⁵⁴⁸ Aliyev Heritage. *Bakü-Tiflis-Erzurum Dogalgaz Hatti*.

⁵⁴⁹ Aliyev Heritage. *Bakü-Tiflis-Erzurum Dogalgaz Hatti*.

⁵⁵⁰ BP Azerbaijan, *South Caucasus Pipeline*.

⁵⁵¹ Sönmezoğlu, *Son Onyillarda Türk Dış Politikası: 1991-2015*, 702.

⁵⁵² Gül, speech, Translated by the author. See Gül, *Azerbaycan'da Onuruna Verilen Akşam Yemeğinde Yaptıkları Konuşma* (Appendix A, 4).

What is more, during Gül's presidency, Turkey's relations with Armenia had a direct impact with Turkey's relationship with Azerbaijan. Beginning with the late 2008 and in 2009, some steps taken to normalize the relations between Turkey and Armenia, were monitored by Baku Government with concern and mounted a negative atmosphere towards Turkey.⁵⁵³ According to Hale, the Turkish government then was under pressure to reach a détente with Yerevan in order to head off genocide recognition resolution tabled in the U.S Congress recently.⁵⁵⁴ Another view suggested that while relations with Armenia impeded Ankara's outreach to the Southern Caucasus since the 1990s, Ankara anticipated that Russian assertiveness due to the Georgian-Russian war might encourage Armenia to approach Turkey to balance Moscow; which created another impetus for the government to prioritize negotiations with Yerevan.⁵⁵⁵ As Carol Saivetz wrote, a possible thaw in relations between Turkey and Ankara would represent a major foreign policy success for Ankara and enhance Turkey's regional role.⁵⁵⁶

In September 2008, Gül accepted his counterpart Sargsyan's invitation for the FIFA World Cup qualifying game between Turkey and Armenia national teams, which was later referred to as "football diplomacy". The particular worry of Baku was how the progress in Turkish-Armenian relations would affect the Nagorno-Karabakh resolution as Azerbaijan expects a parallel progress with the settlement of the Karabakh conflict and the opening of Turkish-Armenian border.⁵⁵⁷ In fact, Aliyev government did not oppose the normalization process, but believed that

⁵⁵³Sönmezoğlu, *Son Onyıllarda Türk Dış Politikası:1991-2015*, 704

⁵⁵⁴Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774*, 217.

⁵⁵⁵Hill, Kirisci, and Moffatt, "Retracing the Caucasian Circle: Considerations and Constraints for U.S., EU, and Turkish Engagement in the South Caucasus," 16-17.

⁵⁵⁶Saivetz, "Tangled Pipelines: Turkey's Role in Energy Export Plans," 105.

⁵⁵⁷Shiriev and Davies, "The Turkey-Armenia-Azerbaijan Triangle: The Unexpected Outcomes of the Zurich Protocols," 186.

Turkey would not sign any agreement if the Armenian occupation remained in effect.⁵⁵⁸

By April, a “roadmap” was discussed between Turkey and Armenia, and in October 2009, Turkey and Armenia signed the Zurich protocols although the protocols were never ratified by both sides after Prime Minister Erdoğan’s declaration that the approval process was contingent on the progress of the Karabakh solution.⁵⁵⁹ Before the roadmap discussion with Armenia, four female members of Azerbaijan parliament brought a handful of soil to Ankara, which they claimed to be taken from Nagorno-Karabakh, and protested Turkey’s reconciliation attempts with Armenia, raising a counter reaction from the Ankara government. Furthermore, Turkish flags around the monument for Turkish servicemen at the Alley of Martyrs in Baku were taken down, followed by a similar act at a building that belongs to the Turkish embassy.⁵⁶⁰

After his visit to Yerevan on September 6, 2008, President Gül left for Baku on September 11 to exchange thoughts on his visit to Armenia with Aliyev. This was seen as Ankara’s attempts to assuage the Azeris.⁵⁶¹ After his exchange of opinions with his Azeri counterpart, Gül, in a press conference, said that they think new opportunities emerged regarding the settlement of the 17-year-long Karabakh dispute, which they hoped for a resolution of dialogue.⁵⁶² In a similar manner, on November 5, 2008, when President İlham Aliyev visited Ankara after his re-election, Gül assured the public that, Turkey and Azerbaijan continue their way, conscious of

⁵⁵⁸Mehtiyev, “Turkish-Armenian Protocols: An Azerbaijani Perspective,” 42.

⁵⁵⁹Shiriev and Davies, “The Turkey-Armenia-Azerbaijan Triangle: The Unexpected Outcomes of the Zurich Protocols,” 186.

⁵⁶⁰“Azerbaycan'da yine bayrak indirildi”.

⁵⁶¹Saivetz, “Tangled Pipelines: Turkey's Role in Energy Export Plans,” 105.

⁵⁶²Ayın Tarihi, September 10, 2008.

One Nation, Two States definition.⁵⁶³ With respect to the developments in Caucasia, he expressed that the two states on the same direction in great solidarity.⁵⁶⁴ Correspondingly, Ilham Aliyev stated that he made his first foreign visit to Turkey after the elections and this demonstrated the bilateral relations being at a high level.⁵⁶⁵ Besides, foreign minister of Turkey then, Ali Babacan declared that the progress in relations with Armenia was a process that goes parallel with the resolution of Armenia-Azerbaijan relations.⁵⁶⁶ Another statement came from Turkish parliamentary speaker then, Köksal Toptan, who said that Turkey shared the deep sorrow of Azerbaijani people whose lands have been occupied and who were removed from their lands, while underlining that the ties between Turkey and Azerbaijan were so strong that no one could harm these relations.⁵⁶⁷ Furthermore, on several occasions, Erdoğan explicitly declared that they would not sign a final deal with Armenia unless there was an agreement between Azerbaijan and Armenia on the Nagorno Karabakh. However, Azerbaijani government remained unconvinced about the developments until Prime Minister Erdoğan's visit to Baku in May 2009.⁵⁶⁸ Moreover, President Aliyev boycotted the April 2009 Istanbul Summit of the Alliance of the Civilisations in reaction to the possibility of Turkish-Armenian reconciliation prior to breakthrough on the Nagorno-Karabakh problem.⁵⁶⁹ The same month, Aliyev stated that:

We are getting a lot of official and non-official information about what's happening between Turkey and Armenia. This is a deal between two sovereign countries, and we have no strategy to stop or impede it, but we, the Azerbaijani people, want to know answer to one very simple question:

⁵⁶³ Ayın Tarihi, November 5, 2008.

⁵⁶⁴ Ayın Tarihi, November 5, 2008.

⁵⁶⁵ Ayın Tarihi, November 5, 2008.

⁵⁶⁶ Ayın Tarihi, September 10, 2008.

⁵⁶⁷ Ayın Tarihi, May 8, 2009.

⁵⁶⁸ Shiriev and Davies, "The Turkey-Armenia-Azerbaijan Triangle: The Unexpected Outcomes of the Zurich Protocols," 190.

⁵⁶⁹ "Aliyev's turn at, 'One minute, one minute'".

is the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict a pre-condition for the rapprochement process or not?⁵⁷⁰

Before he left for Baku, Erdoğan told the press members that he hoped the visit would serve to clarify misunderstandings and misperceptions in the public opinion.⁵⁷¹ In Baku, Erdoğan addressed the Parliament of Azerbaijan, *Milli Majlis*, and with parts of his words as follows:

I would like to express this feeling of fraternity with the verses of the great poets of Turkey and Azerbaijan... ‘Azerbaijan-Turkey, we are one nation two states, same desire, same intention.’... We witness that through speculative and untruthful news, the fraternal atmosphere is tried to be overshadowed... It is a great shame to us that such a condition for Turkey to give up Karabakh is pronounced... The gates [with Armenia] were closed right after the whole of the Nagorno-Karabakh was occupied by Armenia. Therefore, the gates open when this situation disappears or we cannot make a move with disagreement with our Azeri brothers on this point. These are interconnected, cannot be thought as separate. . . . Because we are one nation two states. This perception of us is fundamental. There is no change of this fundament, there cannot be... Our only purpose is to make progress towards the normalization of the relations between Turkey and Armenia while creating the necessary conditions for the resolution of the Upper Karabakh within the principle of Azerbaijan’s territorial integrity. If these go in parallel, we are in, otherwise we are out.⁵⁷²

Upon a question from a press member regarding the suspicions of Baku, Aliyev declared that he was grateful as no suspicion remained after the statement of his invaluable brother Erdoğan.⁵⁷³

Having said these, Azerbaijan also used its energy card to try to convince Ankara to reconsider its rapprochement strategy with Armenia.⁵⁷⁴ In April 2009, Aliyev went to Moscow to exchange opinions with Medvedev on a potential Russo-Azerbaijani gas cooperation.⁵⁷⁵ This visit was a clear message to Ankara to be more

⁵⁷⁰ Shiriev and Davies, “The Turkey-Armenia-Azerbaijan Triangle: The Unexpected Outcomes of the Zurich Protocols,” 192.

⁵⁷¹ Ayın Tarihi, May 12, 2009.

⁵⁷² Erdoğan, speech, Translated by the author. See Erdoğan, “Başbakan Erdoğan, Azeri Meclisi'nde konuştu”. (Appendix A,5).

⁵⁷³ “Erdoğan tam garanti verdi Bakü'nün şüphesi kalmadı”.

⁵⁷⁴ Shiriev and Davies, “The Turkey-Armenia-Azerbaijan Triangle: The Unexpected Outcomes of the Zurich Protocols,” 194.

⁵⁷⁵ Ayın Tarihi, September 17, 2008.

meticulous for the normalizations process.⁵⁷⁶ What is more, the Aliyev Government signed an agreement with Russia to sell Azeri gas to Russian energy companies.⁵⁷⁷ The concrete action of Azerbaijan suggested significant political and economic sanctions to punish Turkey's policy shift.⁵⁷⁸

There were various contending remarks from politicians and analysts throughout the months of strained relations. Former president, a veteran politician in the history of Turkey, Süleyman Demirel, regarding the Gül's visit to Yerevan, expressed his opinion that politics could not be done with perpetual hostility and Gül's visit was correct and positively welcomed both in Turkey and outside.⁵⁷⁹

On the other hand, the leader of the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP), Devlet Bahçeli made a statement that Gül should not go to Yerevan to watch the football game.⁵⁸⁰ Likewise, the leader of the main opposition party Republican People's Party (CHP), Baykal criticized Abdullah Gül and asking him sarcastically whether Armenia recognized the borders of Turkey, gave up its genocide discourse, and withdrew from the Karabakh lands it occupied.⁵⁸¹ Besides, a distinguished diplomat, Ayhan Kamel contends that it was a mistake of Ankara to sign protocols with Armenia to normalize the relations without obtaining any guarantee regarding the Karabakh dispute, as it created an untrustworthy impression of Ankara in the eyes of Azerbaijan, although Turkey delayed the ratification of protocols after the Azerbaijan's reaction.⁵⁸² What is more, in an interview, Consul General of Azerbaijan in Istanbul, Sayyad Adiloglu, regarding the normalization process, stated

⁵⁷⁶ Sönmezoğlu, *Son Onyıllarda Türk Dış Politikası: 1991-2015*, 704.

⁵⁷⁷ "Ankara'ya kızan Aliyev soluğu Moskova'da aldı".

⁵⁷⁸ Shiriev and Davies, "The Turkey-Armenia-Azerbaijan Triangle: The Unexpected Outcomes of the Zurich Protocols," 194.

⁵⁷⁹ *Ayın Tarihi*, September 17, 2008.

⁵⁸⁰ *Ayın Tarihi*, September 1, 2008.

⁵⁸¹ *Ayın Tarihi*, September 4, 2008.

⁵⁸² Kamel, *1923'ten Günümüze Türk Dış Politikası ve Diplomasisi*, 194-195.

that If they were one nation, two states, they could not remain indifferent to the emerging events if they got a blow in their economic and political interests.⁵⁸³

In addition, the Turkish and Azerbaijani mass media reflected the developments with harsh headlines. Popular Turkish newspapers described the situation as “One Nation Breaks Apart”,⁵⁸⁴ “It [Armenia] or Me [Azerbaijan]? Says Azerbaijan”,⁵⁸⁵ “Heads in Baku confused”,⁵⁸⁶ while Azerbaijani local media had headlines such as “Has Azerbaijan lost her closest ally to Armenia? Is that realistic?”,⁵⁸⁷ “Turkish government’s betrayal of the people of Azerbaijan”,⁵⁸⁸ “Would Turkey betray?”.⁵⁸⁹

The process, although it did not result in any concrete progress between Turkey and Armenia that could irreversibly damage the Turkish-Azerbaijan ties, coincided with some energy-related concerns of Azerbaijan, as mentioned above. Yet, the dispute over prices and tariffs was in the making for some time and predated the reaction to Ankara-Yerevan normalization.⁵⁹⁰ In October 2009, Aliyev government demanded a raise in the price of the natural gas sold to Turkey.⁵⁹¹ Aliyev, underlining that Azerbaijan has been selling natural gas to Turkey with a price that was 30% of the world prices, expressed that the situation does not fit in any logic and the new price needed to be close to the world prices.⁵⁹²

In fact, as early as April 2009, President of SOCAR, Rovneg Abdullayev stated that the world has changed a lot, the prices surged, and the agreement signed

⁵⁸³ Ayın Tarihi, April 11, 2009.

⁵⁸⁴ “Bir Millet Ayrılıyor”.

⁵⁸⁵ “Azerbaycan ‘Ya o, ya ben’ diyor”.

⁵⁸⁶ “Bakü’de Kafalar Karışık”.

⁵⁸⁷ “En Yaxın Müttəfiqimizi Ermənistanda Itirəcəyimiz Doğrudurmu”.

⁵⁸⁸ “Turkish Government’s Betrayal of the People of Azerbaijan”.

⁵⁸⁹ “Would Turkey Betray?”.

⁵⁹⁰ Kardas, “Turkish–Azerbaijani Energy Cooperation and Nabucco: Testing the Limits of the New Turkish Foreign Policy Rhetoric,” 69.

⁵⁹¹ “Azerbaycan’ın karşı atağı: Doğalgaza zam”.

⁵⁹² “Azerbaycan’ın karşı atağı: Doğalgaza zam”.

with Turkey in the early 2000s have become obsolete and does not reflect the current prices.⁵⁹³ As a matter of fact, despite the price terms of the deal signed in 2001 expired in 2008, yet Turkey continued to import Azeri gas at the old price, which was far below the current market prices then.⁵⁹⁴ On the other hand, although it seems as an unfair deal for Azerbaijan, as Aydın reminds, when Turkey and Azerbaijan signed a gas deal with the price being \$120-130 per metric ton in 2001, Russia was paying \$80 per metric ton for the Caspian gas.⁵⁹⁵ The negotiations lasted for more than a year and the sides signed new deals in June 2010 with updated prices as well as new agreements to transfer Shah-Deniz gas with new projects.⁵⁹⁶ The Minister of Energy and Natural Resources Taner Yildiz, without disclosing the new terms, noted that Azeri gas was very important for Turkey and the new price was such that it satisfied the interests of Azeri brothers and enabled Turkey to obtain gas at market conditions.”.⁵⁹⁷ Later on, when journalist Zeynep Gürcanlı made an interview with Aliyev’s foreign policy consultant Novruz Mammadov, Mammadov explained that even with the new prices, Azerbaijan was still the country that sells gas to Turkey with the most convenient price, still cheaper than the Russian gas.⁵⁹⁸ With the resolution of the gas problem, the bilateral relations were said to re-normalize.⁵⁹⁹

Azerbaijan’s solid stance regarding Turkey-Armenia normalization was also witnessed during the Russo-Georgian conflict in 2008. Turkey reacted to the conflict with a call for the formation of Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform (CSCP) that unites Turkey, Russia, Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Armenia.⁶⁰⁰ However, Azeri

⁵⁹³ “Azerbaycan’dan Türkiye’ye sattığı gaza zam”.

⁵⁹⁴ Kardas, “Turkish–Azerbaijani Energy Cooperation and Nabucco: Testing the Limits of the New Turkish Foreign Policy Rhetoric,” 65.

⁵⁹⁵ Aydın, “Kafkasya ve Orta Asya’yla İlişkiler,” *Türk Dış Politikası: Cilt 3: 2001-2012*, 482.

⁵⁹⁶ “Azerbaycan’la 3 tarihi imza attık, doğalgazda fiyat krizi çözüldü”.

⁵⁹⁷ “Azerbaycan’la 3 tarihi imza attık, doğalgazda fiyat krizi çözüldü”.

⁵⁹⁸ “Ticari sır denilen doğalgaz fiyatını Azeriler açıkladı”.

⁵⁹⁹ Sönmezoglu, *Son Onyillarda Türk Dış Politikası: 1991-2015*, 705.

⁶⁰⁰ Winrow, “Turkey, Russia and the Caucasus: Common and Diverging Interests,” 7.

officials said that the implementation of the project was impossible with the Karabakh dispute remaining unresolved.

During these years, construction of a regional rail link project that bypasses Russia has also begun; Baku-Tbilisi-Kars (BTK), to directly connect Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Turkey. The railway, which feeds into the broader Turkish railway system to Europe beyond, was first envisioned in 1993 after an operating railway that arrived Baku via Armenia was shut down due to the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute. Yet, the project has begun in 2008 and went into operation in October 2017. By creating a corridor between the parts, the project aims to contribute to economic relations and gain foreign direct investment by connecting Europe and Asia. In addition to having a capacity to transport one million passengers, the BTK route will allow businessmen to send 6,5 million tons of freight as well as storing their cargos in a logistics center.⁶⁰¹ The bulk financing of the project was undertaken by Azerbaijan's State Oil Fund (SOFAZ) that allocated \$631,79 million for the overall cost of nearly \$1billion.⁶⁰² At the inauguration ceremony, President Erdoğan stressed the significance of the project as follows:

The BTK railway line constitutes the most important part of the Middle Corridor project. Now, direct railway connection from Beijing to London has been established... Chinese freight will be delivered to European Union countries within 12 to 15 days via the BTK railway through the Middle Corridor... Carrying even 10 percent of this amount [240 million tons of freight shipped from China to Europe] through our countries will bring an extra 24 million tons of freight transportation.⁶⁰³

Erdoğan also added that the project has been implemented by using their own funds, which Aliyev also underscored at the ceremony.⁶⁰⁴ As a matter of fact, the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, and the European Bank for Reconstruction and

⁶⁰¹“Azerbaijan, Georgia, Turkey launch new Asia-to-Europe rail link”.

⁶⁰²“Azerbaijan issues nearly \$632M for construction of BTK's Georgian section”.

⁶⁰³“Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway to stimulate economic growth, boost human development”.

⁶⁰⁴“Azerbaijan, Georgia, Turkey launch new Asia-to-Europe rail link”.

Development declined to finance the project on the grounds that they preferred revitalization of the old route passing through Armenia.⁶⁰⁵

In short, the BTK railway appeals as a strong alternative bypassing Russia, sanctions on whom have been the New Silk Road's biggest bottleneck.⁶⁰⁶ While the route can become viable by decreasing the 18-day-length of the Beijing-London connection, it will also contribute to further isolation of Armenia and Iran to some extent in the Southern Caucasus by enhancing the ties between Ankara, Baku, and Tbilisi.

Moreover, in August 2010, President Gül visited Baku and Turkey and Azerbaijan signed an agreement on strategic partnership and mutual support.⁶⁰⁷ The same resources remind us that the agreement was signed during a period when Moscow agreed with Yerevan to expand the status of the Russian military base, stimulating Baku to enhance its cooperation with NATO and Turkey in particular.⁶⁰⁸ Regarding the strategic partnership deal, Gül remarked that the agreement was the clearest indication of the political relations of two separate states of one nation.⁶⁰⁹ During his stay, Gül also touched on the Karabakh problem, laid emphasis on the unfairness of the situation for Azerbaijan, and Turkey's perpetual support in every platform for this rightful struggle of Baku. On the other hand, this strategic partnership pact had some disturbing implications as each side agreed to support the other in case of a military aggression by a third party using all possibilities, which may involve Turkey in a possible conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia, and

⁶⁰⁵Shepard, "How Azerbaijan, Georgia, And Turkey Subverted Russia And Isolated Armenia With New Railway".

⁶⁰⁶Shepard, "How Azerbaijan, Georgia, And Turkey Subverted Russia And Isolated Armenia With New Railway".

⁶⁰⁷"Turkey, Azerbaijan sign strategic partnerhship deal".

⁶⁰⁸"Turkey, Azerbaijan sign strategic partnerhship deal".

⁶⁰⁹"Gül ve Aliyev'den basın toplantısı".

even Russia.⁶¹⁰ Although according to Turkish officials, both sides concurred that the agreement did not amount to a mutual defense pact, it raised questions why Turkey has signed such as agreement.⁶¹¹

A recent token of the bilateral links at a strategic level has been the inauguration of the High Level Strategic Cooperation Council (HLSC) mechanism in 2010 at the presidential level, convening five times between 2010 and 2016.⁶¹² In addition, Turkey-Azerbaijan-Georgia, Turkey-Azerbaijan-Iran, and Turkey-Azerbaijan-Turkmenistan trilateral meetings were formed together with Azerbaijan to further enhance regional stability, peace, and prosperity.⁶¹³ Prime Minister Erdoğan expressed that the inauguration of the mechanism was a representation of Heydar Aliyev's legacy of One Nation, Two States.⁶¹⁴

The first HLSC meeting took place on October 25, 2011 in Istanbul. During this meeting, the parts signed several documents ranging from natural gas deals, communication, training of police forces, family and social politics, mutual promotion and protection of investments, training of diplomatic personnel, cooperation on media and information, and forestry.⁶¹⁵ In addition, Aliyev and Erdoğan joined the groundbreaking ceremony of Haydar Aliyev High School in Kars and the opening ceremony of the AYPE-T factory in Petkim petroleum refinery in Izmir.⁶¹⁶ To evaluate bilateral relations, Erdoğan again underlined that Turkey and Azerbaijan is one heart in addition to being One Nation, Two States while Turkey stands shoulder to shoulder with Azerbaijan against the Karabakh attacks.⁶¹⁷

⁶¹⁰Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774*, 216.

⁶¹¹Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774*, 216.

⁶¹²Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Relations between Turkey and Azerbaijan*.

⁶¹³Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Relations between Turkey and Azerbaijan*.

⁶¹⁴"Türkiye-Azerbaycan arası stratejik imza atıldı".

⁶¹⁵"Türkiye-Azerbaycan Yüksek Düzeyli Stratejik İşbirliği Konseyi Toplantısı".

⁶¹⁶"2 devlet tek millet tek yürek".

⁶¹⁷"2 devlet tek millet tek yürek".

The second HLSC meeting in 2012 was also fruitful in terms of further signing of cooperation agreements. Top representatives from Ankara and Baku signed 8 agreements in areas of transportation, diplomatic exchange, farming, search and rescue, economic regulations and standardization, Turkology, and media cooperation.⁶¹⁸

In the early 2010s, another big-scale project with respect to the energy cooperation between Ankara and Baku was introduced; Trans-Anatolian Natural Gas Pipeline Project, (TANAP). The aim of the TANAP project is to convey the natural gas from Azerbaijan's Shah Deniz-2 field as well as other fields in the Caspian Sea to Turkey, and to Europe.⁶¹⁹ Put differently, in TANAP, Turkey serves as both a transit and an importer of Azerbaijani gas. The project will run from the Turkish border with Georgia, and through 20 provinces in Turkey, it will end at the Greek border, to be connected with the Trans-Adriatic Pipeline (TAP) in Europe.⁶²⁰ Along with the South Caucasus Pipeline (SCP), and TAP, TANAP forms the skeleton of the Southern Gas Corridor.⁶²¹

The negotiations for TANAP commenced in 2011 and agreements were signed between energy minister of Turkey and Azerbaijan in December of the same year.⁶²² Twenty percent of the project was decided to belong to Turkish companies;⁶²³ BOTAS and TP, while the rest is termed to be SOCAR's from Azerbaijan.⁶²⁴ The legal basis of TANAP was drawn up with "Intergovernmental Agreement concerning the Trans-Anatolian Natural Gas Pipeline System between

⁶¹⁸ "8 anlaşma imzalandı".

⁶¹⁹Trans-Anatolian Natural Gas Pipeline Project. *Why TANAP?*

⁶²⁰Trans-Anatolian Natural Gas Pipeline Project. *Why TANAP?*

⁶²¹Trans-Anatolian Natural Gas Pipeline Project. *Why TANAP?*

⁶²²Ayın Tarihi, December 26, 2011.

⁶²³It was increased to 30% later.

⁶²⁴Ayın Tarihi, December 26, 2011.

the Government of the Republic of Turkey and the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan” and the Host Government Agreement annex, signed in Istanbul on June 26, 2012.⁶²⁵ Upon the signing ceremony in 2012, Prime Minister Erdoğan, while again stressing the rhetoric of One Nation, Two States, claimed that the project along with the Southern Gas Corridor, enhancing the strategic dimension of the relations, was very vital for the energy security of both Turkey and Europe.⁶²⁶ Likewise, Aliyev who said he did not know any alliance like Turkey and Azerbaijan on the political arena, underlined that although each project has economic and commercial issues, without the fraternal base the bilateral relations would have never been at this point.⁶²⁷

The ground-breaking ceremony of TANAP was performed on March 17, 2015 in Kars province of Turkey.⁶²⁸ According to scheduled plan, it is expected to transport the first gas to Turkey in 2018, and to Europe in 2019 with the annual volume of the gas to transport to reach to 16-billion-meter cube in 2020, 23-billion-meter cube in 2023, and 31-billion-meter cube in 2026 respectively.⁶²⁹ Moreover, after the fifth Azerbaijan-Turkey High Strategic Cooperation Council in March 2016, Erdoğan noted that efforts continued to finish the TANAP pipeline earlier than the scheduled date. As of May 2017, İlham Aliyev told the press that 93% of Shah-Deniz-2 project and 72% of the TANAP were completed and it is expected to fuel the first gas through TANAP by 2018.⁶³⁰ Similarly, energy minister of Turkey, Berat Albayrak noted a few times throughout 2017 that the project was going on ahead of schedule and by 2020, Azeri gas would be exported to Europe at large volumes with

⁶²⁵Trans-Anatolian Natural Gas Pipeline Project, *Agreements*.

⁶²⁶subasi94, “Başbakan Erdoğan-Aliyev Ortak Basın Toplantısı. 1”.

⁶²⁷subasi94, “Başbakan Erdoğan-Aliyev Ortak Basın Toplantısı. 1”.

⁶²⁸“Trans Anadolu Doğal Gaz Boru Hattı (TANAP) Projesinin Temel Atma Töreni Gerçekleşti”.

⁶²⁹“Trans Anadolu Doğal Gaz Boru Hattı (TANAP) Projesinin Temel Atma Töreni Gerçekleşti”.

⁶³⁰““TANAP'ın yüzde 72'si tamamlandı””.

the completion of TAP. The completion of TANAP seems quite urgent for Turkey who is heavily dependent on Russian gas. As matter of fact, Prime Minister Davutoğlu paid a visit to Baku to agree on the acceleration of the progress, following the downing of a Russian warplane by Turkey in 2015.⁶³¹ On the other hand, TANAP also attracted the attention of Turkmenistan which signed an outline deal with Turkey in November 2014 to supply gas to the proposed project.⁶³²

In 2013, the fraternal relations were crowned at the top-level when President Abdullah Gül conferred the Order of State to President Aliyev while his counterpart, in return, decorated President Gül with the Order of Heydar Aliyev. The Order of Heydar Aliyev was also conferred to Erdoğan by Aliyev one year later in Ankara.

On July 16, 2013, Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu paid an official visit to Baku.⁶³³ Indicating the high level of cooperation between two brotherly countries from time immemorial, Davutoğlu stressed that along with energy, the parts finalized many projects ranging from defense industry to trade relations and transport. Also, announcing the commencing of the diplomat exchange program between the two ministries, Davutoğlu touched upon the Karabakh issue, and criticized the Minsk Group and Co-Chairs for not producing any result for more than 20 years, and not including Turkey in the recent process carried out by the Co-Chairs alone. In addition to this visit, Davutoğlu visited Baku 2 more times in the next three months of 2013 to exchange views on the bilateral and regional issues.

November 2013 also hosted the third meeting of the Turkey-Azerbaijan HLSC. During this meeting several protocols and agreements that covers different aspects of the relations were signed; protocol for scientific and technological

⁶³¹“Turkey agrees with Azerbaijan to accelerate gas project”.

⁶³²“Turkmenistan inks deal with Turkey to supply gas to TANAP pipeline”.

⁶³³Ayın Tarihi, July 16, 2013.

cooperation, memorandum for technologic and industrial cooperation, agreement for freight transportation, security cooperation, and mutual employment.⁶³⁴ The visits also continued in 2014, with Prime Minister Erdoğan's working visit in April when they had opportunity to review the bilateral relations and the current cooperation, followed by Erdoğan's first visit on September 3, after assuming the Presidency. Next, Aliyev came to Turkey on January 15, 2015 upon the invitation of Erdoğan and the two exchanged views on projects such as TANAP and Baku-Tbilisi-Kars Railway as well as regional developments.⁶³⁵ One month later, Foreign Minister Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu visited Aliyev and his counterpart Memmedyarov in Baku. Describing the Hodjali incident between Armenians and Azerbaijanis as massacre and genocide during his visit which was an anniversary of the events, Çavuşoğlu also commented on the normalization process with Armenia in 2009; that Armenia was left out of the regional cooperation mechanisms thanks to its insincere and malicious intentions and the only way to include Armenia back in regional mechanisms passed through its withdrawal from Azerbaijani lands.⁶³⁶ He also reminded that Turkey invited Azerbaijan to the G-20 Summit as the chairman with the belief in the important contribution by Azerbaijan.⁶³⁷

The fourth HLSC meeting between President Erdoğan and Aliyev took place in the beginning of 2015, with the signing of agreements on cooperation against money laundry and financing terrorism and further dialogue for customs and borders.⁶³⁸ At the press conference after the meeting, Erdoğan expressed his content with the progress gained through HLSC mechanisms and his desire to improve

⁶³⁴ "The third meeting of Turkey-Azerbaijan High Level Strategic Council was held in Ankara".

⁶³⁵ *Ayın Tarihi*, January 15, 2015.

⁶³⁶ "Foreign Minister Çavuşoğlu is in Azerbaijan".

⁶³⁷ "Foreign Minister Çavuşoğlu is in Azerbaijan".

⁶³⁸ "Erdoğan-Aliyev Ortak Basın Toplantısı".

bilateral trade to higher volumes, while he also criticized the Minsk Group which he thinks pursues a stalling policy with regard to the Karabakh problem.⁶³⁹ He also added that Turkey has a firm stance regarding the dispute and it will continue to back Baku for a peaceful resolution that preserves the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan.⁶⁴⁰

The HLSC meetings continued in 2016, the fifth one taking place just after a serious terrorist attack in Ankara. With this meeting the parts signed 6 documents with respect to cooperation between military and civil personnel, judiciary cooperation, recognition of driving licenses, and technical cooperation between ministries.⁶⁴¹

On July 15, 2016, a failed coup attempt took place in a bloody way in Turkey. The Turkish government blames the attempt on Fethullah Gülen and his terrorist Fetullah Terrorist Organization (FETÖ). Upon the failure of the attempt, President Aliyev sent a letter to Erdoğan that congratulates the protection of democracy by the people of Turkey under the leadership of his brother Erdoğan as he states, which was seen as a heroic struggle for Azerbaijan.⁶⁴²

With regard to FETÖ which was claimed to have strong influence in Azerbaijan, there were various statements from Azerbaijani officials underscoring the fact that Azerbaijan is having an effective struggle against this organization.⁶⁴³ Apparently, the issue has gone beyond being a domestic affair of Turkey and became a subject in bilateral talks. For instance, when Foreign Minister Çavuşoğlu and Minister of Internal Affairs Nurettin Canikli visited Baku in December 2016 and

⁶³⁹“Erdoğan-Aliyev Ortak Basın Toplantısı”.

⁶⁴⁰“Erdoğan-Aliyev Ortak Basın Toplantısı”.

⁶⁴¹“Türkiye ve Azerbaycan arasında 6 anlaşma imzalandı”.

⁶⁴²“Aliyev'den Erdoğan'a "15 Temmuz Demokrasi ve Milli Birlik Günü" mektubu”.

⁶⁴³“Azerbaycan Cumhuriyet Başsavcısı Garalov: Azerbaycan'da FETÖ'ye karşı etkin bir mücadele veriliyor”.

September 2017 respectively, they both appreciated measures Azerbaijan took against FETO in their declarations.

By 2017, Turkey and Azerbaijan celebrated the twenty-fifth year of the establishment of the political relations with the agreement signed on January 14, 1992. In these 25 years, with special efforts of the parties, as the ambassador of Azerbaijan, Faig Bagirov thinks that, besides the improvement of political ties, the two fraternal countries fostered strong multi-dimensional links in economic, energy, commercial, educational, cultural, and military terms, reaching the level of a strategic alliance.⁶⁴⁴ Signing more than two hundred agreements and the realization of milestone initiatives such as the BTC oil pipeline, BTE natural gas pipeline, and the TANAP project, has paved the way from a brotherhood to a strategic alliance, Bagirov noted.⁶⁴⁵ Today, while intense high-level contacts define the bilateral relations according to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, it became a symbolic tradition to visit each other's countries right after assuming the office.⁶⁴⁶ In addition to the bilateral relations, the two fraternal states carried on their cooperation to the international arena, through the mechanisms of the UN, OSCE, European Council, BSEC, Turkic Council while Turkey has been a strong advocate of a pro-Azerbaijan resolution of the Karabakh dispute.⁶⁴⁷ Today, the two states are said to experience the golden age of their 25-year-old relations.⁶⁴⁸ With regard to the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the diplomatic relations, Ilham Aliyev noted that the

⁶⁴⁴ "Azerbaycan-Türkiye ilişkilerinin 25. yılı".

⁶⁴⁵ "Azerbaycan-Türkiye ilişkilerinin 25. yılı".

⁶⁴⁶ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Relations between Turkey and Azerbaijan*.

⁶⁴⁷ "Azerbaycan-Türkiye ilişkilerinin 25. yılı".

⁶⁴⁸ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Relations between Turkey and Azerbaijan*.

“‘One nation, two states’ principle has covered all spheres of Azerbaijan-Turkey relations that have no analogues in the world.”⁶⁴⁹

So far, this section attempted to shed light on the development of political relations. The Turkish political elite has welcomed the independence of Azerbaijan along with other Turkic republics with great euphoria. With a fraternal theme of One Nation, Two States, the general tendency of relations has been to support Azerbaijan’s development in the first years and then improve bilateral cooperation in political, economic, and cultural fields. Furthermore, the Karabakh dispute has been topping the political agenda of Turkey with respect to its Azerbaijan policies, and it seems appropriate at this point to elaborate Turkey’s stance towards the dispute. Therefore, before moving on to economic relations, an outline of Turkey’s attempts to resolve the dispute is provided next

3.1.3 Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and Turkey

As Hale expresses, of the various disputes between the regional states surrounding Turkey, that between Azerbaijan and Armenia has been the most critical one for Turkey.⁶⁵⁰ Nagorno-Karabakh is a mountainous border region claimed by both Azerbaijan and Armenia. The conflict of Nagorno-Karabakh is an unresolved dispute since 1988, when Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast (NKAB) of the Azerbaijan SSR declared independence from Azerbaijan. The background of the conflict’s roots go further back to 1920’s when Soviet demarcation created the borders of the region

⁶⁴⁹ “Ilham Aliyev: ‘One nation, two states’ principle covers all spheres of Azerbaijan-Turkey relations”.

⁶⁵⁰ Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774*, 211.

in favor of Azerbaijan⁶⁵¹ despite the demands of Armenians;⁶⁵² Hence, the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Region was established within the Soviet Socialist Republic of Azerbaijan in 1920, achieving the autonomous status afterwards in 1923.

Armenian side claims the region as their own based on the historical Armenian populations.⁶⁵³ Until the first half of the nineteenth century, the Armenian population constituted a minority against the Muslim community in Southern Caucasus, however the Russian policy to resettle Armenians in the region throughout the century resulted in the Armenian community to turn into the majority in Karabakh.⁶⁵⁴ Consequently, Karabakh Armenians had comprised 94%, and 76% of the population in the 1920s and the 1980s respectively.⁶⁵⁵

In 1988, the conflict has been exacerbated when the parliament of the region voted to join Armenia paving the way for a bloody war between Azerbaijani troops and Armenian secessionists.⁶⁵⁶ During the fighting, in which between 20,000 and 30,000 people are estimated to have lost their lives, the ethnic Armenians gained control of the region.⁶⁵⁷ In addition, they pushed on to occupy Azerbaijani territory outside the region, creating a buffer zone linking Karabakh and Armenia.⁶⁵⁸

According to the Council on Foreign Relations, by 1993, Armenia controlled Nagorno-Karabakh and occupied 20% of the surrounding Azerbaijan territory.⁶⁵⁹

Likewise, the course of the conflict had serious ramifications beyond Karabakh borders; thousands of people, both Azerbaijani and Armenian, had to flee their

⁶⁵¹Herzig, *The new Caucasus: Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia*, 66.

⁶⁵²Azer, *Babadan Oğula Güney Kafkasya*, 573.

⁶⁵³Herzig, *The new Caucasus: Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia*, 66.

⁶⁵⁴Kamel, *1923'ten Günümüze Türk Dış Politikası ve Diplomasisi*, 193.

⁶⁵⁵Herzig, *The new Caucasus: Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia*, 66.

⁶⁵⁶BBC News, *Nagorno-Karabakh Profile*.

⁶⁵⁷BBC News, *Nagorno-Karabakh Profile*.

⁶⁵⁸BBC News, *Nagorno-Karabakh Profile*.

⁶⁵⁹Global Conflict Tracker, *Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict*.

homes in the districts of Agdam, Fizuli, Jebrail, Kelbajar, Kubatly, Lachin, and Zangelan.

By the way, on December 1, 1989, the parliament of Nagorno-Karabakh and the Soviet Supreme of Armenia promulgated the unification of Karabakh and Armenia; which changed to the independence of Nagorno-Karabakh due to the reservations of Armenia in the international arena.⁶⁶⁰ Ironically, the independence has not been recognized by any state, including Armenia itself.⁶⁶¹ A truce was signed in 1994, brokered by Russia, but the region has been under the de-facto control of the ethnic Armenians.⁶⁶² Between 1994-2016, minor skirmishes took place as the ceasefire has been breached numerous times, causing the soldiers' death from both sides. In April 2016, the most intense fighting after the 1994-cease-fire drew the attention of international community to the region again with the conflicts killing more than 200 people.⁶⁶³

In 1994, the Minsk Group within the OSCE was created to address the dispute and carry out negotiation and mediation efforts. Co-chaired by Russia, France, and the U.S, the group successfully negotiated cease-fires but failed to provide a permanent solution regarding the territorial issues.⁶⁶⁴ As Kamel, who was actively involved in the process between 1995 and 1997, states, although the group sometimes succeeded in bringing the presidents of the disputed states around the same table, negotiations on the status of the region and the plans for the retreatment of Armenians have reached a deadlock.⁶⁶⁵ Therefore, in this frozen conflict, a

⁶⁶⁰Herzig, *The new Caucasus: Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia*, 66.

⁶⁶¹Herzig, *The new Caucasus: Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia*, 66.

⁶⁶²BBC News, *Nagorno-Karabakh Profile*.

⁶⁶³"Azeri woman and child killed by Armenian forces near Nagorno-Karabakh boundary: defense ministry".

⁶⁶⁴Global Conflict Tracker, *Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict*.

⁶⁶⁵Kamel, *1923'ten Günümüze Türk Dış Politikası ve Diplomasisi*, 194.

stalemate prevails until today, as BBC states, with Azerbaijan demanding the return of the occupied territories while Armenians have not been willing to do so.⁶⁶⁶

Turkey, as Sönmezoglu expresses, has been on Azerbaijan's side due to national interests and moral values.⁶⁶⁷ While Turkish public opinion has strongly favored the fellow-Muslims of Turkic Azeris, rich oil and natural gas reserves of Azerbaijan have been of vital strategic and economic importance to Turkey.⁶⁶⁸ Turkey has favored the diplomatic mechanisms to put an end to the dispute. Turkish governments could not afford to give much more than economic and moral support to Azerbaijan, according to Hale, for the fear of provoking a direct military confrontation with Armenia, hence Russia, as the latter's troops station in Armenia thanks to the CIS agreements.⁶⁶⁹

With Turkey's efforts, a multilateral international process has begun in February 1992 with the convention of the Conference for Security and Cooperation of Europe (CSCE) that gave both parties to meet in Minsk and discuss the dispute.⁶⁷⁰ The conference and the next meetings in the following years have confirmed the autonomous legal status of Nagorno-Karabakh within Azerbaijan while making the obligation of the territorial integrity of the parties for a principle of the resolution. Through this process, the Minsk Group within the OSCE was also formed, Turkey being a permanent member. In addition, Turkey has also brought up the dispute to the UNSC platform.⁶⁷¹ Four resolutions have been taken by the UNSC in 1993; 822, 853, 874, and 884 respectively.⁶⁷² These resolutions expressed the institution's

⁶⁶⁶BBC News, *Nagorno-Karabakh Profile*.

⁶⁶⁷Sönmezoglu, *Son Onyillarda Türk Dış Politikası:1991-2015*, 349.

⁶⁶⁸Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774*, 211.

⁶⁶⁹Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774*, 211.

⁶⁷⁰Sönmezoglu, *Son Onyillarda Türk Dış Politikası:1991-2015*, 343.

⁶⁷¹Sönmezoglu, *Son Onyillarda Türk Dış Politikası:1991-2015*, 344.

⁶⁷²U.S Department of State, *1993 UN Security Council Resolutions on Nagorno-Karabakh*.

concerns and condemnation regarding the occupation of Azerbaijan territories, therefore they demand the immediate withdrawal of all occupying forces from Azeri lands.⁶⁷³

In March 1993, Turkey warned Armenia upon its occupation of Kelceber and expressed its expectation for an immediate withdrawal. By April Turkey decided to stop the passage of all the aid that goes to Armenia through Turkey's territories and airspace. Furthermore, Turkey has joined Azerbaijan in closing borders with and declaring an economic blockade on Armenia although the blockade was not complete as Turkey opened an air corridor between Istanbul and Yerevan in 1995 and allowed free travel of Armenians, and up to 40,000 Armenian passport holders were thought to work in Istanbul without work permits but with the toleration of the Turkish authorities.⁶⁷⁴ In addition , commercial contacts between Turkey and Armenia were not completely halted as it continued via Georgia.⁶⁷⁵ As the flow of events have shown, the economic blockade had no impact on the resolution of the conflict.

Through the 1990s, the mediation efforts of the Minsk Group continued with the participation of Turkey; especially the Lisbon Summit in 1996 was an almost-successful attempt to make progress with respect to the resolution.⁶⁷⁶ The sides agreed on the territorial integrity of both sides and the autonomous status of the Karabakh, however they were divided on the implementation of action plans. The dispute was also addressed by the BSEC in the same year as Moscow Declaration of the BSEC Summit expressed the concern regarding the instability of the Southern Caucasus. However, no progress has been achieved for peace.

⁶⁷³U.S Department of State, *1993 UN Security Council Resolutions on Nagorno-Karabakh*.

⁶⁷⁴International Crisis Group, "Turkey and Armenia: Opening Minds, Opening Borders",2.

⁶⁷⁵Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774*, 213.

⁶⁷⁶Sönmezoğlu, *Son Onyıllarda Türk Dış Politikası:1991-2015*, 346.

On the other hand, since the early 2000s, Ankara has been left outside the peace process as Armenia opposed Turkey's involvement in the dispute, and the parties kept negotiations under the mediation efforts of France, Russia, the U.S, with no concrete progress being achieved yet.⁶⁷⁷

In brief, regarding the dispute, Turkey has championed the diplomatic and peaceful channels for a resolution that maintains Azerbaijan's territorial integrity. Ankara supported the Azerbaijan forces through cooperation but always abstained from providing any kind of direct military support that could be perceived as intervention. But one should admit that, Turkey's attitude towards the Nagorno-Karabakh problem and Armenia is a vivid manifestation of One Nation, Two States despite some occasional minor frictions between Ankara and Baku.

3.2 Economic relations

As Aydın underscores, the acceleration of developments in political field between Turkey and the Turkic states could not be found in economic and commercial relations, particularly in the 1990s, thanks to new republics' economic needs exceeding the capacity of Turkey that aimed to be the principal financial donor to the Turkic world.⁶⁷⁸

The legal framework of Turkish-Azeri bilateral commercial and economic relations has been formed by several agreements such as Agreement on Enhancing Economic and Technical Cooperation (1992), Agreement on Mutual Promotion and Protection of Investments (1994), and Double Taxation Prevention Treatment

⁶⁷⁷Sönmezoğlu, *Son Onyillarda Türk Dış Politikası:1991-2015*, 349.

⁶⁷⁸Aydın, "Kafkasya ve Orta Asya'yla İlişkiler," *Türk Dış Politikası: Cilt 2: 1980-2001*, 426.

(1994).⁶⁷⁹ With these agreements, both sides granted most-favored nation conditions to each other. As of 2016, Azerbaijan is Turkey's largest trading partner in the Caucasus region. Table 1 below demonstrates the trade numbers according to World Bank since the independence of Azerbaijan.

In general, in the past 25 years, despite some drops, the trade volume tended to surge, especially since the 2000s, from \$137 million in 1992 to \$1,6 billion in 2016. This has been in parallel with the economic progress observed both in Turkey and Azerbaijan, both of which multiplied their overall international trade volumes since the 2000s.⁶⁸⁰ Turkey's total exports figure to Azerbaijan rose by more than tenfold between 2002 and 2014. Through the end of the 1990s, Turkey has become Azerbaijan's top import partner despite the limited exports to Turkey.⁶⁸¹ Each year, Turkey has enjoyed a positive trade balance, with a small share of Azerbaijani imports to Turkey in the bilateral trade.

Among top export items of Turkey to Azerbaijan by 2016, machinery, mechanical appliances, plastics, articles of iron or steel, furniture, arms, ammunition, medical and photographic instruments, apparel products, washing items, articles of paper and wood, dyeing products, vehicles and parts thereof, chemical products and pharmaceutical products take their place.⁶⁸²

On the other hand, Azerbaijan's sales to Turkey are mostly comprised of natural gas, plastics and articles thereof, aluminum and articles, mineral fuels and oils, organic chemicals, copper and articles, cotton and raw hides.⁶⁸³ While Turkey's exports to Azerbaijan has a share of 1% of the Turkey's total exports to the world,

⁶⁷⁹Ministry of Economy, *Azerbaijan*.

⁶⁸⁰Kardas and Macit, "Turkey-Azerbaijan Relations: The Economic Dimension," 36-37.

⁶⁸¹Kardas and Macit, "Turkey-Azerbaijan Relations: The Economic Dimension," 27.

⁶⁸²Trade Map, *Bilateral trade between Turkey and Azerbaijan in 2016*.

⁶⁸³Trade Map, *Bilateral trade between Turkey and Azerbaijan in 2016*.

Table 1. Turkey-Azerbaijan Bilateral Trade⁶⁸⁴

Years	Turkey's Imports (US\$ Million)	Turkey's Exports (US\$ Million)	Trade Volume (US\$ Million)	Balance (US\$ Million)
1992	35	102	137	67
1993	34	68	102	34
1994	9	132	141	123
1995	22	161	182	139
1996	38	239	277	201
1997	58	320	378	261
1998	50	325	375	275
1999	44	248	292	204
2000	96	230	325	134
2001	78	225	303	147
2002	63	227	290	163
2003	123	315	438	193
2004	136	404	539	268
2005	272	528	800	256
2006	340	695	1036	355
2007	330	1048	1377	718
2008	363	1667	2030	1305
2009	141	1400	1541	1260
2010	253	1550	1803	1298
2011	262	2064	2326	1802
2012	340	2585	2925	2245
2013	334	2960	3294	2627
2014	291	2875	3166	2583
2015	232	1899	2131	1666
2016	278	1285	1563	1007

imports from Azerbaijan does not even amount to 1% of overall imports of Turkey from the world.⁶⁸⁹ In other words, Azerbaijan is not listed among top 20 country in imports and exports of Turkey by 2016.⁶⁹⁰ On the contrary, trade with Turkey has

⁶⁸⁴World Bank, *Turkey Export-Import US\$ Thousand Azerbaijan 1989-2016*.

⁶⁸⁹Trade Map, *Bilateral trade between Turkey and Azerbaijan in 2016*.

⁶⁹⁰Turkish Statistical Institute, *Foreign Trade Statistics*.

greater importance for Azerbaijan as imports from Turkey has a share of 18% in Azerbaijan's overall imports despite a 2% share of exports to Turkey in the overall export cake.⁶⁹¹ Turkey takes the second place after the Russian Federation as exporter to Azerbaijan.⁶⁹²

When Turkey established relations with the Turkic republics, in economic terms, Ankara aimed to develop mutually beneficial projects to get a share from the exploitation of oil and gas resources.⁶⁹³ Regarding this framework, Azerbaijan was the top priority for Turkey.⁶⁹⁴ Turkey's interest in Azerbaijan energy has become apparent even before the dissolution of the Soviet Union, as in 1990, PetOil, a Turkish national company, contacted Azneft the official company of the Azerbaijan SSR then.⁶⁹⁵ Even though a joint venture agreement were signed, the process had halted with the disintegration.⁶⁹⁶ In the early years of Azerbaijan's independence, this time domestic turmoil of Azerbaijan has slowed down the process of cooperation regarding the energy sector.⁶⁹⁷ Thanks to the milestone projects of BTC oil pipeline and BTE gas pipeline and the upcoming TANAP infrastructure, the recent era of the bilateral relations have been dominated by energy politics. With the inauguration of BTC oil pipeline Turkey expects an annual income between \$140 million and \$200 million for the first 15 years from toll and administration services as well as shares in the oil fields, while supply of oil becomes less costly for Turkey.⁶⁹⁸ Although the BTC pipeline carries Azeri oil to Turkey, the oil conveyed is quite limited and Turkey primarily serves as a transit route for European markets. Besides, by 2016,

⁶⁹¹ Trade Map, *Bilateral trade between Turkey and Azerbaijan in 2016*.

⁶⁹² World Bank, *Azerbaijan Trade Summary 2015 Data*.

⁶⁹³ Azer, *Babadan Oğula Güney Kafkasya*, 425.

⁶⁹⁴ Azer, *Babadan Oğula Güney Kafkasya*, 425.

⁶⁹⁵ Azer, *Babadan Oğula Güney Kafkasya*, 460.

⁶⁹⁶ Azer, *Babadan Oğula Güney Kafkasya*, 460.

⁶⁹⁷ Azer, *Babadan Oğula Güney Kafkasya*, 460.

⁶⁹⁸ Aydın, "Kafkasya ve Orta Asya'yla İlişkiler," *Türk Dış Politikası: Cilt 3: 2001-2012*, 517.

fuels imported from Azerbaijan amount to nearly 17% in the overall import share of Turkey with this country.⁶⁹⁹ However, Turkey still does not count among the top 5 fuel export destinations of Azerbaijan.⁷⁰⁰ Likewise, the 2016 reports of Energy Market Regulatory Authority (EPDK) in Turkey demonstrate that Turkey's petroleum import from Azerbaijan makes up the 1% of overall petroleum imports of the former.⁷⁰¹ Regarding natural gas, Azerbaijan's share in Turkey's imports is much higher compared to oil as it comes after Russia and Iran with a 14% share in Turkey gas imports.⁷⁰²

The transition of Azerbaijan to market economy created new possibilities for Turkish entrepreneurs.⁷⁰³ Among all ex-Soviet republics, the most active market for business from Turkey was Azerbaijan due to its being the closest one.⁷⁰⁴ Likewise, Turkish businessmen were among the first investors in Azerbaijan, taking advantage of the linguistic and cultural affinities. However, this leverage has diminished due to the intense arrival of other foreign investments, particularly in the energy sector. Moreover, the lack of economic reforms, regulations to protect investor and investments, and commercial agreements as well as the lack of banking system for cross-border transactions, bribery, high taxes, and heavy bureaucracy were among the main reasons that have limited the interest of Turkish businessmen in Azerbaijan and other Turkic countries through the 1990s.⁷⁰⁵ Despite significant developments, the insufficiency of Azerbaijan customs, tax issues, difficulties in money transfer still form some of the noteworthy reasons for underdevelopment of trade with Azerbaijan

⁶⁹⁹World Bank, *Product Imports by Turkey from Azerbaijan 2016*.

⁷⁰⁰World Bank, *Azerbaijan Trade Summary 2015 Data*.

⁷⁰¹Energy Market Regulatory Authority, "Turkish Petroleum Market Report 2016".

⁷⁰²Energy Market Regulatory Authority, "Turkish Natural Gas Market Report 2016".

⁷⁰³Aras, *Political Economy of Cooperation Between Turkey and Azerbaijan: An Analysis of Turkey's Mid to Long Term Regional Policy*, 156.

⁷⁰⁴Aras, *Political Economy of Cooperation Between Turkey and Azerbaijan: An Analysis of Turkey's Mid to Long Term Regional Policy*, 15.

⁷⁰⁵Aydın, "Kafkasya ve Orta Asya'yla İlişkiler," *Türk Dış Politikası: Cilt 2: 1980-2001*, 431.

in the 2000s.⁷⁰⁶ Moreover, according to Ministry of Economics of Turkey, high rate of customs duty between Turkey and Azerbaijan stands out as the primary obstacle to fulfill its true potential.⁷⁰⁷

From a geographical perspective, the lack of direct access between Azerbaijan and Turkey was considered a noteworthy obstacle for further development of economic ties, while, according to some analysts, routes through Nakhichevan seemed insecure thanks to Armenia.⁷⁰⁸ With this in mind, Turkish goods exported through Georgia and Iran face problems at borders or are charged high transit fees.⁷⁰⁹ Furthermore, Azerbaijan's membership of the Commonwealth of Independent States and Turkey's Customs Union agreement with the EU are also said to limit commercial ties.

While the first decade of economic relations revolved around bilateral trade, this pattern has changed in recent years with the increase of mutual investment in economic projects.⁷¹⁰ According to official sources, Turkey is the most important country for Azerbaijani investments.⁷¹¹ In the last 10 years, Azerbaijan's FDI in Turkey amounts to approximately \$4,8 billion.⁷¹² Among important drivers of these FDI inflows to Turkey in the 2000s, Turkey's economic reforms and rapid development, intense privatization policies and Azerbaijan's economic growth thanks to the oil revenues can be observed.⁷¹³ By 2016, there are 1956 companies with Azerbaijani capital operating in Turkey mostly in energy, wholesale and retail,

⁷⁰⁶ Aydın, "Kafkasya ve Orta Asya'yla İlişkiler," *Türk Dış Politikası: Cilt 3: 2001-2012*, 513.

⁷⁰⁷ Ministry of Economy, *Azerbaijan: Türkiye ile Ticaret*.

⁷⁰⁸ Aras, *Political Economy of Cooperation Between Turkey and Azerbaijan: An Analysis of Turkey's Mid to Long Term Regional Policy*, 143.

⁷⁰⁹ Kardas and Macit, "Turkey-Azerbaijan Relations: The Economic Dimension," 39.

⁷¹⁰ Kardas and Macit, "Turkey-Azerbaijan Relations: The Economic Dimension," 39.

⁷¹¹ Ministry of Economy, *Azerbaijan*.

⁷¹² Ministry of Economy, *Azerbaijan*.

⁷¹³ Kardas and Macit, "Turkey-Azerbaijan Relations: The Economic Dimension," 33-34.

construction, realty, transportation, hotels and restaurants, and mining.⁷¹⁴ These FDI flows to Turkey has evolved Azerbaijan as one of the top investors recently.⁷¹⁵ Among these FDI flows in energy sector has drawn particular attention. In 2008, 51% public share in the capital structure of Petkim, a major Turkish petrochemical company, was transferred to the State Oil Company of Azerbaijan Republic (SOCAR) and Turcas Petrokimya A.S.⁷¹⁶ In 2011, SOCAR bought 25% share of Turcas and with this acquisition the name of Petkim was changed as SOCAR Turkey.⁷¹⁷ Today, SOCAR describes itself as the biggest foreign direct investor of Turkey with an overall investment volume to reach \$19,5 billion creating an employment opportunity of 35,000.⁷¹⁸ SOCAR is also the largest stakeholder of TANAP by 58%, followed by BOTAS (30%) and BP (12%). TANAP is projected to cost \$6 billion, \$4,8 billion of which will be financed by SOCAR.⁷¹⁹ Another large-scale project, Socar Turkey Aegean Refinery (STAR) is underway to become an integrated refining center of oil, chemistry, and energy with logistics.⁷²⁰ The project aims to meet around 25% of Turkey's need for refined oil.⁷²¹ The share of SOCAR in the Star project is 60%.⁷²² Financial loan of the project takes the first place in Turkish real sector history with \$3,29 billion provided by 23 banks.⁷²³ According to officials, the STAR project will be an investment worth \$5,5 billion.⁷²⁴ Another key project of SOCAR Turkey is Petlim port project in Izmir. SOCAR owns 70% of

⁷¹⁴Kardas and Macit, "Turkey-Azerbaijan Relations: The Economic Dimension," 33-34.

⁷¹⁵Ministry of Economy, "Foreign Direct Investments in Turkey 2015".

⁷¹⁶Petkim, "Petkim 2016 Annual Report".

⁷¹⁷Petkim, "Petkim 2016 Annual Report".

⁷¹⁸SOCAR, *SOCAR Hakkında Bilgiler*.

⁷¹⁹Kardas and Macit, "Turkey-Azerbaijan Relations: The Economic Dimension," 42.

⁷²⁰SOCAR, *Aegean Refinery*.

⁷²¹SOCAR, *Rafineri-Star Rafineri*.

⁷²²Ibrahimov, "Turkish-Azerbaijani Energy Relations: Significant Leverage in the Implementation of the Foreign Policy Interests of Both Countries," 87.

⁷²³"SOCAR'dan Star Rafineri için dev imza".

⁷²⁴"Turkey pushes for more investments in Azerbaijan (exclusive)".

shares for this largest container port in Turkey,⁷²⁵ which went into operation in 2017, October. The port aims to serve as the logistics center of the integrated petrochemical production of the STAR.

With Baku's transition to market economy, Azerbaijan attracted an increasing level of foreign investment, against which Turkey made moves to get its share both through direct investments and joint ventures.⁷²⁶ While Turkish capital largely flew into the energy sector, hundreds of Turkish firms also have become active in infrastructure, construction, transportation, telecommunications, tourism, education, bakery, textiles, and furniture.⁷²⁷ By the end of the 1990s, investments in Azerbaijan were behind those in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan with a \$656,3 million value, of which \$284,4 million belongs to construction services.⁷²⁸ However, with recent initiatives, Azerbaijan has become the second largest destination for Turkish FDIs, having the biggest share of Turkey's investments in Central Asia and the Caucasus.⁷²⁹ For Turkish companies, operating in Azerbaijan and other Turkic countries, especially in the energy and construction sectors, also marked the internationalization in these industries.⁷³⁰ TP's acquiring shares to produce Azeri oil and gas as well as its stakes at pipeline projects indicate the first significant international energy operations undertaken by a Turkish company,⁷³¹ whose energy investments exceed \$3,5 billion.⁷³² In fact, TP, which is now the largest Turkish public investor in Azerbaijan, is involved in all of the significant energy projects

⁷²⁵Ibrahimov, "Turkish-Azerbaijani Energy Relations: Significant Leverage in the Implementation of the Foreign Policy Interests of Both Countries," 87.

⁷²⁶Kardas and Macit, "Turkey-Azerbaijan Relations: The Economic Dimension," 27.

⁷²⁷Kardas and Macit, "Turkey-Azerbaijan Relations: The Economic Dimension," 27.

⁷²⁸Aydın, "Kafkasya ve Orta Asya'yla İlişkiler," *Türk Dış Politikası: Cilt 2: 1980-2001*, 430.

⁷²⁹Yavan, "Türkiye'nin Yurt Dışındaki Doğrudan Yatırımları: Tarihsel ve Mekânsal Perspektif," 258-60.

⁷³⁰Kardas and Macit, "Turkey-Azerbaijan Relations: The Economic Dimension," 28.

⁷³¹Kardas and Macit, "Turkey-Azerbaijan Relations: The Economic Dimension," 28.

⁷³²"Azerbaycan'da faal Türk firmaları bin 685'e ulaştı".

implemented in Azerbaijan; Azeri, Chirag, and Deep Water Guneshli (6,75%), Shah Deniz (19%), Araz, Alov and Sharq (10%), BTC (6,87%), and BTE (9%).⁷³³

According to the Ministry of Economics of Turkey, Turkish direct investments in Azerbaijan in the last 10 years has amounted up to \$5,5 billion.⁷³⁴ Through these investments approximately 25,000 people are said to be employed by Turkish companies in Azerbaijan.⁷³⁵ Furthermore, Turkish Ambassador to Azerbaijan Erkan Özoral notes that Turkish construction companies have invested in 350 projects worth of \$11 billion implemented in Azerbaijan, since 2003.⁷³⁶ Considering the fact that Azerbaijan has attracted foreign investment capital of \$14,6 billion in 2017,⁷³⁷ the performance of Turkish companies seems noteworthy. Finding favorable business opportunities with the re-construction process of Azerbaijan after the disintegration of the Soviet Union, Turkish construction companies have been undertaking numerous projects ranging from highways, airports, energy transmission lines, infrastructure, presidential and state buildings while they contributed to exports of construction materials to Azerbaijan.⁷³⁸ To name the best known Turkish construction firms in Azerbaijan, Tekfen Holding, Enka, Anel Holding, AE Arma-Elektropanç, İstanbul Çarşı Import Export, Alarko, Baytur, İlk, Atilla Doğan, Borova, Burç, Cenay, Ekpar, Gama, Pet, Tepe, Ural, Turan Hazinedaroglu, TML, Yücelen and Zafer Construction can be counted. Some giant-scale milestone projects in Azerbaijan such as Baku International Airport (Enka), Baku Olympic Stadium (Tekfen), SOCAR Tower (Tekfen and AE Arma-Elektropanç), Azeri, Chirag,

⁷³³İbrahimov, "Turkish-Azerbaijani Energy Relations: Significant Leverage in the Implementation of the Foreign Policy Interests of Both Countries," 85-86.

⁷³⁴Ministry of Economy, *Azerbaijan: Türkiye ile Ticaret*.

⁷³⁵"Turkey pushes for more investments in Azerbaijan (exclusive)".

⁷³⁶"Turkey pushes for more investments in Azerbaijan (exclusive)".

⁷³⁷"Azerbaijan expects 15 bln USD in foreign investment in 2018".

⁷³⁸Ministry of Economy, *Azerbaijan: Türkiye ile Ticaret*.

Guneshli, Shah Deniz oil and gas terminals (Tekfen), Western Route Pipeline (Tekfen), and Azerbaijan Central Bank (Ural), Shahdag Resort Grand Hotel (İlk), Baku White City Hotel (İlk), Azersu Tower (İlk), National Gymnastic Arena (İlk), are undertaken by some of these Turkish firms.

Besides energy and construction, some noteworthy Turkish FDIs and joint ventures with Azerbaijani business circles include Azerbaijan Coca-Cola, Azercell Telecom, Azersun Holding (food), Elvan - Azeri Gıda (chocolate), Dimes Gafkaz MMC (fruit juice), Kissan Parke (parquet), Dizayn - Cenay Azerbaycan (pipe), Veyselöğlü- Yaycılı Kardeşler (food), Kartaş Ltd. (construction chemicals), Beta Çay (tea), Vestel, Beko (white goods), Damat, LCV, Koton (textile), Yapi Kredi Azerbaijan, and Azertürk Bank (banking).⁷³⁹ According to official reports of 2013, Turkey is the top investor in Azerbaijan given the volume of direct investments.⁷⁴⁰

On the other hand, since the early 1990s, Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA), Eximbank, and joint business councils have been developing projects to facilitate the activities of Turkish businessmen in the Turkic States.⁷⁴¹ Founded in 1992 under the umbrella of Ministry of Foreign Affairs (later attached to Prime Ministry), though it now reaches to Africa and the Middle East, TIKA first embarked on implementing projects to contribute to the development Turkic states and neighboring countries and foster their cooperation of with Turkey in economic, cultural and social areas. Among TIKA's missions, development of independent domestic structures in countries of interest, facilitation of transition to market economy, training of civil servants, providing education opportunities, and promotion of Turkic solidarity top the agenda.⁷⁴²

⁷³⁹ “Azerbaycan'da faal Türk firmaları bin 685'e ulaştı”.

⁷⁴⁰ Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency, “Turkish Development Assistance 2013”.

⁷⁴¹ Winrow, “Turkey and the Newly Independent States of Central Asia and the Transcaucasus,” 231.

⁷⁴² Aydın, “Kafkasya ve Orta Asya'yla İlişkiler,” *Türk Dış Politikası: Cilt 2: 1980-2001*, 382.

Although, TIKA developed more than 270 technical aid and cooperation projects through the 1990s, due to the widening of the geography it works on and loss of focus, the impact of the mechanism has diminished gradually.⁷⁴³ Nevertheless, by 2003, TIKA's overall technical assistance amounted \$98 million, 13% of which went to Azerbaijan whereas most of the aid went to Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Iraq respectively.⁷⁴⁴ Throughout the 2000s, Azerbaijan continued to occupy the top ranks of Turkey's ODAs.⁷⁴⁵ For the first ten years, TIKA's activities primarily concentrated on the improvement of banking sectors, taxation, private sectors, customs, diplomacy, public governance, insurance, privatization, competition policies, foreign investment and development of SMEs in transition economies as well as promoting social cooperation.⁷⁴⁶ According to Adem Urfa, Baku Program Coordinator of TIKA as of August 2016, TIKA have carried out 750 projects and trained more than 7,000 experts in Azerbaijan until today.⁷⁴⁷ In recent years, Azerbaijan's share of TIKA budget ranged from 0,77% to 2,35%.⁷⁴⁸ Yet, from 2011 to 2015, Azerbaijan received a sizeable amount of development assistance from Turkey; \$26 million, \$19,36 million, \$28,68 million, \$37 million, and \$8,76 million respectively.⁷⁴⁹ Recent projects include various training for banking and financial industries in Azerbaijan, organic agriculture, husbandry, and forestry, tourism training programs, medical training programs, training of police and military forces, dispatching medical personnel, establishing and renovating educational

⁷⁴³ Aydın, "Kafkasya ve Orta Asya'yla İlişkiler," *Türk Dış Politikası: Cilt 2: 1980-2001*, 382.

⁷⁴⁴ Fidan and Nurdun, "Turkey's role in the global development assistance community: the case of TIKA (Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency)," 100.

⁷⁴⁵ Fidan and Nurdun, "Turkey's role in the global development assistance community: the case of TIKA (Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency)," 101.

⁷⁴⁶ Fidan and Nurdun, "Turkey's role in the global development assistance community: the case of TIKA (Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency)," 104.

⁷⁴⁷ "Türk Şirketler Azerbaycan'daki Özelleştirme ile İlgileniyor" – Bakü".

⁷⁴⁸ Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency, *Turkish Development Assistance Reports*.

⁷⁴⁹ Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency, *Turkish Development Assistance Reports*.

institutions, provision education materials, provision of broadcasting materials, entrepreneurship, projects to increase the employment of youth and women, bomb disposal vehicles and materials, and building child care centers.⁷⁵⁰ With these projects, Azerbaijan became the top beneficiary of TIKa assistance in the Central Asia and Caucasus region.⁷⁵¹ In short, despite the fact that, handicaps of limited budget compared to other international aid mechanisms, limited cooperation within domestic and foreign institutions, and demand driven activities rather than result-oriented approaches of TIKa caused the loss of initial intensity in Eurasia, TIKa has contributed to the well-being of people in the newly independent states including Azerbaijan.⁷⁵²

Turkish Export Credit Bank or Eximbank has been another key mechanism to foster bilateral economic links. Eximbank, founded in 1987, is a fully state-owned enterprise with the goal of sustaining Turkey's export strategy by financing foreign trade, Turkish exporters and investors operating overseas, promoting Turkish exports, and finding new markets. It does not just function as a loan-provider but also implements insurance and guarantee schemes to facilitate exports. In 1993, Turkish Council of Ministers approved a credit line to Azerbaijan with a maximum value of \$250 million, extended by Eximbank to finance the projects of Turkish contractors in Azerbaijan.⁷⁵³ By 2000, Azerbaijan used a sum of \$91,7 million credit within the defined limit.⁷⁵⁴ This amount did not change until recent years, according to Eximbank annual reports.⁷⁵⁵ Out of this \$91,7 million, 59,6 million has been

⁷⁵⁰Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency, *Turkish Development Assistance Reports*.

⁷⁵¹Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency, *Turkish Development Assistance Reports*.

⁷⁵²Fidan and Nurdun, "Turkey's role in the global development assistance community: the case of TIKa (Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency)," 105.

⁷⁵³Aras, *Political Economy of Cooperation Between Turkey and Azerbaijan: An Analysis of Turkey's Mid to Long Term Regional Policy*, 145.

⁷⁵⁴Aydın, "Kafkasya ve Orta Asya'yla İlişkiler," *Türk Dış Politikası: Cilt 2: 1980-2001*, 427.

⁷⁵⁵Eximbank, *Annual Reports*.

provided as export credits and the rest belonged to project loans. By 2012, \$78,2 million were paid back.⁷⁵⁶ Among projects financed by Eximbank in Azerbaijan, Baku International Airport draws extra attention. In addition, Eximbank has been issuing “letters of intent” for the projects to be undertaken by Turkish firms in Azerbaijan, insuring of transactions with Azerbaijan, setting up new credit limits for Azerbaijani banks such as International Bank of Azerbaijan (\$15 million) and Unibank recently.⁷⁵⁷ As other recent examples, in 2015, Eximbank provided a loan of \$29 million to Pashabank in Azerbaijan to be finance Turkish projects and exports.⁷⁵⁸ Likewise, a \$92 million loan was provided to SOCAR in the same year.⁷⁵⁹

Again, some argue that these loans and investment initiatives were not efficiently utilized to reach a true potential particularly throughout the 1990s, thanks to the lack of necessary economic reforms in Azerbaijan.⁷⁶⁰ According to Bülent Semiler, executive director of Impexbank then, Turkish entrepreneurs were willing to take risks in spite of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and domestic turmoil of Azerbaijan, but Azerbaijan has missed the opportunity during the 1990s.⁷⁶¹ Bülent Aras, a prominent scholar also thinks that Baku’s failure to establish the legal infrastructure of the market economy was turning off the investment of all foreign businessmen, not just the Turkish ones.⁷⁶² Another factor shown as the reason of underdevelopment of Turkey’s exports to Azerbaijan plus other Turkic states during the 1990s was the low-quality of goods that could not been exported to Europe due

⁷⁵⁶Metin, “Türk Eximbank”.

⁷⁵⁷Eximbank, *Annual Reports*.

⁷⁵⁸Eximbank, *Annual Reports*.

⁷⁵⁹“SOCAR borrows loan from Turkish and Korean banks”.

⁷⁶⁰Azer, *Babadan Oğula Güney Kafkasya*, 456.

⁷⁶¹Aras, *Political Economy of Cooperation Between Turkey and Azerbaijan: An Analysis of Turkey’s Mid to Long Term Regional Policy*, 159.

⁷⁶²Aras, *Political Economy of Cooperation Between Turkey and Azerbaijan: An Analysis of Turkey’s Mid to Long Term Regional Policy*, 157.

to its low-quality.⁷⁶³ This situation has caused a reputational damage for Turkish goods. Similarly, Azer underscores that the lack of reforms in Azerbaijan caused a reluctance for respected Turkish enterprises, and paved the way for some parvenue companies.⁷⁶⁴ The operations of these new companies has damaged the trust felt for Turkey, and even a phrase to describe a good product “it is good, because it is not Turkish goods” was propagated in Azeri markets.⁷⁶⁵ Although the situation and the perception of consumers have changed with the penetration of respected companies into Azeri markets, Azer argues that the scar was never fully healed during the 1990s.⁷⁶⁶

Furthermore, Foreign Economic Relations Board (DEIK) closely monitored the bilateral trade through its Azerbaijan-Turkey Business Council. DEIK established in 1986, has been assigned to manage foreign economic relations of the Turkish private sector, to boost the country’s exports and attract foreign investment to Turkey. Since its foundation in 1991, the Council has been in close contact with Azeri leaders, top officials, businessmen to foster economic cooperation and take advantage of opportunities in Azerbaijan. The Council’s meetings with Azerbaijani counterparts have been accompanied by prime ministers and presidents through the 1990s, aligning the council’s initiatives with the political developments and expectations. Besides materializing investments and commercial ties, DEIK has also adopted various missions such as introducing Azerbaijan to entrepreneurs in Turkey, introducing Turkish markets to Azeri investors, working with government organizations and embassies to organize bilateral business forums, and lobbying for Turkey’s joint projects with Azerbaijan such as the BTC pipeline within the

⁷⁶³Aydın, “Kafkasya ve Orta Asya’yla İlişkiler,” *Türk Dış Politikası: Cilt 2: 1980-2001*, 431.

⁷⁶⁴Azer, *Babadan Oğula Güney Kafkasya*, 456.

⁷⁶⁵Azer, *Babadan Oğula Güney Kafkasya*, 456.

⁷⁶⁶Azer, *Babadan Oğula Güney Kafkasya*, 456.

international business communities.⁷⁶⁷ In his recent press statements, the current head of the Council as of 2017, Selçuk Akat repeatedly emphasized that despite the economic progress achieved in recent years, the current trade volume and investments did not reflect the real potential of the two countries as they expected a boost in economic ties by no later than 2020.⁷⁶⁸ Adding that the reciprocal investments complement each other, he summarized the solidarity of the two countries as one nation, two states, one economy.⁷⁶⁹

Tourism is another area where both parties have begun paying extra attention. As early as the 1990s, Azerbaijani Airlines (AZAL) and Turkish Airlines (THY) signed cooperation agreements and launched flights to each other with increasing numbers over the years.⁷⁷⁰ According to official statistics, between 2001 and 2016, the total number of visits from Azerbaijan to Turkey is around 7,1 million with an annual average of nearly 445,000; which is around 600,000 for the last 6 years.⁷⁷¹ On the contrary, between 2002 and 2016, the total number of arrivals from Turkey is around 2,8 million with an annual average of 186,000; which is around 300,000 for the last 6 years.⁷⁷² Baku declared the year 2016 to be a “tourism year” and opened a representative office in Istanbul to accelerate touristic visits between the two countries.⁷⁷³ Referring to the statistics of 2015 that visits from Turkey are around 340,000, the officials of the representative office underlined that the statistics is much lower than the desired level thanks to the low interest of Turkish tourists.⁷⁷⁴

⁷⁶⁷Turkey-Azerbaijan Business Council, “Azerbaycan Ülke Bülteni”.

⁷⁶⁸“Dış Ekonomik İlişkiler Kurulu Türkiye - Azerbaycan İş Konseyi Başkanı Akat: Azerbaycan'ın Türkiye'ye yatırımı 20 milyar doları geçecek”.

⁷⁶⁹“Dış Ekonomik İlişkiler Kurulu Türkiye - Azerbaycan İş Konseyi Başkanı Akat: Azerbaycan'ın Türkiye'ye yatırımı 20 milyar doları geçecek”.

⁷⁷⁰Aras, *Political Economy of Cooperation Between Turkey and Azerbaijan: An Analysis of Turkey's Mid to Long Term Regional Policy*, 144-145.

⁷⁷¹Ministry of Culture and Tourism, “Sınır Giriş-Çıkış İstatistikleri”.

⁷⁷²Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Azerbaijan, “Arrivals”.

⁷⁷³“Azerbaycan, Türkiye’de Turizm Temsilciliği açtı”.

⁷⁷⁴“Azerbaycan, Türkiye’de Turizm Temsilciliği açtı”.

Likewise, officials from Baku Embassy convened with various tourism agencies from Turkey and Azerbaijan in 2016 emphasizing that the current level of touristic visits was much below what they aimed.⁷⁷⁵ Both sides pursue to uplift these numbers to at least one million.⁷⁷⁶

In brief, the development of political links has manifested itself in economic relations as well. Although both countries are not each other's critical trade partners, particularly energy investments of Azerbaijani firms in Turkey, Turkish construction and energy investments in Azerbaijan along with the pipelines form important examples of economic interdependence between the two countries and come into prominence assessing the relations initiated on an emotional basis.

3.3 Cultural relations

Regarding the establishment of cultural links, Turkey has approached Azerbaijan plus other Turkic states through a Turkic lens. In the 1990s, Turkey worked for common history books and a common alphabet, but these efforts failed in the same decade.⁷⁷⁷ Although these efforts demonstrated Turkey's enthusiasm, they were unrealistic and wasted initiatives as proven by the passing time.⁷⁷⁸ Ankara sent books and typewriters in the early 1990s to ease Azerbaijan's transition to Latin Alphabet by 1992.⁷⁷⁹ In 1992, ministry of education has launched the Great Student Project to offer approximately 26,000 scholarships to the Turkic students.⁷⁸⁰ Out of these, 3656 were offered to Azerbaijan and 2884 students received the scholarship.⁷⁸¹ The

⁷⁷⁵ "Türkiye ve Azerbaycan'dan Turizm Hamlesi".

⁷⁷⁶ "Türkiye ve Azerbaycan'dan Turizm Hamlesi".

⁷⁷⁷ Aydın, "Kafkasya ve Orta Asya'yla İlişkiler," *Türk Dış Politikası: Cilt 3: 2001-2012*, 506.

⁷⁷⁸ Devlet, "Türkiye'nin Avrasya'ya Yönelik Kültür Politikaları," 179.

⁷⁷⁹ Aydın, "Kafkasya ve Orta Asya'yla İlişkiler," *Türk Dış Politikası: Cilt 2: 1980-2001*, 402.

⁷⁸⁰ Aypay, "Turkish Higher Education Initiatives toward Central Asia", 85.

⁷⁸¹ Aypay, "Turkish Higher Education Initiatives toward Central Asia", 85.

number of received scholarships surged to 3600s by 2010.⁷⁸² However, these scholarships, the education, and the living standards provided with the scholarships have not been satisfactory for Turkic students as indicated by various survey results.⁷⁸³ In addition, Turkey has opened several schools and cultural centers in the Turkic world. Throughout the 1990s, the ministry and NGOs established institutions such as Qafqaz University (NGO), College of Business (NGO), and Faculty of Divinity (state) in Baku University in Azerbaijan.⁷⁸⁴ By 2000, there were 17 schools of Turkish initiative, mostly private, in Azerbaijan with around 3500 students and 280 teachers.⁷⁸⁵ Besides, Turkish higher education institutions of Turkey and Azerbaijan have signed 30 cooperation agreements between 1990-2001.⁷⁸⁶ On the other hand, TIKa established Turkology departments in the universities of the Turkic states while Religious Affairs Administration of Turkey set up schools of divinity in these republics.⁷⁸⁷ Recently, TIKa carried out various projects ranging from dispatching teachers, training for technical schools, equipment support for news agencies, educational support as postgraduate scholarships, renovating schools, and organizing Turkic-cultural events. Turkish students also consider studying in Azerbaijan as the number of Turks in this country surged to 4,000 by 2009.⁷⁸⁸

International Organization of Turkic Culture (TURKSOY) established in 1993, is another initiative of Turkey to promote cultural solidarity in the Turkic world by organizing Turkic art events such as painting, music, dance, and Nevruz celebrations. Besides private foundations, a state-led institution, Yunus Emre

⁷⁸² Aydın, “Kafkasya ve Orta Asya’yla İlişkiler,” *Türk Dış Politikası: Cilt 3: 2001-2012*, 506.

⁷⁸³ Devlet, “Türkiye’nin Avrasya’ya Yönelik Kültür Politikaları,” 181.

⁷⁸⁴ Aypay, “Turkish Higher Education Initiatives toward Central Asia”, 87.

⁷⁸⁵ Aydın, “Kafkasya ve Orta Asya’yla İlişkiler,” *Türk Dış Politikası: Cilt 2: 1980-2001*, 384-385.

⁷⁸⁶ Aypay, “Turkish Higher Education Initiatives toward Central Asia”, 87.

⁷⁸⁷ Aypay, “Turkish Higher Education Initiatives toward Central Asia”, 91.

⁷⁸⁸ Balcer, “Between Energy and Soft Pan-Turkism: Turkey and the Turkic Republics,” 156.

foundation was founded in 2007 to promote Turkish culture and language through its cultural centres in Baku and other Turkic cities. Turkish TV channels were also promoted in the Turkic world to reach to these countries. State-owned Turkish Radio and Television Corporation's *TRT-Int* and *TRT Avrasya* channels has begun broadcasting in the early 1990s, followed by *TRT Avaz* and *TRT Türk* in the 2000s. These channels, due to linguistic barriers have not become popular in the Turkic world except in Azerbaijan whose language is the closest to Turkish.⁷⁸⁹ Recently, some Turkish local channels have become accessible via the satellites of Azerbaijan. Among these, *TGRT*, *NTV*, *CNNTürk*, *ATV* are the most watched channels after Russian broadcasts.⁷⁹⁰ While Turkish public opinion of Azerbaijan, its culture and literature is quite limited, mostly following the news about official visits, energy pipelines, and the Karabakh issue, Azeri society has much more knowledge about the developments and lifestyle in Turkey thanks to the media along with other means of interaction and communication.⁷⁹¹

Regarding cultural cooperation, Turkey and Azerbaijan also work through the Turkic Council mechanism. Top officials from Ministry of Culture from the member states gather on a regular basis to promote the teaching of Turkic history, literature, languages while they champion the idea of student exchange programs among member states.⁷⁹² The meetings also focus on granting scholarships for higher education such as bachelors, masters, and Ph.D. degrees to Turkic students from the member states.⁷⁹³ In addition, by 2014, the Council organs took decisions to establish a Joint Educational TV Channel to promote the Turkic history by means of national

⁷⁸⁹ Aydın, "Kafkasya ve Orta Asya'yla İlişkiler," *Türk Dış Politikası: Cilt 3: 2001-2012*, 509.

⁷⁹⁰ Ergun, "Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri," 264-265.

⁷⁹¹ Ergun, "Türkiye-Azerbaycan İlişkileri," 263-264.

⁷⁹² Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States, *Cultural, Educational, and Scientific Cooperation*.

⁷⁹³ Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States, *Cultural, Educational, and Scientific Cooperation*.

television broadcasts of the members.⁷⁹⁴ Likewise, preparations are underway to set up the Turkic Scientific Research Fund to support academic research on the Turkic world.⁷⁹⁵ In addition to the existing institutions, the International Turkic Academy (2010) and The Turkic Cultural Heritage Fund (2012) are also recent multilateral mechanisms under the umbrella of the Turkic Council to champion cultural unity among the Turkic nations.

In short, Turkey has launched numerous initiatives, both public and private, to forge strong cultural links with the Turkic world. It opened schools, faculties, and Turkic centres, commenced broadcasting of Turkish channels in these countries while providing scholarships to make Turkey an educational center of attraction among the Turkic states. Although people from both sides made a progress toward getting to know each other's culture, as Mustafa Aydın contends, compared to efforts and resources allocated, Turkey has not achieved a desired level of success with respect to its cultural policy toward the Turkic world.⁷⁹⁶ This situation was also reinforced by the low level of interest of Turkish people in general in the culture of Turkic nations.⁷⁹⁷

To summarize the chapter, the emergence of the new Turkic Republics has provided a new dimension for Turkish foreign policy. Among these republics, with the advantage of geographical proximity, "brother" Azerbaijan can be evidently asserted to be the closest one to Turkey with respect to political, economic, and cultural terms, despite some emerging tensions. Turkey, welcoming the independence of "Outside Turks" with great euphoria, became the first state to recognize the Republic of Azerbaijan with a strong endorsement of the sovereignty

⁷⁹⁴Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States, *Cultural, Educational, and Scientific Cooperation*.

⁷⁹⁵Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States, *Cultural, Educational, and Scientific Cooperation*.

⁷⁹⁶Aydın, "Kafkasya ve Orta Asya'yla İlişkiler," *Türk Dış Politikası: Cilt 3: 2001-2012*, 510.

⁷⁹⁷Devlet, "Türkiye'nin Avrasya'ya Yönelik Kültür Politikaları," 180.

of independence of the latter. Since the 1990s, Ankara has fostered ties with Baku on multifaceted and strategic level. Promoted as One Nation, Two States, the relations were crowned with more than 200 bilateral agreements in political, economic, and cultural areas. Ankara has provided considerable aid in the early years of the latter's independence and has always taken a pro-Azerbaijani stance regarding the Karabakh issue. In addition to frequent high-level visits with amicable dialogue since the 1990s, mutual interests have paved the way for the inauguration of the milestone projects; BTC, BTE, TANAP, and BTK recently which have forged the links between the two countries, enhanced by huge volume of reciprocal and mutual investments in various business sectors. On the other hand, with the 2000s, the relations evolved into an institutionalized form through various bilateral and trilateral cooperation mechanisms. In short, the ties, which have been initiated by emotional factors have improved since the 1990s in a very fast way, upgraded to the level of strategic partnership with national interests beyond the cultural affinity. After having covered relations in detail, the next chapter attempts to shed some light on the relations through lenses of the interviewees.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS FROM INTERVIEWS WITH DIPLOMATS AND BUSINESSMEN

This chapter attempts to illustrate what is thought of the primary contribution of this study; views of the interviewees who have worked or still been working in Azerbaijan either as a diplomat, businessmen, or a member of non-governmental organization. The author of this study has interviewed eleven people; four of whom are diplomats, either retired or still in active service, five businessmen having projects in Azerbaijan, and two people representing NGOs having close relations with Azerbaijan. The interviewees are asked two open-ended questions that aim to measure the impact of Turkic identity on bilateral commercial relations.⁷⁹⁸ Listing the questions, the following paragraphs illustrate these eleven invaluable perspectives from the field.

The first question is as follows: “What significance does the rhetoric of One Nation, Two States carry in the bilateral relations?”. As it is the dominant description of Turkey-Azerbaijan ties, the meaning of this discourse needs to be elaborated first.

To begin with, Halil Akıncı, former secretary general of the Turkic Council, underlines that the Turkist views have been quite existent as a stream in Azerbaijan, long before the twentieth century.⁷⁹⁹ Furthermore, he reminds as that Turks of Azerbaijan are one of the primary sources that Turkey’s Turks have learnt nationalism from along with Crimean Turks and Tatar Turks. Some vanguards of Turkish nationalism such as Ahmet Ağaoğlu (Ahmet Agayev) are from Azerbaijani background. Likewise, Akıncı confirms that Azerbaijani Turks have always paid

⁷⁹⁸See Appendix B for original questions and answers in Turkish and a brief biography of the interviewees.

⁷⁹⁹Halil Akıncı, interview by author, December 2017, (Appendix B,1).

attention to Turkey. However, what is vital regarding the sentimental dimension, is to be able to create mutual interests, according to Akıncı. Otherwise, the sentimental dimension would vanish or have a reverse effect on the relations when it is not supported by material interests. Hence, Turkish foreign policy vis-à-vis Azerbaijan was about constituting mutual economic interests. Correspondingly, the intense sentimental dimension has been consolidated by reciprocal interests of Ankara and Baku. Put differently, Akıncı defines the sentimental element in the bilateral links as a facilitator, that initiates the relations but does not perpetuate them. The only way to maintain the relations is to place them on a realist basis. Moreover, Azerbaijan can naturally collaborate with the West when it comes to high-technology. But when regional development is at stake, the address is Ankara that is going to help them, according to Akıncı, as economic aid, military cooperation, Armenia factor, and Iran are elements that still unite us.

Özdem Sanberk, a distinguished figure in Turkish diplomacy as well, states that One Nation, Two States discourse is not empty talk, though it is not something to exaggerate.⁸⁰⁰ According to Sanberk, Azerbaijan, is not a country that has embraced the discourse by all its people, due to its diverse ethnic structure. As there are parts of the Azeri society that do not adhere to Turkism or even dislike it, one mistake that Turkish public opinion falls into, especially regarding Elchibey, a Turkist, is to think of this Turkist tendency as the pervasive political stance of the whole of Azerbaijan. Furthermore, Azerbaijan being composed of Shia muslims, but not in a devout way, and Russian culture being the dominant culture in Azerbaijanis intellectual and art world thanks to the Soviet hegemony are among the primary factors pointed out by Sanberk, that narrow down the domain of this discourse by

⁸⁰⁰ Özdem Sanberk, interview by author, November 2017, (Appendix B,2).

excluding those principal cultural elements. Furthermore, although seeing common language as a uniting factor, which was also reinforced by Turkey's cultural politics, Sanberk underlines the hegemony of the Russian culture and language in Azerbaijanis' thinking, which again diminishes the scope of the rhetoric according to him.

On the other hand, Sanberk lists some crucial aspects that correspond to this slogan. First, the liberal ideas of the West have reached Azerbaijan not through Soviet Russia, but via Turkey thanks to its being a neighbor of Azerbaijan. What is more, when Azerbaijan declared its independence, its people were in a very poor and desperate position. Thanks to the generous aid of Ankara to the Elchibey administration along with other newly emerging republics, this Turkist government, though representing a small share of the diverse society, had been vindicated, and One Nation, Two States slogan has emerged in Azerbaijan. According to Sanberk, this was of course part of a five-legged strategy of Turkish foreign policy towards the new republics that were heavily dependent on Moscow; establishing transportation channels alternative to Moscow, communication channels alternative to Moscow, cultural platforms alternative to Moscow, economic and commercial channels alternative to Moscow, and energy relations alternative to Moscow. As these policies were materialized by Turkish Airlines launching direct flights to Baku, Ankara's sending fax, telex machines and phones to Azerbaijan, launching Turkish TV broadcasts in Azerbaijan, establishment of Eximbank, and constituting the legal framework of bilateral trade, commercial relations have been initiated with Azerbaijan. With all these, according to Sanberk, real fraternal ties have been forged, Azerbaijan acknowledged brotherhood with Turkey, and the slogan of One Nation, Two States has been realized. Confirming that both sides approached to each other

with pragmatic considerations behind as Elchibey saw Turkey as a gateway to the West, Sanberk also defends the view that thanks to these initiatives of Ankara, Turkey got a share from energy deals, which he considers a success.

Sanberk also lay emphasis on some common misunderstandings of the Turkish public opinion with respect to Azerbaijan. First, he underlines the view that Ankara encouraged Heydar Aliyev, who had no interest in nationalism, for his policies that took Russia, the U.S, and Iran into account as well. Second, closing borders with Armenia was not just a sentimental reaction for the Karabakh conflict, but Ankara's experience of separate problems with Yerevan such as the demands of the latter for border changes. In brief, Sanberk considers closing the borders as a peaceful policy that preserves regional interests. Like Akıncı, Sanberk also underscores that the relations were normalized by laying them on a basis of mutual interest while keeping the sentimental side under realist borders, especially with the Aliyev era. Put differently, sentimental side and common language are not the primary reason of the development and the current state of the bilateral ties, but they need to be counted in the formula as well. Lastly, remarking on the recent policies, Sanberk argues that the religionist discourse adopted by the AKP government is not an acceptable option for Baku, and this rhetoric could be said to prevent the commercial ties from reaching its true potential.

On the other hand, Ünal Çeviköz, a former ambassador to Baku, draws attention to diverse understandings of One Nation, Two States slogan between Turkey and Azerbaijan.⁸⁰¹ He states that while Turkish people takes the slogan in a more sentimental and earnest way, the same rhetoric is evaluated through a more realist and pragmatic lens by the Azerbaijan side. Çeviköz expresses that with

⁸⁰¹Ünal Çeviköz, e-mail interview by author, December 2017, (Appendix B,3).

respect to commercial relations, when a case of a difficulty is experienced by Turkish side, which Azerbaijani justifies by its own legal regulations, the Turkish side could sometimes expect a solution due to the sentimental ties, and could be disappointed in the end. According to Çeviköz, the visa issue, that is Turkey not applying visa to Azerbaijani citizens but Azerbaijan applying visa conditions for Turkish citizens, is the most evident example of this variance of Turkey and Azerbaijan in understanding the One Nation, Two States. In other words, Çeviköz emphasizes that Turkish side sometimes tends to take the rhetoric in a more sentimental way that could lead to disappointments especially doing business in Azerbaijan whereas Azerbaijanis are inclined to regard the One Nation, Two States motto through a more realist and coldblooded way.

Alper Coşkun, another former ambassador to Baku, like Çeviköz, stresses the divergent manifestations of the sentimentality, which according to Coşkun is quite observable in the bilateral relations.⁸⁰² However, in contrast to Çeviköz, Coşkun contends that level of sentimentality, hence the potential for sensitivity and fragility is much higher in Azerbaijan. The reason, according to Coşkun, is the difference of the two states in terms of their positions, scale, and status in the course of history. Despite its long history, Azerbaijan is still a young republic, which brings higher expectations compared to Turkey, according to evaluations of Coşkun. Consequently, he states that Turkish foreign policy and statements of Turkish diplomats in Baku are always closely monitored by Azerbaijanis. Giving example of the reactions againsts Turkey's normalization process with Armenia in 2009, Coşkun reminds us of the great offense and a sense of betrayal felt by Azerbaijanis as a result

⁸⁰²Alper Coşkun, interview by author, December 2017, (Appendix B,4).

of these great expectations in spite of the numerous statements of Turkish officials that they would not pursue a policy that contrasts with the interests of Azerbaijan.

Similar to Akıncı and Sanberk, Alper Coşkun also underscores the view that the sentimental dimension with intense affinity definitely precipitates a strong initiation of the relations. But he reminds us that fraternity is not enough and needs to be enhanced by the satisfaction of material interests. Likewise, regarding the Turkish foreign policy especially in the 1990s, Coşkun thinks Ankara was able to fulfill its role as a model for Azerbaijan thanks to serious steps it has taken both in political and economic realm. Within the framework of One Nation, Two States theme, while confirming the role of international conjuncture in determining the fate of crucial projects such as BTC, Coşkun puts forward the idea that trust in Turkey and a perception of common fate in the region also stand as decisive factors in Baku's policies. Of course, Turkey always needs to carry on an economic significance for Baku with respect to those kinds of milestone projects, but this common ground has also facilitated the decision processes in favor of Turkey, requiring the satisfaction of political and material concerns according to Coşkun. Likewise, he adds that in terms of strategic areas such as TANAP and BTK, Azerbaijan demonstrates its will in favor of Turkey and vice versa thanks to this perception of a common fate although costs sometimes may be higher compared to alternatives. To summarize, Coşkun argues that with the sentimental dimension comes a sensitivity and a sense of fragility of Azerbaijan to the table, due to its being a young republic compared to Turkey. While the cultural ties precipitate a strong start to relations, they need to be fed by political and material interests of both sides. However, what Coşkun underlines is the sense of a common fate in the region and trust in Turkey that unite

Ankara and Baku regarding the Southern Caucasus policies and have an impact in the strategic decisions of the latter.

From an NGO point of view, Akkan Süver, president of the Marmara Group Foundation, who has been honoured by the Friendship Order by Ilham Aliyev, underscores that the sentimentality of Azerbaijan is a not a pre-calculated political reaction but an incommensurable affinity, manifestation of which can be observed through genuine and spontaneous acts of Azerbaijani people.⁸⁰³ Süver shares some of his personal experiences to support his claim. For instance, when Azerbaijani singers won the Eurovision song contest in 2011, they celebrated their success by waving Turkish flags on the stage. Likewise, in 2015, during the parade of the European Games in Baku as each national team marched in order, the whole stadium, approximately 70,000 people stood up at once and cheered the Turkish national team upon its appearance. Occasions like these, according to Süver, are vivid tokens of a natural and heartfelt reflex of the Azerbaijani people towards Turkey. Moreover, he adds that Azerbaijani people are always proud of being Turkic. But when it comes to commerce, Süver stresses, money does not know kinship and rules of the liberal economy dominate everywhere. Süver's viewpoint seems close to Akıncı and Coşkun who underline the very existence of the sentimental ties beside strategic interests whereas perspectives of Sanberk and Çeviköz seem to be more pragmatism-oriented.

Of course, all the interviewees are asked the first question, but as responses of some participants, especially those of businessmen, mostly fit what the second question asks, they are placed below. The second question addressed by the interviews is: "In the business world of Azerbaijan, what are the reasons of

⁸⁰³ Akkan Süver, interview by author, January 2018, (Appendix B,5).

preference for Turkish firms, and does being Turkish play a role in these preferences, or does it provide an advantage for Turkish entrepreneurs?''.

To begin with, all the participants with no exception admit the role of linguistic and cultural familiarity as facilitators for the adaptation of Turkish entrepreneurs in Azerbaijan since the early 1990s. According to Sanberk, however, the most important facilitator is the policies of Ankara in the 1990s that prepared the legal and commercial grounds for bilateral trade and investments. Likewise, Akıncı states that in the Turkic world, fire is lit from above, which means establishing good relations at the political level has a direct impact on economic and commercial initiatives. Moreover, he inserts familiarity with bureaucratic processes into the formula, along with the common language and culture. Furthermore, Alper Coşkun adds the dynamic economy of Turkey coupled with enthusiastic entrepreneurship of Turkish businessmen to the list of advantages, while warning that Azerbaijanis drive really hard-bargains for commercial projects except strategic initiatives, and very high bids often end with the loss of the Turkish side.

Similar to this observation, Çeviköz reminds us that Azerbaijan does not have the mentality of forming commercial relations based on ethnicity or national identity. He also adds that Turkish businessmen penetrating the Azeri markets, sometimes expect privileged treatment by the Azerbaijani authorities or counterparts, which could result in a disappointment in the end. Besides cultural and linguistic factors, according to Çeviköz, the essential reason of the Turkish companies' success in Azerbaijan, especially in the long-run, is their embracement of the way of doing business in Azerbaijan as Akıncı argues, which is already close to that of Turkey, and proposing their projects in conformance to expectations of Azerbaijani business world. In parallel with this view, Süver stresses, despite the fraternal atmosphere,

money does not know any kinship and rules of the liberal economy dominate everywhere.

Nurengiz Eşki, Coordinator of Turkey-Azerbaijan Business Council at DEIK, expressing the view that Azerbaijan was the first destination of Turkish businessmen after the disintegration of the Soviet Union thanks to linguistic and cultural advantages, emphasizes that people of the region are well aware of the fact that Turkish projects and goods represent high quality despite some negative experiences in the past.⁸⁰⁴ Especially for contracting and construction industries, Turkish companies are famous for delivering excellent quality in a very fast way, which is the main reason of preference for Turkish firms according to Eşki. In addition, she argues that, Azerbaijani authorities often confer contracts to Turkish bidders on the condition that they work with Azerbaijani firms, providing an opportunity for the latter to learn from the expertise of the former. Eşki also points out the positive role Turkish TV broadcasts in Azerbaijan play in the consumption of Turkish goods there. However, she underlines that much has changed since the 1990s, prosperity increased in Azerbaijan that opened to world like everyone else, and Turkish goods started to fall behind in terms of being the first preference in Azerbaijani markets anymore, particularly in the fashion industry that is dominated by Italian and French brands.

Cemal Yangın, president of Azerbaijan Turkey Business Association and a member of the Turkey-Azerbaijan Business Council at DEIK as a businessman from the construction sector, shares the views of Çeviköz and Süver that in the Azerbaijan business world, which is directed by liberal market dynamics, despite the linguistic advantage, one is only and only preferred for the quality of one's service, not for

⁸⁰⁴Nurengiz Eşki, interview by author, November 2018, (Appendix B,6).

his/her nationality.⁸⁰⁵ Geographical proximity can also be an advantage for Turkish firms as it eases logistical and after sales support according to Yangın. On the other hand, he also appreciates the welcoming atmosphere created by Azerbaijanis in the 1990s, in which Turkish businessmen felt embraced and developed a desire to work together with their Azerbaijani counterparts.

Mustafa Parapan, vice president of Anel Group that has undertaken significant electrical and mechanical contracting projects in Azerbaijan such as Baku Olympic Stadium, admitting the welcoming environment towards Turkish people in Azerbaijan, considers the success of Turkish companies as the result of their conformance to Azerbaijan market conditions, in parallel with Çeviköz and Yangın.⁸⁰⁶ Like Coşkun, he also emphasizes that price is always a top priority in Azerbaijan. According to Parapan, there are several advantages of Turkish companies in Azerbaijan compared to their Western rivals. First comes the quality combined with a convenient price. Thanks to geographical proximity, material and labor force reach Azerbaijan in a cheap way. Having no language barrier standing for the imported labor force provides an easiness for the companies. More importantly, Parapan stresses that labor force and manufacturing in Turkey are much cheaper than in Western countries, which enable Turkish firms to provide the high quality with cheaper prices by importing these from their homeland. This, combined with relevant expertise, creates the primary reason of preference for Turkish companies in Azerbaijan, according to Parapan who also lists the adaptation to ways of doing business in Azerbaijan as another plus for Turkish entrepreneurs compared to Western companies. Another interesting point also noted by Parapan is that sometimes Azerbaijani firms are willing to work especially with Turkish companies

⁸⁰⁵ Cemal Yangın, telephone interview by author, January 2018.

⁸⁰⁶ Mustafa Parapan, interview by author, November 2018, (Appendix B,7).

to eliminate the language barrier and for that they would demand a discount in the price to make the deal.

Yalçın Bozduman, who has been involved in various big-scale construction projects of ANEL in Baku and worked with his Azerbaijani colleagues recently as a consultant, also notes that they certainly felt the “we” paradigm and One Nation, Two States perception in the welcoming environment of Baku.⁸⁰⁷ Besides the language, Bozduman sees the world-wide reputation of Turkish companies, that provide excellent quality with an optimum price in a short period of time, in contracting and construction industries as the first and the most important reason of preference. Second, he adds Azerbaijani firms have a strong eagerness to gain knowledge from Turkish companies in these industries, which he claims to be another incentive to choose to undertake projects with Turkish initiatives. Like Parapan, he underlines that for all these reasons in the background, Azerbaijani businessmen sometimes demand a price discount from Turkish contractors when some rival bids are lower than Turkish companies, so that they could work with the latter one. However, at the end of the liberal economy factors determine who would get to contract, according to Bozduman.

The same questions were also asked to Azerbaijani managers working at and with Turkish companies in Baku. Mamed Abbasov, the head of the representative office of Turkish engineering and contracting company AE-ARMA-Elektropanc in Baku, confirming the existence of the linguistic and cultural familiarity as a plus, agrees with the businessmen mentioned above that quality, price, and liberal economy requirements need to be met first in order to undertake projects.⁸⁰⁸ According to Mamed Abbasov, Turkish companies easily meet these expectations

⁸⁰⁷Yalçın Bozduman, interview by author, November 2018, (Appendix B,8).

⁸⁰⁸Mamed Abbasov, interview by author, November 2018, (Appendix B,9).

thanks to their prestige and high-quality deliveries. However, he remarks that fraternal political relations since the 1990s, as Akıncı stressed, also play a decisive role in Turkish firms getting contracts in Azerbaijan. Like Sanberk and Eşki, Abbasov also considers Turkish broadcasts in Azerbaijan to have had an impact on the domestic consumption. But at the end of the day, like most interviewees claimed above, price is very important in Azerbaijan, according to Abbasov who states that if a Korean firm pledges the same quality as that of a Turkish company at a much lower price, the Korean gets the contract.

Elchin Abbasov, a well-known engineer from the Azerbaijan Performance Center in the automobile industry, who has worked with Turkish companies since the early 1990s, also confirms the supportive role of language and political relations as a plus for Turkish initiatives.⁸⁰⁹ What is more, Abbasov states that rather than sentimental factors, Turkish firms are preferred thanks to delivering high-quality projects, showing more familiarity and flexibility for Azerbaijani bureaucracy, and easiness of coming to an agreement, compared to Western companies. Yet, despite the sentimental side being certainly felt, Abbasov states that competition is much higher in Azerbaijan compared to the 1990s, and everyone needs to conform to the requirements of liberal market dynamics today.

To sum up, this chapter attempts to illustrate the insights from the field, that is Turkish diplomats, businessmen, and NGOs sharing their experiences with respect to Azerbaijan. In doing so, the interviewees are asked about the manifestation of the One Nation, Two States description of the bilateral relations, and what role being a Turkish plays in Azerbaijan's business world, in order to find out the impact of ideational factors on commercial interests. Although, diverse views came from the

⁸⁰⁹Elchin Abbasov, interview by author, November 2018, (Appendix B,10).

participants, it is possible to denote common or dominant patterns in these answers and to illustrate an ultimate perspective in a systematic way.

First of all, the emphasis of sentimental ties is not an empty talk, as confirmed by all the participants, and the affinity regarding Turkicness is evident, although participants' views vary on the level of the nationalism. This sentimentality can manifest itself in Azerbaijan, sometimes through acts of cheer such as the one in European games or through reactions of anger and disappointment as in the case of Turkish-Armenian rapprochement in 2009. As a matter of fact, these ties have enabled a strong initiation of the bilateral relations as a facilitator. However, being solely initiators, sentimentality is not enough to maintain and improve the ties, according to views; it needs to be consolidated by mutual strategic and material concerns at the end of the day, to serve a purpose in international relations. Through acts of aid, economic policies, and opening to Azerbaijan along with other new republics, launching strategic regional projects, and precipitating the legal framework for the commercial world, it is what Turkey has been doing since the early 1990s, enhancing the Turkish-Azerbaijani sentimental background with mutual strategic and material interests.

Participants listed various advantages of Turkish companies operating in Azerbaijan, compared to their Western rivals. The sentimentality and Ankara's policies have precipitated a welcoming business environment for Turkish firms. No existence of language barrier and cultural familiarity ease the penetration to Azerbaijani markets and provide a convenience for labor force imported from Turkey. Geographical proximity also eases the import of material from Turkey while lowering costs of projects; a significant point in Azerbaijan's business world. Fraternal relations at the political level is argued to provide an advantage to Turkish

entrepreneurs as they are claimed to have direct impact on commercial realm.

Compared to Western firms, Turkish businessmen are repeatedly referred to for their easy adaptation to way of doing business and bureaucratic processes in Azerbaijan.

On the other hand, all the participants acknowledge the dominance of liberal market dynamics in Azerbaijan. Accordingly, they state that the success of Turkish firms is the direct result of their compliance with these liberal expectations. Well-known expertise of Turkish businessmen especially in the contracting and construction industries and their capability of delivering high-quality projects in a cheaper way and timely manner are pointed out as the primary reason of their preference. The expertise also stimulates another incentive in Azerbaijan, to gain know-how from their Turkish counterparts in joint projects. Accordingly, all the participants also agree on that despite the sentimental ties quality is what wins the contract, and without the latter, the former can only lead to disappointment in Azerbaijan. In brief, sentimentality is an existent factor, but it needs to be fed by realist policies both in political and commercial realm in order to lead to a concrete result in Turkey-Azerbaijan ties.

CHAPTER 5

ANALYSIS OF EMPIRICAL DATA THROUGH THE PRISM OF IR THEORY

So far, the paper has covered a theoretical background, a timeline of Turkey-Azerbaijan relations in political, economic, and cultural aspects, as well as insights shared by those closely related to either political and business world in Azerbaijan. Combining all the extracted knowledge together, this chapter attempts to analyze the relations within the framework of analytic eclecticism by evaluating the development of relations through the lens of realism, liberalism, and constructivism respectively.

5.1 Realist perspective

Any analysis of the prospects of bilateral relations in global politics must begin with an assessment of each party's strategic interests. As expressed in the second chapter, stressing the competitive and conflictual structure of international politics, realist tradition assumes that self-interested nation-states behave purposely in pursuit of power and material well-being in an anarchic structure. Presumed as rational entities, states seek to maximize the benefits and minimize the costs of their national interests without letting moral principles and identities define their actions.

To begin with, the former Prime Minister Çiller's words draw the general outline of the Turkish foreign policy in the post-Cold War era; that "not only geography and history direct Turkey's policy towards other states as relations are strong and fruitful as long as they satisfy mutual interests."⁸¹⁰ Similarly, prominent

⁸¹⁰ Çiller, "Turkish Foreign Policy in its Dynamic Tradition," 1.

figures of the ministry such as former diplomat Ercan Özer contend that an essential attribute of Turkey's economic foreign policy has been its realism, which precluded Turkey from indulging in adventurism in Turkic territories.⁸¹¹ Likewise, as Kut has argued, there was no revision of Turkish foreign policy principles or priorities with the demise of the Soviet bloc, but a change of the status quo in the neighboring regions prompted Turkey to pursue a pragmatic, cautious, and pro-cooperation foreign policy.⁸¹² The cautious side of the Turkish foreign policy making was observed in the early 1990s vis-à-vis the Turkic republics in spite of the domestic euphoria. Even after glasnost and perestroika policies, Ankara approached the newly emerging Turkic republics in a meticulous way in order not to be perceived as trying to weaken the current USSR then.⁸¹³ In addition, the surge of the trade volume between Turkey and the Soviet Union during late 1980s, as the latter has begun exporting natural gas to the former after a natural gas deal signed in 1984, and Turkey increased its exports to the Union in return, combined with Turkey's traditional Soviet policy of non-interference in domestic affairs, paved the way to a meticulous Turkish approach toward the emerging Turkic republics.⁸¹⁴ As former diplomat Kamel vividly underlines the view that, beyond having common history and cultural ties, Azerbaijan is a state with whom Turkey has common interests of great importance.⁸¹⁵ Therefore, both Ankara and Baku have had good reasons to foster links with one another in the post-Cold War system.

Although cultural, linguistic, and religious affinities were initial stimulants of closer ties, Turkey's attitude toward the Turkic republics was based more on

⁸¹¹Özer, "Foreign Economic Policy and Relations of Turkey: The Regional Perspective," 5.

⁸¹²Kut, "The Contours of Turkish Foreign Policy in the 1990s," 14.

⁸¹³Aydın, "Foucault's Pendulum: Turkey in Central Asia and the Caucasus," 2.

⁸¹⁴Aydın, "Kafkasya ve Orta Asya'yla İlişkiler," *Türk Dış Politikası: Cilt 2: 1980-2001*, 372.

⁸¹⁵Kamel, *1923'ten Günümüze Türk Dış Politikası ve Diplomasisi*, 195.

pragmatic considerations than on simple nationalist rhetoric.⁸¹⁶ From the beginning, Ankara has strongly endorsed the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan plus other Caucasian states. While repetitive calls for reinforcing their outside autonomy, political institutions, economic structures, and domestic stability are made by Turkish officials almost in every case since the 1990s, this has been a strategic priority for Ankara rather than a simple rhetoric.⁸¹⁷ There have been various concerns that lay the basis of this policy. Competition of external forces to influence the region against Turkish interests, the fact that any instability could spill over into the Turkish territory, Turkey's internal sensitivities for the preservation of the unitary state and defined borders, threat of damaging Turkey's economic ties with the region and secure access to the Central Asia have all led Ankara to position against developments that challenge these norms.⁸¹⁸ Furthermore, along with Armenia and Georgia, Azerbaijan creates a buffer zone between Turkey and its historic rival Russia, against which Ankara found supporting independence and stability of Caucasian states as the best way to preserve this buffer zone.⁸¹⁹ As a matter of fact, the Caucasus is generally recognized as the focal point of Turkish-Russian regional rivalry.⁸²⁰ As Sezer puts it, Turkish military assistance to Azeris in the form of training and equipment deliveries is a well-known secret.⁸²¹ Therefore, a friendly but not necessarily pan-Turkic Baku administration as a natural ally that limits the Russian return to Southern Caucasus has been among the goals of Turkish political elite.⁸²² Immediate recognition of these states and economic initiatives to increase

⁸¹⁶Sayari, "Turkey: The Changing European Security Environment and the Gulf Crisis", 15.

⁸¹⁷Aydın, "Turkey's Caucasus Policies," 178.

⁸¹⁸Aydın, "Turkey's Caucasus Policies," 178.

⁸¹⁹Aydın, "Turkey's Caucasus Policies," 178-179.

⁸²⁰Sezer, "Turkish-Russian relations: The challenges of reconciling geopolitical competition with economic partnership", 68.

⁸²¹Sezer, "Turkish-Russian relations: The challenges of reconciling geopolitical competition with economic partnership", 70.

⁸²²Bölükbaşı, "Ankara's Baku-Centered Transcaucasia Policy: Has It Failed?," 81.

regional stability and prosperity conforms to this mentality of Ankara. Moreover, Sanberk's statements in the previous chapter confirms this point as Ankara initiated economic policies towards Azerbaijan to decrease the latter's dependence on Moscow.

From the strategic viewpoint of Azerbaijan, Baku's plans to promote its energy resources to world markets and obtain a favorable solution for the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict have been the main drivers to deepen the partnership with Ankara.⁸²³ In addition, political elite of Baku were championing Turkey's secular ideology, turning their heads to the West, and they aimed to restore their identity by resorting to the Turkic culture,⁸²⁴ particularly during the Elchibey era. Besides serving as a bridge for Western markets, Turkey also symbolized a gateway to the Western security communities in the 1990s.⁸²⁵ In terms of security, Azerbaijan repeatedly called for Ankara's active involvement as covered in the previous chapter, and through the 1990s, Baku reiterated their wish to host Turkish, U.S, NATO military bases to balance the Russian-supported Armenian forces.⁸²⁶

Moreover, Caspian energy resources have always been an essential sphere of interest for Ankara, showing itself even right before the collapse of the Soviet Union. As Turkey's domestic oil and natural gas resources are quite limited, securing reliable energy at rational prices has become a major objective of Turkish foreign policy.⁸²⁷ According to the ministry, Turkey is a net energy (oil and gas) importer with the highest rate of growing energy demand among OECD countries over the last

⁸²³Kardas and Macit, "Turkey-Azerbaijan Relations: The Economic Dimension," 24.

⁸²⁴Aras, *Political Economy of Cooperation Between Turkey and Azerbaijan: An Analysis of Turkey's Mid to Long Term Regional Policy*, 84.

⁸²⁵Kardas and Macit, "Turkey-Azerbaijan Relations: The Economic Dimension," 24.

⁸²⁶Sezer, "Turkish-Russian relations: The challenges of reconciling geopolitical competition with economic partnership", 70.

⁸²⁷Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774*, 154.

15 years as it can meet only around 26% of its total energy demand from domestic sources.⁸²⁸ Hence, building pipelines with neighboring countries such as Russia, Azerbaijan, Iran, and Iraq has occupied the agenda.⁸²⁹ On the other hand, Turkey is asymmetrically dependent on Russian energy.⁸³⁰ This also pushes Ankara with a strong incentive to diversify its energy supplies.⁸³¹ This diversification incentive is not only against the Russian dependency though, but on Arab resources as well.⁸³²

According to recent data, oil, natural gas, and coal each cover a third of Turkey's total supply of energy consumed domestically.⁸³³ Turkey is neither a strategic energy producer nor a consumer due to its market size not being enough to affect the global energy trade.⁸³⁴ On other hand, it is an important oil transit country with future potential and a potential gas transit country with increasing significance, being neighbor to countries with vast oil and gas resources.⁸³⁵ But Turkey's total natural gas imports amount to nearly 4,3% of the global exports, which makes it the 8th largest natural gas importer by 2012.⁸³⁶ Moreover, Turkey has become the fourth largest natural gas consumer in Europe by 2015.⁸³⁷

Among Turkey's oil importers, Iraq (45,5%), Iran (22,3%), Russia (12,4%), and Saudi Arabia (9,5%) rank as the actors with the largest shares.⁸³⁸ The top five countries from which Turkey imported oil products in 2015 were Russia (22,9% of

⁸²⁸Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Turkey's Energy Profile and Strategy*.

⁸²⁹Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774*, 154.

⁸³⁰Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774*, 208.

⁸³¹Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774*, 208.

⁸³²Landau, *Pan-Turkism: From Irredentism to Cooperation*, 203.

⁸³³International Energy Strategy, "Energy Policies of IEA Countries: Turkey 2016 Review," 23.

⁸³⁴Global Relations Forum, "Turkish Energy Strategy in the 21st Century: Weathering Uncertainties and Discontinuities," 16.

⁸³⁵Global Relations Forum, "Turkish Energy Strategy in the 21st Century: Weathering Uncertainties and Discontinuities," 16.

⁸³⁶Global Relations Forum, "Turkish Energy Strategy in the 21st Century: Weathering Uncertainties and Discontinuities," 27.

⁸³⁷Çeviköz, "Could Turkey Become a New Energy Trade Hub in South East Europe?," 74.

⁸³⁸International Energy Strategy, "Energy Policies of IEA Countries: Turkey 2016 Review," 72.

the total), the U.S (14,1%), India (11,4%), Israel (9,2%) and Greece (6,8%).⁸³⁹

Moreover, almost all the crude oil reaching Ceyhan Port via the BTC pipeline is delivered to the world markets as Turkey has not purchased crude oil from BTC so far.⁸⁴⁰

Natural gas has rapidly become a major component of Turkish energy supply within a decade.⁸⁴¹ As recent releases of widely-referred reports indicate, Turkey's natural gas supply is almost entirely provided by imports for its domestic natural gas consumption.⁸⁴² Natural gas also accounts for 38,6% of electricity generation of Turkey in 2015.⁸⁴³ In 2016, Turkey imported 45,1 billion cubic meters (bcm) of natural gas, 7,7 bcm being by LNG imports and 37,4 bcm by pipelines.⁸⁴⁴ On the other hand, only 0,6 bcm was exported via pipelines.⁸⁴⁵ Out of the imported volume, gas bought from Azerbaijan amounts to 6,5 bcm, ranking third after imports from Russia (23,2) and Iran (7,7).⁸⁴⁶ Put differently, gas bought from Azerbaijan makes up 14,4% of the overall gas Turkey imported in 2016, and 17,4% of the gas obtained from the pipelines. As a matter of fact, by volume, Azeri gas supplies along with Russian and Iranian ones have been on a surging trend since 2007.⁸⁴⁷ The BTE gas pipeline between Azerbaijan and Turkey serves for the Azeri imports to Turkish market, as it is not considered a transit pipeline when it enters the gas network of Turkey.⁸⁴⁸

⁸³⁹International Energy Strategy, "Energy Policies of IEA Countries: Turkey 2016 Review," 73.

⁸⁴⁰International Energy Strategy, "Energy Policies of IEA Countries: Turkey 2016 Review," 82.

⁸⁴¹Global Relations Forum, "Turkish Energy Strategy in the 21st Century: Weathering Uncertainties and Discontinuities," 25.

⁸⁴²International Energy Strategy, "Energy Policies of IEA Countries: Turkey 2016 Review," 103.

⁸⁴³International Energy Strategy, "Energy Policies of IEA Countries: Turkey 2016 Review," 103.

⁸⁴⁴BP, "BP Statistical Review of World Energy June 2017," 35.

⁸⁴⁵BP, "BP Statistical Review of World Energy June 2017," 35.

⁸⁴⁶BP, "BP Statistical Review of World Energy June 2017," 34.

⁸⁴⁷International Energy Strategy, "Energy Policies of IEA Countries: Turkey 2016 Review," 104.

⁸⁴⁸International Energy Strategy, "Energy Policies of IEA Countries: Turkey 2016 Review," 112.

In addition, when it is completed, TANAP is going to be the first transit natural gas pipeline of Turkey. TANAP has a scalable capacity of 16 bcm/year to 32 bcm/year which could enable Turkey to enhance its gas supply security.⁸⁴⁹ In the first phase upon the implementation of the project in 2018/19, 6 bcm will be provided to the Turkish domestic market and 10 bcm to Europe in 2020 along the TAP.⁸⁵⁰

In brief, as a significant client for natural gas, Turkey's natural gas security is almost entirely dependent on a limited number of neighboring countries, which create risky interdependencies.⁸⁵¹ And in this picture, Azerbaijan has already taken its place as a major supplier for the Turkish market. This dependence of Turkey on Azeri gas provides Baku with a political leverage that could be used to exert pressure on Ankara as it was observed during the Turkey-Armenia rapprochement in 2008/09.

In the third chapter, it was repeated several times that pro-Turkist Elchibey and Heydar Aliyev who oftentimes adopted the rhetoric One Nation, Two States, pursued a foreign policy that seems to favor Ankara with respect to the energy politics. Yet, a realist perspective can offer more explanatory reasons with respect to energy and pipeline politics of Baku. A pipeline from Azerbaijan in the west direction could pass through several countries such as Russia, Iran, Georgia, Armenia, and Turkey. However, these possible routes have different reservations and disadvantages for Azerbaijan. While a route via Russia could help Moscow to re-establish control over Baku, which the U.S. also does not desire in the Caucasus, a route via Iran again faces strong opposition from Washington that has a series of trade restrictions on Tehran.⁸⁵² As the Karabakh dispute remains unresolved between Yerevan and Baku,

⁸⁴⁹International Energy Strategy, "Energy Policies of IEA Countries: Turkey 2016 Review," 112.

⁸⁵⁰International Energy Strategy, "Energy Policies of IEA Countries: Turkey 2016 Review," 112.

⁸⁵¹Global Relations Forum, "Turkish Energy Strategy in the 21st Century: Weathering Uncertainties and Discontinuities," 26.

⁸⁵²Ibrahimov, "Turkish-Azerbaijani Energy Relations: Significant Leverage in the Implementation of the Foreign Policy Interests of Both Countries," 95.

the only possible option to export Azerbaijani oil to the Western markets appears to be via Georgia to Turkey and to Europe from there.⁸⁵³ Likewise, due to the calm climate of the Mediterranean, Turkey's Ceyhan port is open all year long whereas Black Sea ports are shut down in the winter thanks to dangerous weather conditions.⁸⁵⁴ Moreover, Ceyhan had a greater capacity to handle shipping volume than Novorossisk, the Russian port discussed regarding a potential route.⁸⁵⁵

Correspondingly, since 1994, Ankara has campaigned to convince the stakeholders of the BTC pipeline that the Baku-Ceyhan line was the most economically and politically sound option as another route to transfer oil to the Mediterranean would be costlier and may increase Baku's dependency on Russia.⁸⁵⁶ In fact, Azerbaijan's considering Political concerns such as Russian military presence in the region and Armenian dispute was vividly stated by Ilham Aliyev, then vice president of SOCAR, as "the question of selecting an oil transport route was a political and not an economic decision for Azerbaijan."⁸⁵⁷ Likewise, Babali argued that political concerns of regional and international actors preceded the economic motivations in the early stages of the project whereas the economic viability has been addressed the very late stages of the pipeline.⁸⁵⁸ In short, the selection of countries on possible pipeline routes by Baku has been subject to concerns over national interests and Azerbaijan's geographic constraints, which explains Turkey's dominant role in Azeri energy exports.⁸⁵⁹ Besides great importance attached to Caspian oil and gas reserves, as Temel Iskit expresses,

⁸⁵³Ibrahimov, "Turkish-Azerbaijani Energy Relations: Significant Leverage in the Implementation of the Foreign Policy Interests of Both Countries," 95.

⁸⁵⁴Aras, "Turkey's policy in the former Soviet South: Assets and options," 41.

⁸⁵⁵Aras, "Turkey's policy in the former Soviet South: Assets and options," 41.

⁸⁵⁶Babali, "Implications of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Main Oil Pipeline Project," 33.

⁸⁵⁷Babali, "Implications of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Main Oil Pipeline Project," 34.

⁸⁵⁸Babali, "Implications of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Main Oil Pipeline Project," 35.

⁸⁵⁹Global Relations Forum, "Turkish Energy Strategy in the 21st Century: Weathering Uncertainties and Discontinuities," 28.

Turkey sees these not just as energy sources but a significant contribution to regional stability in its neighborhood, which in turn means increased trade and investment opportunities for Turkish businessmen.⁸⁶⁰

Besides energy, Turkey approached Azerbaijan with the aim of economic penetration to satisfy Ankara's export-driven growth strategy.⁸⁶¹ A significant impact of the disintegration of the Soviet Union was that new export markets were now relatively open to Turkish exporters as well as to others.⁸⁶² The changes in the structure of the Turkish economy in 1980s, Özal's reforms for an export-oriented economy, Turkey's integration with the global economy and its attempts to engage economically with its neighbors in the post-Soviet era have precipitated the surge of Turkey's trade and investments vis-à-vis its neighbors.

Although Turkey's exports to Azerbaijan surged since the latter's independence in 1991, which was also facilitated by geographical proximity of the two countries compared to other Turkic republics in Central Asia,⁸⁶³ Azerbaijan is still not among the top 20 destinations of Turkish exporters and is not listed among top importers of Turkish domestic markets apart from energy. Therefore, the Azeri market does not constitute a dependency for Turkish exports and Turkish market does heavily rely on Azeri exports except the energy flow.

On the other hand, imports from Turkey built up a significant share (18%) of overall imports of Azerbaijan, which positions Turkey as the second largest import partner after Russia. Again, export items to Turkey except energy amount only around 2% of total Azeri exports to the world. With all these noted, apart from

⁸⁶⁰Iskit, "Turkey: A New Actor in the Field of Energy Politics?," 8.

⁸⁶¹Kardas and Macit, "Turkey-Azerbaijan Relations: The Economic Dimension," 26.

⁸⁶²Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774*, 151.

⁸⁶³Ibrahimov, "Turkish-Azerbaijani Energy Relations: Significant Leverage in the Implementation of the Foreign Policy Interests of Both Countries," 84.

energy, no strong sign of trade dependency can be observed between the parts except Turkey occupying a large place in imports to Azerbaijan.

Although the transition of Azerbaijan to the market economy has created opportunities for Turkish businessmen after the disintegration of the Soviet Bloc, the lack of direct access between the two countries, customs issues, lack of necessary regulations particularly during the 1990s, and high rate of customs in the 2000s combined with Azerbaijan's membership of the Commonwealth of Independent States and Turkey's Customs Union agreement with the EU, as discussed in the previous chapter, are listed as the primary reasons for the underdevelopment of Turkish exports to this country. In other words, the One Nation, Two States definition does not seem to find a full reflection in commercial ties in the face of these realities.

TIKA and Eximbank initiatives were spearhead assets of Ankara regarding the transition of Azerbaijan and other Turkic states to liberal market economies.⁸⁶⁴ While these institutions have helped Azerbaijan and other Turkic states to overcome the domestic problems after a communist regime, they were also mechanisms formed to accelerate the penetration of Turkish exports to new markets. Moreover, in addition to the cultural ties with the Turkic speaking states enabling Turkish foreign aid to gain momentum in the 1990s,⁸⁶⁵ as Hakan Fidan, former president of TIKA, points out, the self-interest forms a strong incentive for donor communities to deliver ODA to partner countries.⁸⁶⁶ In other words, aid is not always provided for humanitarian motives but may include political, economic, and strategic reasons that

⁸⁶⁴Kardas and Macit, "Turkey-Azerbaijan Relations: The Economic Dimension," 26.

⁸⁶⁵Fidan and Nurdun, "Turkey's role in the global development assistance community: the case of TIKA (Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency)," 102.

⁸⁶⁶Fidan and Nurdun, "Turkey's role in the global development assistance community: the case of TIKA (Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency)," 95.

can benefit the donor states in the long run.⁸⁶⁷ Maintaining politically preferable governments, preserving allegiance, and supply of natural resources from the recipient states and promoting exports to these states can be considered among reasons driven by self-interest.⁸⁶⁸ Therefore, from a realist point of view, these institutions have served to create a stable environment in which Turkish economy can benefit through exports and imports. However, one should also note that, due to limited resources, these assets were not able to compete with other international and regional actors in the long run, as greater financial means and expertise have provided Western and East Asian firms with a competitive edge over Turkish initiatives.

Recent developments in Turkey's periphery also prompted it to look for further prospects for Turkish investments in Southern Caucasus, as the instability in the Middle East, the economic recession in Russia, followed by Moscow's sanctions on Turkey have led to market losses for Turkish products and services.⁸⁶⁹ Since 2013, Turkey's trade, especially exports to Russia, Ukraine, and the Arab territory have gone down by 3%, 11%, 5% respectively.⁸⁷⁰ On the other hand, Chinese *One Belt-One Road* initiative offered future opportunities for Turkish investments in this relatively stable region that may become a transit and logistical hub.⁸⁷¹ In addition to its long-term aspirations of furthering its non-hydrocarbon economy, Baku also desires to position the country as a logistical hub on the modern Silk Route.⁸⁷² Hence, in addition to security issues, energy-diversification efforts, the proximity

⁸⁶⁷Fidan and Nurdun, "Turkey's role in the global development assistance community: the case of TIKA (Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency)," 95.

⁸⁶⁸Haka Fidan and Nurdun, "Turkey's role in the global development assistance community: the case of TIKA (Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency)," 95.n Fidan, the Case of TICA, 95.

⁸⁶⁹Kirişci and Moffatt, "Turkey and the South Caucasus: An Opportunity for Soft Regionalism?," 70.

⁸⁷⁰Kirişci and Moffatt, "Turkey and the South Caucasus: An Opportunity for Soft Regionalism?," 85.

⁸⁷¹Kirişci and Moffatt, "Turkey and the South Caucasus: An Opportunity for Soft Regionalism?," 70.

⁸⁷²Kirişci and Moffatt, "Turkey and the South Caucasus: An Opportunity for Soft Regionalism?," 81.

and future integration of the region to the OBOR initiatives, also increase the economic attractiveness of the region for Turkey.⁸⁷³

Besides these, a major challenge Turkey faces in the South Caucasus is its lack of direct relations with Armenia. With no official communications between Yerevan and Ankara, Turkey is argued to be hindered from playing a more effective role in encouraging greater stability and prosperity in the region.⁸⁷⁴ In spite of the huge domestic sympathy for Azerbaijan, Ankara began a constructive dialogue with Yerevan to establish political and economic links in the early 1990s.⁸⁷⁵

However, the interests and expectations from developing closer political and economic ties with the neighboring states has carried the danger of Ankara's involvement of regional conflicts such as Karabakh regarding which Ankara faced difficult policy choices between the desire to remain neutral vs the satisfying the domestic pressures stemming from the sympathy for Azerbaijanis.⁸⁷⁶ Turkey's stance regarding the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute is considered a symbol of the solidarity between Turkey and Azerbaijan as the former has kept its border with Armenia closed since 1993 and advocated Azerbaijan's territorial integrity on international platforms.⁸⁷⁷ In addition to constituting a sentimental issue for the Turkish public opinion, Karabakh dispute poses a threat to Turkey's security in the region,⁸⁷⁸ with the proximity of Armenian irredentism.⁸⁷⁹ Yet, dispute is not the only major factor that Turkey abandoned formal relations with Armenia. With the collapse of the Soviet Bloc, some Armenian parliamentarians announced that they did not recognize

⁸⁷³Kirişçi and Moffatt, "Turkey and the South Caucasus: An Opportunity for Soft Regionalism?," 85.

⁸⁷⁴Kirişçi and Moffatt, "Turkey and the South Caucasus: An Opportunity for Soft Regionalism?," 76.

⁸⁷⁵Sayari, "Turkey: The Changing European Security Environment and the Gulf Crisis", 16.

⁸⁷⁶Sayari, "Turkey: The Changing European Security Environment and the Gulf Crisis", 16.

⁸⁷⁷Çeviköz, "Turkey in a Reconnecting Eurasia: Foreign Economic and Security Interests," 10.

⁸⁷⁸Çeviköz, "Turkey in a Reconnecting Eurasia: Foreign Economic and Security Interests," 10.

⁸⁷⁹Uzer, *Identity and Turkish Foreign Policy: The Kemalist Influence in Cyprus and the Caucasus*, 180.

the borders between Turkey and Armenia established during the Soviet era, in addition to the fact that Armenia formally views the events of 1915 between Ottomans and Armenians as genocide and pursues policies in the international arena for a formal recognition of it.⁸⁸⁰

Since its emergence, the Karabakh conflict has been preventing Turkey from developing relations with Yerevan. As Bölükbaşı expresses, it is not because the Turks are against such a development per se, but because the Turkish governments know that developing ties with Yerevan would strain the relations with Baku and discredit Ankara in the eyes of Turkish public opinion.⁸⁸¹ Moreover, as mentioned in the previous section by Sanberk, Ankara's closing borders with Armenia was a peaceful policy that aims to preserve the regional interests. As a matter of fact, commercial ties still go on between Turkey and Armenia. Indirect trade has been surging between the two states, which is mostly in the form of Turkish goods exported to Armenia via Georgia, making Turkey Armenia's one of the largest partners.⁸⁸²

As retired ambassador Ünal Çeviköz underscores, the economic-centered approach of Ankara vis-à-vis the region is vulnerable to disruption by instability, hence it forces Turkey to be more engaged in addressing political problems in the region such as Nagorno-Karabakh in order to secure its own economic interests.⁸⁸³ In addition, regional conflicts such as Karabakh take place in geostrategic and proximate locations for Ankara, having security implications such as regarding support for Kurdish insurgency, and they affect fellow Turks.⁸⁸⁴ The dispute also

⁸⁸⁰ Aydın, "Foucault's Pendulum: Turkey in Central Asia and the Caucasus," 10.

⁸⁸¹ Bölükbaşı, "Ankara's Baku-Centered Transcaucasia Policy: Has It Failed?," 93.

⁸⁸² Kirişçi and Moffatt, "Turkey and the South Caucasus: An Opportunity for Soft Regionalism?," 78.

⁸⁸³ Çeviköz, "Turkey in a Reconnecting Eurasia: Foreign Economic and Security Interests," 8.

⁸⁸⁴ Robbins, "Between Sentiment and Self-Interest: Turkey's Policy toward Azerbaijan and the Central Asian States," 596.

poses a risk for the security of the pipelines coming from Baku to Turkey. As the frontline where Armenian and Azeri forces confront each other is quite close to the pipelines, Armenians claim that they have the capability of destroying Azerbaijani energy facilities by a missile attack. With these in mind, Ankara assumes that Baku could be convinced that Turkish-Armenian normalization would be of broader benefit by breaking Russia's stranglehold and creating new political and economic opportunities for all the Southern Caucasus states.⁸⁸⁵ However, as Azerbaijan expects a parallel progress both in the normalization process between Ankara and Yerevan, and in the Karabakh conflict, any other approach seemed to be adopted by Ankara is perceived as a betrayal to the fraternal relations for Baku which also do not hesitate to use the energy card and Moscow rapprochement to exert pressure on Ankara.

Although it is beyond the scope of the present work to analyze the relationship between Turkey and Russia, the latter one is an important factor that influences Turkey's relation with Caucasian republics and Azerbaijan. Russia and Turkey were on politically opposite sides of the Karabakh dispute, and Ankara, as Hale expresses, needs to follow a meticulous policy in balancing its sympathies for Turkic nations, and prevention of Russian hegemony in Russia's 'near abroad' with its economic interests in Moscow and avoidance of a clash with Russian military power in the region.⁸⁸⁶ Despite the inclination of President Özal and some representatives of the nationalist circles to intervene or resort to creating deterrence by massing troops on the Armenian border, such as action would have jeopardized Turkish national security as Russia was behind Armenia while strong existence of Armenian lobby in the U.S and France would put pressure on their governments to

⁸⁸⁵Kirişçi and Moffatt, "Turkey and the South Caucasus: An Opportunity for Soft Regionalism?," 77.

⁸⁸⁶Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774*, 207.

restrain Turkey.⁸⁸⁷ Within this Armenian pressure, the possibility of Armenian lobbies playing the “genocide” card also restricted Ankara’s intervention in the Karabakh.⁸⁸⁸ Therefore, despite the existence of ideational factors and domestic pressure of pro-Azerbaijan public opinion, material variables such as military, economic, and a hostile international conjuncture to a military intervention prevented Ankara from intervening to help fellow Turks in Karabakh.⁸⁸⁹

Moreover, while the dispute that threatens Turkish security carries an emotional meaning for the Turkish public opinion exerting occasional pressure on Ankara governments combined with unresolved historic issues between Ankara and Yerevan, Turkey, following a Baku-oriented approach though, still favors a regional policy that does not isolate Yerevan with whom forging ties is believed to serve Ankara’s security and economic interests in the Southern Caucasus. Put differently, while Turkey’s Karabakh stance has been pointed out as a manifestation of the One Nation, Two States definition, Ankara also opts for regional policies based on national security and economic concerns. Hence, Ankara walks on a delicate tightrope to balance its interests in Azerbaijan and Turkish sympathy for their brothers against the cooperative and interest-based regional policies it aims to pursue while taking the Moscow factor into account.

One additional interesting point to is that, none of the Turkic republics have formally recognized Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, which is an issue in Turkish foreign policy with high priority. Azerbaijan’s Deputy Prime Minister Ali Hasanov explains Azerbaijan’s reservations regarding the Cyprus issue by stating

⁸⁸⁷Uzer, *Identity and Turkish Foreign Policy: The Kemalist Influence in Cyprus and the Caucasus*, 155.

⁸⁸⁸Uzer, *Identity and Turkish Foreign Policy: The Kemalist Influence in Cyprus and the Caucasus*, 182.

⁸⁸⁹Uzer, *Identity and Turkish Foreign Policy: The Kemalist Influence in Cyprus and the Caucasus*, 155.

that If only Azerbaijan recognized Northern Cyprus, several states would recognize Nagorno-Karabakh, which Turkey would not want.⁸⁹⁰ Although not much has been discussed about this, the example, based on the statement, is a clear indication of mutual interests pushing sentimental expectations to backwaters of relations.

To summarize the section, from a realist perspective, Turkey has significant interests in the Southern Caucasus and Azerbaijan beyond historical and ethnic ties. First, as part of Turkey's periphery, the region, which is a gateway to Central Asia, with unresolved conflicts poses threats to the security and economic ties of Turkey. Therefore, Ankara has been endorsing the development of democratic mechanisms, peaceful processes for disputes, and liberal norms such as free market economy to stabilize the region and increase the prosperity. In addition, Ankara championed the One Nation, Two States rhetoric to enhance the links with Baku which is also seen as an ally to counter the Russian influence in the region. Moreover, energy diversification has also been a popular item in Turkish foreign policy agenda. At this point, Azerbaijan has become a major partner, especially as a natural gas provider; on whom Turkey has noteworthy import dependency. Emerging as a new export destination for Turkish businessmen in the post-Soviet era, Azerbaijan also has good reasons to strengthen ties with Ankara; promoting its energy reserves to world markets through a route without Russian influence or American opposition, and alliance in the international arena to find a favorable solution to the Karabakh conflict. With all these in mind, despite minor frictions, the two states seem to have strong incentives stressed by realism to forge ties with each other, beyond Turkist sentiments. In a similar manner, the next section aims to elaborate the bilateral dynamics emphasized by the liberal approach.

⁸⁹⁰ "Azerbaycan KKTC'yi tanıyamaz çünkü...".

5.2 Liberal view

As former Turkish foreign minister Cem expresses, the Turkish political elite has been aware of the fact that they no longer live in a world where sheer military force is the major determinant of a country's international status, but economic factors coupled with historical, cultural, and political assets shape the role of a country.⁸⁹¹ Accordingly, this section tries to shed some light on Turkey-Azerbaijan relations through a liberal angle. As Hale underscores, Turkish statesmen, particularly Turgut Özal, during his presidency between 1989 and 1993, adopted a liberal approach that increasing regional economic links and interdependence would generate better political ties and a regional security, which has been also shared by the AKP government after 2002.⁸⁹² As AKP's foreign policy approach had been characterized by greater emphasis on the use of soft power and forging amicable relations with all Turkey's neighbors under the "zero problems" motto,⁸⁹³ therefore, from a liberal perspective, Turkey promotes its role as a commercial and investment partner and seeks opportunities for further cooperation through big-scale projects to link the two countries.⁸⁹⁴ Furthermore, as Çeviköz outlines, Turkey's policy vis-a-vis the Southern Caucasus and Azerbaijan based on the following principles, which conforms to the liberal explanation of the international relations; development of regional security, promotion of peaceful solutions to the regional conflicts,

⁸⁹¹Cem, "Turkish Foreign Policy: Opening New Horizons for Turkey at The Beginning of a New Millennium," 2.

⁸⁹²Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774*, 151.

⁸⁹³Öniş and Yılmaz, "Between Europeanization and Euro-Asianism: Foreign Policy Activism in Turkey during the AKP Era," 9.

⁸⁹⁴Çeviköz, "Turkey in a Reconnecting Eurasia: Foreign Economic and Security Interests," 8.

democratic norms, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of the states, deepening cooperation and economic integration.⁸⁹⁵

As mentioned in Chapter 2, Keohane and Nye defined three principal characteristics of complex interdependence; multiple channels, absence of hierarchy among issues, and declining use of military force. In general, Turkey-Azerbaijan relations fit closely the three conditions set forth by Keohane and Nye.

To begin with, military force plays no direct role in the bilateral relationship as there exists no symptom of military threat from each other. Despite Ankara being a key partner of Azerbaijan for security cooperation (education, military maneuvers, and financial aid),⁸⁹⁶ no instance of military alliance against an external threat or military intervention has been observed since the demise of the Soviet Union.

Likewise, regarding the absence of hierarchy among issues, military security does not necessarily dominate the agendas of Turkish and Azerbaijani statesmen with respect to the bilateral relations. On the contrary, besides concerns raising in Turkish public opinion about the Karabakh attacks, energy, and cooperation seem to frame the development of bilateral ties.

Turkey-Azerbaijan relations are notable for the multiple channels of contact between the two countries. Besides thousands of Turkish citizens or origins living in Azerbaijan and vice versa, direct flights between Turkey and Azerbaijan have started in the early 1990s, reaching an offering of several daily flights to Azerbaijan today. Accordingly, thousands of people from both countries visit Turkey and Azerbaijan each year. According to Balcer, Turks make up the biggest group of foreign visitors to Azerbaijan while Turkey is the main travel destination of Azeris after Russia.⁸⁹⁷

⁸⁹⁵Çeviköz, "Turkey in a Reconnecting Eurasia: Foreign Economic and Security Interests," 8.

⁸⁹⁶Balcer, "Between Energy and Soft Pan-Turkism: Turkey and the Turkic Republics," 146.

⁸⁹⁷Balcer, "Between Energy and Soft Pan-Turkism: Turkey and the Turkic Republics," 146.

When it comes to soft power, Turkey also has considerable influence in Azerbaijan through its television broadcasts, as confirmed by the interviewees.

Moreover, there are numerous Azerbaijan-related associations in Turkey such as Istanbul Turkey Azerbaijan Solidarity and Cultural Association, Turkish-Azerbaijani Fraternity Culture and Solidarity Association, Federation of Turkey Azerbaijan Associations that have branches in Adana, Edirne, Amasya, Eskisehir, Ankara, Gebze, Antalya, Izmir, Balikesir, Canakkale, Kars, Derince, and Kocaeli, Azerbaijan Cultural Association, Istanbul Azerbaijan Cultural House, Association of Kars Azerbaijan Caucasian Cultures, Caucasian Cultural Association (KAFDER) etc.

With respect to the Turkish business associations, Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB), the Turkish Industrialists and Businessmen's Association (TUSIAD), others such as the Independent Industrialists and Businessmen's Association (MUSIAD), the Turkish Exporters Assembly (TIM), the Foreign Economic Relations Board (DEIK), the International Transporters Association (UND) and the Turkish Contractors Association (TMB) has become quite active and widely heard over time in Azerbaijan.

The development of commercial and economic links is the most visible factor driving Turkey's engagement with the region. In parallel with this observation, by 2010s, both countries have taken their places among the top foreign direct investors for each other.⁸⁹⁸ Thanks to the rapid development and privatization policies of both countries, Azerbaijan becomes the top investor in Turkish energy sector whereas it has become the second largest FDI destination of Turkey particularly for construction, infrastructure, energy industries. However, owing to a shortage of

⁸⁹⁸Balcer, "Between Energy and Soft Pan-Turkism: Turkey and the Turkic Republics," 158.

financial and technological opportunities, Turkey has been mainly attending to the problem of Caspian oil transportation to foreign markets.⁸⁹⁹

As covered in the previous chapter, Turkish companies, particularly in contracting and construction industries, seem to conform to drivers of the liberal market, which, according to interviewees, is the primary reason of their achievements in Azerbaijan. As liberal markets value the best service at the lowest cost possible with no sentimental influence on decision process, almost all the participants confirmed the good reputation of Turkish contracting and construction firms, which emanates from delivering excellent quality projects in a relatively short amount of time, with lower prices compared to Western enterprises. Moreover, interviewees underlined the fact that despite providing advantages, cultural ties and language do not win the contract in Azerbaijan but only quality with best price does.

The overlapping strategic interests have manifested themselves most clearly in energy partnership as Turkey pursues to secure energy supplies and become a transit route between the East and the West while Azerbaijan considered Turkey as a viable export route to monetize its hydrocarbon resources.⁹⁰⁰ Ultimately, these overlapping interests have fostered an interdependence between Baku and Ankara, and facilitated further cooperation.⁹⁰¹ In Mustafa Aydın's words, while the historical and cultural ties facilitated the development of closer Political and economic links between Turkey, Azerbaijan, and Georgia, they have upgraded their relations to strategic partnership thanks to the pipeline politics.⁹⁰²

⁸⁹⁹Nassibli, "Azerbaijan's Geopolitics and Oil Pipeline Issue," 4.

⁹⁰⁰Kardas and Macit, "Turkey-Azerbaijan Relations: The Economic Dimension," 25.

⁹⁰¹Kardas and Macit, "Turkey-Azerbaijan Relations: The Economic Dimension," 24.

⁹⁰²Aydın, "Turkey's Caucasus Policies," 179.

Azerbaijan has no access to the open seas; therefore, it depends on its neighbors to export its resources.⁹⁰³ Therefore, Baku allowed itself to become dependent on routes through Turkey which in return considered Azerbaijan as a reliable energy partner and a key to Caspian and Central Asian resources.⁹⁰⁴ This interdependency can be observed for gas pipelines especially as in gas markets, buyers and sellers are typically locked in through pipelines and long-term contracts.⁹⁰⁵

In the previous section, Turkey's gas dependency on Azerbaijan was elaborated. As a matter of fact, the Turkish market seems to be a commercially suitable market for Azerbaijani gas due to the shorter transportation distances and growing domestic demand. The recent figures also point to the growing importance of Turkish markets for Azerbaijani suppliers. In 2011, the share of Turkey in Azerbaijan's total gas exports was 55,7%.⁹⁰⁶ This percentage has surged to approximately 70% in 2015 and 74% in 2016, according to the BP reports.⁹⁰⁷ In short, most of Azerbaijani gas is shipped to Turkey through BTE pipeline, since Azerbaijan has become a net exporter of gas in 2007.

Although Turkey is a client of Azerbaijani oil, thanks to its geographical location, it is crucial for Azeri exports to the world. Azerbaijani oil accounts for nearly 85% of the oil transported by BTC, while the rest belongs to Kazakh and Turkmen supplies.⁹⁰⁸ And the BTC oil constitutes about 80% of total oil exported by Azerbaijan.

⁹⁰³Ibrahimov, "Turkish-Azerbaijani Energy Relations: Significant Leverage in the Implementation of the Foreign Policy Interests of Both Countries," 94.

⁹⁰⁴Kardas and Macit, "Turkey-Azerbaijan Relations: The Economic Dimension," 24.

⁹⁰⁵Global Relations Forum, "Turkish Energy Strategy in the 21st Century: Weathering Uncertainties and Discontinuities," 28.

⁹⁰⁶Global Relations Forum, "Turkish Energy Strategy in the 21st Century: Weathering Uncertainties and Discontinuities," 28.

⁹⁰⁷BP, "BP Statistical Review of World Energy June 2017".

⁹⁰⁸Balcer, "Between Energy and Soft Pan-Turkism: Turkey and the Turkic Republics," 159.

Turkey is located close to more than 75% of the world's proven hydrocarbon reserves, which presents Turkey with a unique opportunity to become a major energy trade hub and transit country between the East-West and the South-North Axes.⁹⁰⁹ While the EU is heavily dependent on Russian gas, it seeks to diversify its imports, which are expected to increase in the near future, the southern gas corridor that may include Turkey have been considered as an energy security priority. Moreover, it is expected that natural gas will take on greater significance in the energy mix of Europe.⁹¹⁰ As president of BP Turkey, Bud Fackrell underlines, Ankara wants to play an fundamental role in supplying gas to Europe in order to become an essential regional power.⁹¹¹ Turkey has its advantages for this ambition, namely being the shortest route between Azerbaijan and Europe, and a good record of pipelines already in operation.⁹¹²

In this regard, the engagement of Ankara in the Southern Caucasus has also importance to sustain Turkey's economic growth and the pursuit of the EU membership. As energy revenues are of paramount importance for Azerbaijan's economic development, pipeline diversity is also a definite strategic objective for Baku. At this point, the BTC and BTE pipelines serve to these decades-long mutual interests, while TANAP is accentuated as the next step for Ankara's ambitions to become a transit country and a direct opportunity for Azerbaijan to export its resources to Europe. Besides building the backbone of the Southern Gas Corridor, TANAP will also stand as another prominent route of gas supply for Turkish markets, hence forging the interdependence between Ankara and Baku. Another aspect of the pipeline projects is they serve to the mutual security interests of both

⁹⁰⁹Çeviköz, "Could Turkey Become a New Energy Trade Hub in South East Europe?," 70.

⁹¹⁰Fackrell, "Turkey and Regional Energy Security on the Road to 2023," 86.

⁹¹¹Fackrell, "Turkey and Regional Energy Security on the Road to 2023," 86.

⁹¹²Fackrell, "Turkey and Regional Energy Security on the Road to 2023," 86.

countries. While Turkey's foreign policy in the post-Cold War era has aimed to accomplish a plural regional order that loosens Moscow's grip over the ex-Soviet republics, newly independent such as Azerbaijan have also been intent to intensify their ties with the U.S and the E.U. The economic aspect of this geographical pluralism hinges upon pipeline projects with non-Russian routes. Overall, Turkey appears to have been quite successful by managing to benefit from geopolitical oil and gas games played in the Caspian region.⁹¹³ As Oktay Tanrisever expresses this successful performance of Turkey in establishing cooperation with Caspian states has occurred despite Ankara's limitations in its capabilities."⁹¹⁴ While energy dominates the discussions of interdependency between the two states, the inaugurated BTK railway plus the planned Lapis-Lazuli project aim to contribute to mutual interests in the area of transportation and forming transit corridors.

In recent foreign policy initiatives, Turkey pursues to exploit economic opportunities and interdependence by further institutionalizing its relations with the neighboring countries. The earliest efforts of Turkish political elite in the early 1990s was pioneering the Turkic Summits. In order to benefit from the historical and cultural accumulations of the Turkic geography, summits have commenced with the initiatives of Turkey, including Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyzstan. The first Turkic Summit was held in Ankara in 1992, with the subsequent meetings held until 2016. During the Nakhichevan Summit in 2009, in order to institutionalize the process, the Turkic states except Uzbekistan signed an agreement to establish the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States or Turkic

⁹¹³Ediger and Durmaz, "The New Geopolitical Game in the Caspian Region: Azerbaijan-Turkey Energy Relations,"148.

⁹¹⁴Ediger and Durmaz, "The New Geopolitical Game in the Caspian Region: Azerbaijan-Turkey Energy Relations,"148.

Council.⁹¹⁵ These Summits are convened with the participation at presidential and ministerial level.

Besides promotion of political solidarity, economic-related activities include working groups, forums, or exhibitions to improve the investment opportunities between member states, diversification of bilateral trade and entrepreneurship. The working groups of the Council also organize meetings among ministers of Transportation and customs administration. For instance, a Letter of Intent among Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkey, and Georgia on Promoting and Facilitating Trade among Silk Road Countries was signed in Istanbul in 2012, followed by, a “Joint Cooperation Protocol on Development of Transport among the Member States” and “Memorandum of Understanding on Sister Seaport Relations and Cooperation among the Ports of Baku, Aktau and Samsun” were signed in 2013.⁹¹⁶

Black Sea Economic Cooperation represents another attempt of Turkish foreign policy to advance her own economic and security objectives.⁹¹⁷ Through this mechanism, Ankara gathered two states in a dispute with each other; Azerbaijan and Armenia. Şükrü Elekdağ, a distinguished figure in Turkish diplomacy, the originator of the idea of the BSEC according to *Cumhuriyet* newspaper, asserted that acceleration gained with economic cooperation via the BSEC would pave the way for the resolution of political disputes among the member states.⁹¹⁸ According to Hale, though, it is hard to estimate the independent impact of the organization on the economic sphere, as the increase of Turkey’s overall trade volume with the BSEC

⁹¹⁵Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States, *Turkic Summits*.

⁹¹⁶Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States, *Customs and Transport Cooperation*.

⁹¹⁷Öniş, “Turkey in The Post-Cold War Era: In Search of Identity,” 51.

⁹¹⁸“Ülkelerarası işbirliği gelişir”.

states was mostly accounted by Russia alone between 1996 and 2010.⁹¹⁹ In addition, Hale finds the ambition of the BSEC that economic interdependence among the members would lead to a better political cooperation too optimistic to achieve in practice as complex contests exist between Turkey and Greece, between Russia and Ukraine and Georgia, and between Azerbaijan and Armenia.⁹²⁰

Turkey is also a member of Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), a cold war project initiated by Turkey, Iran, and Pakistan in 1985.⁹²¹ After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Azerbaijan, along with Central Asian republics and Afghanistan were invited by Turkey to promote economic, technical, and cultural cooperation.⁹²²

The growing interdependence between Turkey and Azerbaijan along with Georgia plus the strategic importance that they attribute to economic cooperation has led to the institutionalization of tri-lateral high level meetings.⁹²³ Ankara also established other multilateral dialogue platforms that include Baku such as Turkey-Azerbaijan-Georgia, Turkey-Azerbaijan-Iran, and Turkey-Azerbaijan-Turkmenistan meetings. High Level Strategic Cooperation Councils also consist an important part of AKP's policy towards the neighboring regions along with collaborative economic projects.⁹²⁴ As covered in the previous chapter, HLSC meetings have been annually set up with participation of Erdoğan and Aliyev, usually ending up several cooperation agreements being signed on various fields.

Lastly, since Azerbaijan's independence, as detailed in Chapter 3, Ankara always championed a liberal model for Baku in the post-Soviet era. Turkish state elite always supported the democratization process of Azerbaijan, its transition to

⁹¹⁹Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774*, 210.

⁹²⁰Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy since 1774*, 210.

⁹²¹Çeviköz, "Turkey in a Reconnecting Eurasia: Foreign Economic and Security Interests," 6.

⁹²²Çeviköz, "Turkey in a Reconnecting Eurasia: Foreign Economic and Security Interests," 6.

⁹²³Kirişçi and Moffatt, "Turkey and the South Caucasus: An Opportunity for Soft Regionalism?," 75.

⁹²⁴Aras and Akpınar, "The Relations between Turkey and the Caucasus," 55.

liberal market economy, and establishment of necessary institutions and reforms to attract international investment and trade. Moreover, Ankara has seen the Karabakh issue also through a liberal lens. Numerous Turkish politicians stressed the importance of a lasting solution to the conflict on the basis of international law, with an adherence to international norms such as human rights and preservation of territorial integrity against the use of force. Therefore, resisting the domestic calls of intervention, Ankara also aimed at preserving its international image; and demonstrated this internationalist stance with repetitive calls for international community each time the crisis exacerbates.

To conclude, Turkey-Azerbaijan relations closely fit the frame of complex interdependence suggested by Keohane and Nye. While, the use of military force has never been an option between two “brother” states, multiple channels of communication have fostered the ties since the collapse of the Soviet Bloc, prioritizing energy cooperation and large volume of mutual investments in recent years. As Çeviköz states, Turkey, by itself, is not a significant actor that affects global energy politics, but its geographical location and domestic need for energy imports, particularly in the field of natural gas make Turkey a key partner.⁹²⁵ These interests and advantages of Turkey is not contradictory to Baku’s energy policies to export more of its reserves, but rather complementary, which drives the formation of a complex network of interdependence. While the interdependence will be further enhanced by upcoming projects; TANAP, BTK, and new Silk Road initiatives, other liberal elements such as institutionalizing the relations, and promotion of regional stability, prosperity, cooperation, democracy, and free trade have also been the principal layers of the relationship since the 1990s.

⁹²⁵Çeviköz, “Could Turkey Become a New Energy Trade Hub in South East Europe?,” 76.

As mentioned in Chapter 2, analytic eclecticism offers a convergence point between the realist and liberalist approaches to international relations. Both traditions admit the anarchic structure in which self-interested rational actors respond to material interests. In this manner, while Turkey's self-interests push Ankara towards developing relations with Baku, Azerbaijan forms alliance with Turkey to pursue its own national goals. Particularly, both energy and Karabakh factors that are crucial for national securities of both states can be explained by both the realist and liberal lenses. Cooperation in energy sector stems from separate self-interests of the states. Regarding Ankara's aims for energy diversification and becoming an energy transit route, Azerbaijan plays a crucial role which is driven by Baku's own concerns; exporting its energy reserves to the West. Likewise, Karabakh issue on which Ankara and Baku are on the same side, while posing a threat to Azerbaijan's territorial integrity, indicates a security threat to Turkey who is already sensitive about being a unitary state. The conflict also threatens the economic concerns of both sides as trade routes and pipelines are put under risk. In addition, the influence of Moscow is another element of the regional politics, and both sides work with each other to counter balance Russia in the Southern Caucasus. Put differently, economic and security concerns of Ankara and Baku, which are privileged by realism, lead to strategic cooperation of the two states in an interdependent way, stressed by liberalism.

5.3 Constructivist take on

As elaborated in Chapter 2, constructivism assumes that group and state identities along with culture influence their political and economic interests. The "we" paradigm that is accentuated as One Nation, Two States is an evident fact, also

confirmed by the interviews of this project, along with the euphoria of Turkey in the face of Azerbaijan's independence and recurring sentimental reactions to the Karabakh conflict both in public opinion and political circles, indicating the very existence of ideational elements in the bilateral ties.

Although Pan-Turkism was dismissed throughout the post-Kemalist period by virtually all Turkish leaders, feelings of kinship with Turks living outside the boundaries of the Turkish state were proven to exist beyond the small circles of Pan-Turkists, as widespread among the population.⁹²⁶ With the demise of the Soviet Union, as Turkish foreign policy has paid significant attention to the Turkic Republics, a growing concern with the fate of these states also took its place.⁹²⁷ According to Öniş, the emergence of the Turkic republics helped Turkey to overcome its cultural isolation that stems from being neither Arab nor fully European, and Turkey has been able to find a group of states which it can relate to in cultural and economic terms.⁹²⁸ Frequent references were made to a "Turkic world as stretching from the Adriatic Sea to the Great Wall of China" by Turkish policymakers, analysts, and columnists. However, as far as Turkish foreign policy towards the Turkic world was concerned, there were elements of cultural pan-Turkism but not a political one. While recent public opinion polls have shown that Turks display very warm feelings for their Turkic kinsmen,⁹²⁹ among Turkic republics, Azerbaijan is the only country where people characterized themselves as Turks or Azerbaijani Turks.⁹³⁰ Moreover, it is the only country among the Turkic Republics that Turkey defines the relations as One Nation, Two States. What is

⁹²⁶Kushner, "Self-Perception and Identity in Contemporary Turkey," 226-227.

⁹²⁷Kushner, "Self-Perception and Identity in Contemporary Turkey," 228.

⁹²⁸Öniş, "Turkey in The Post-Cold War Era: In Search of Identity," 60.

⁹²⁹Balcer, "Between Energy and Soft Pan-Turkism: Turkey and the Turkic Republics," 156.

⁹³⁰Uzer, *Identity and Turkish Foreign Policy: The Kemalist Influence in Cyprus and the Caucasus*, 153.

more, this specific rhetoric has dominated the discourses of both sides through numerous statements of political elite since Azerbaijan's independence. Hence, culture and identity factors are considered as particularly important between Turkey and Azerbaijan compared to between the former's ties with other post-Soviet countries.⁹³¹ However, as expressed in the second chapter, neither pure realism nor pure idealism can account for a political behavior. While the ideological and cultural basis needs to be remembered as they represent Turkey's own self-perception; Turkish nationalism with strong racial and linguistic elements, there is no doubt that crucial political and economic factors lay behind the orientation of Turkish foreign policy towards the Turkic world.⁹³² To be more specific, as prominent analyst Mustafa Balbay expresses, it would be as wrong to approach Turkic republics with purely "fraternity in vessels" or to approach them solely for "oil in the pipelines."⁹³³ With respect to this view, this section attempts to identify any impact of the ideational factors such as identity on the bilateral relations, and doing business.

Cultural and ethnic elements form the base of the One Nation, Two States description. Yet, as Wendt argues, there are factors considered to facilitate the formation of "we" paradigm beyond the identification with self vs other. First, the famous rhetoric above has been reiterated countless times and embraced by all leaders from both side, each time helping describe the relations on a fraternal basis. The discourse has been used on various occasions; be it a leaders' summit, signing ceremony of an energy deal, or an official statement about the Karabakh case. Second, a common threat is argued to contribute to the formation of collective identity. The policies of Armenia can be conceived as a common threat to both

⁹³¹Balcer, "Between Energy and Soft Pan-Turkism: Turkey and the Turkic Republics," 153.

⁹³²Kushner, "Self-Perception and Identity in Contemporary Turkey," 228.

⁹³³Balbay "Gündem," April 5, 1999.

countries; to the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and regional security Ankara pursues to establish in its neighborhood. Therefore, Turkey takes a pro-Azerbaijani side in the international arena. Although security or material interests can lie at the foundation of this alliance, it still contributes to the salience of collective identity as the huge sympathy of the Turkish public opinion for Azerbaijan against the recurring conflict with Armenians in Karabakh and Moscow's intervention in 1990 has shown us since the 1990s. Put differently, security concerns of both sides are also accompanied with the sentimentality of Turkish society.

Wendt also claims that shared domestic values, or one seeing the other as a role model can contribute to ideational convergence between states. This claim can be observed in the Turkish-Azerbaijani relations, especially during the 1990s. Following the end of the Cold War, "Turkish model" as a democratic, secular, and free-market society presented to the young Turkic states and it was an important tool of Turkish foreign policy to increase Ankara's influence in the Turkic geography. Moreover, as Yanik points out, the "bridge" role Turkey adopted to integrate this geography with the West helped Ankara to justify its role in the newly independent Turkic geography.⁹³⁴ Correspondingly, this Western model of Turkey was embraced by Azerbaijani leaders; especially Elchibey and Heydar Aliyev who repeatedly expressed their desire to pursue a path similar to Turkey's. Of course, behind the promotion of the Turkish model by Ankara and its appreciation by Baku lies material and security interests of both sides, enhancing Ankara's regional power and development of Azerbaijan's economy in a secure environment. In addition, the lack of readiness in Europe to accept Turkey as a full member of the European Union has led to different reactions in Turkey; reorientation toward the Muslim world to some

⁹³⁴Yanik, "The Metamorphosis of Metaphors of Vision: "Bridging" Turkey's Location, Role and Identity After the End of the Cold War," 538.

extent, and attempts of the political elite to stress Turkey's position as a bridge between east and west.⁹³⁵ Still, it can be argued to contribute to the closeness of the two states. Moreover, Abdelal's study of the post-Soviet states puts forward the idea that national identity of states defines their foreign policy choices. In this regard, Elchibey's Turkist stance, though it lasted for short amount of time, can be fairly asserted to contribute to the "we" paradigm shared by Ankara and Baku. For instance, when Özal argued that the twenty-first century would be the century of the Turks and called for the creation of a Turkic common market, these ideas were not supported by the Turkic leaders except Elchibey.⁹³⁶ Other catalyst elements Wendt mentions for a collective identity are repeated acts of cooperation and interdependence. This argument also goes hand in hand with Sil and Katzenstein's convergence point of realism and constructivism. Eclectic approach contends that norm-guided behavior can emerge from material interests and rational action can be oriented towards socially constructed ideas such as identity and culture. Ankara's norm-guided behavior has been observed each time the tension in Karabakh escalates. Since the 1990s, Ankara favored a cooperative resolution process on an international level that is based on uninterrupted dialogue, peace, respect to territorial integrity and avoidance of use of force. Of course, beside the sympathy for their kinship, Turkish officials have been concerned about stability in their neighborhood of great importance. Furthermore, Wendt considered interdependence, repeated acts of cooperation, and rising trade and capital flows increase sensitivity to each other and accelerate actors to identify with each other. As covered above in previous sections, the most evident tokens of the bilateral ties have been the interdependency

⁹³⁵Kushner, "Self-Perception and Identity in Contemporary Turkey," 232.

⁹³⁶Uzer, *Identity and Turkish Foreign Policy: The Kemalist Influence in Cyprus and the Caucasus*, 160.

in energy and repeated acts of cooperation with reciprocal investments accompanying the sentimental dimension.

The interviews conducted for this paper strongly confirm the observations and claims listed above. As mentioned in the previous part, interviewees, especially diplomats, stress the fact that sentimental ties have initiated the bilateral relations in a strong way, and play a facilitator role in the relations, but it is the mutual strategic and economic interests and the consequent cooperation such as BTC that have maintained and consolidated the Turkish-Azerbaijani alliance. Without concrete steps in terms of regional projects, the One Nation, Two States slogan could have never been realized, according to interviews. Accordingly, Ankara's political and economic aid to Azerbaijan especially in the early 1990s has vindicated and flamed the rhetoric.

Familiarity with the local culture of Azerbaijan and other Turkic states is argued to provide Turkish entrepreneurs with a competitive edge over Western businessmen.⁹³⁷ Correspondingly, Mustafa Aydın argues that especially during the 1990s, Turkish businessmen's familiarity to Turkic language and culture enabled them to adapt to the risky business conditions and negotiation processes much easier than American and Europeans.⁹³⁸ This has also generated new partnerships between Western entrepreneurs and Turkish business circles in Turkic states as the former provides the necessary capital and technology while the Turks bring their cultural advantages and cheap labor forces to the table.⁹³⁹

Again, all these claims and more were affirmed by the interviews covered before. According to participants, ideational elements such as language, and cultural

⁹³⁷Winrow, "Turkey and the Newly Independent States of Central Asia and the Transcaucasus," 231.

⁹³⁸Aydın, "Kafkasya ve Orta Asya'yla İlişkiler," *Türk Dış Politikası: Cilt 2: 1980-2001*, 427.

⁹³⁹Aydın, "Kafkasya ve Orta Asya'yla İlişkiler," *Türk Dış Politikası: Cilt 2: 1980-2001*, 427.

familiarity definitely provide an advantage for Turkish businessmen and labour force imported from Turkey. Moreover, participants denote that welcoming business environment in Azerbaijan, especially in the 1990s, motivated Turkish businessmen to form partnerships and undertake big-scale projects. Having said this, interviewees confirm that fraternal political relations of Ankara and Baku certainly affects the commercial interactions and joint initiatives in Azerbaijan. In addition to all these, Turkish firms' easy adaptation to way of doing business and Azerbaijan bureaucracy in contrast with their Western competitors is underlined as another plus.

Nevertheless, at the end of the day, it is the strategic and material concerns that has been fostering the emotionally-based relationship, hence providing a solid basis for interactions. The interviews also support Wendt's claims about the facilitating factors for the "we paradigm" such as intense cooperation and confirm a convergence point of constructivism and realism from an eclectic viewpoint.

To sum up, through a realist eye, both states approached each other with strategic and pragmatic considerations. Naturally, Ankara sought the ways of securing its interests in Azerbaijan in the post-Cold War era. She endorsed the independence and sovereignty in Azerbaijan to counterbalance Russia in the region, to get a share of Caspian energy reserves, to evade the threat emanating from the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict for the regional security and prosperity, to improve her trade network in the new republics. Baku, on the other hand, welcomed Turkey's political and economic aid especially in the years of its independence, considered the latter as a gateway to West particularly for energy exports, and an ally in the international arena regarding the Karabakh conflict.

From a liberal point of view, the relations fit the complex interdependence framework. Based on the interests mentioned above, the relations have evolved into

regional energy projects that satisfy some of Turkey's energy need and desire to become an energy transit route along with Baku's primary foreign policy objective of monetizing her resources. Multiple channels of contact between the two countries, huge volumes of reciprocal investments, repeated acts of regional cooperation, numerous cooperation agreements in various fields, and shared stance with respect to Armenia factor have also enhanced this interdependence.

With regard to Turkey and Azerbaijan, constructivism also has much to say. As confirmed by the interviews, ethnic, cultural, and linguistic ties definitely played a facilitator role especially in the early 1990s enabling a potent initiation for the One Nation, Two States definition. In Turkish public opinion, the affinity has mostly manifested itself through reactions to the Karabakh case while interviews also point to a similar sentimentality in Azerbaijani people. Yet, this "we" paradigm has been maintained through repeated acts of cooperation that serve to mutual interests, shared regional perspectives, and upgrading of relations to level of strategic partnership.

At the commercial level, sentimental ties and cultural familiarity have provided advantages for Turkish businessmen in Azerbaijan. While language and culture is argued to enable an easy adaptation of entrepreneurs and labor force imported from Turkey, amicable political relations precipitate a welcoming business environment for Turkish firms in Azerbaijan. Moreover, confirming the dominance of liberal market expectations in Azerbaijan, interviewees also stress that Turkish companies are usually more adept at compliance to way of doing business and bureaucratic process in Azerbaijan.

Turkish-Azerbaijani relations, for the reasons stated above, stands as a fruitful case study for analytical eclecticism methodology as three paradigms have things to offer to evaluations. Through a realist viewpoint, Azerbaijan stands a buffer

zone to counter Russian influence in the region, an ally against the Armenia factor, an energy supplier for Turkey, both for domestic consumption and transit revenue, and export markets for Turkish goods and services. On the other hand, Azerbaijan, having no access to open seas to export its hydrocarbon resources, depends on routes via Turkey which is also an important market for Caspian reserves, while Baku sees Ankara as a regional ally against the Russian influence and Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. These foreign policy contours of both states are reinforced by what liberalism have to say about international relations. Ankara's desire to diversify its energy suppliers and to become a transit route between the east and the west, coupled with Azerbaijan's energy driven foreign policy have manifested itself as regional energy pipelines. While bilateral cooperation both at political and commercial level plus reciprocal and mutual investments dominate the relationship along with numerous point of contact between the two societies, no military issue privileged by realism takes place in Turkey-Azerbaijan links, apart from the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute. In this sense, building upon the realist considerations of the two countries, Turkey-Azerbaijan relations closely fits the complex interdependence advocated by liberalism. Ankara's promotion of liberal values for Azerbaijan's independence and sovereignty as well as territorial integrity should also be viewed as a part of a Turkish foreign policy to diminish the Russian influence in the region. In addition to these strategic and material interests, ideational elements such as Turkic identity, historical, cultural and linguistic affinity play a facilitator role in the bilateral ties, initiating the relations with a strong background which has been maintained and consolidated by mutual interests underlined by realist and liberal paradigms. In this sense, constructivist components contribute to formation of the "we" paradigm and

the rhetoric of One Nation, Two States that has been primarily vindicated by bilateral cooperation and the pursuit of self-interests.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

This project examined the relationship between ideational factors and economic relations via the case of Turkey-Azerbaijan bilateral relations. In doing this, the development of political, economic, and cultural links scrutinized in order to understand the current state and dynamics that have impact on commercial realm. The relevance of the cultural affinity to economic relations is investigated by conducting elite interviews with Turkish diplomats, businessmen and NGOs.

As Chapter 2 illustrates, different IR theories attempt to explain the foreign policy behavior of states through diverse lenses. While realism privileges foreign policy based on a rationality and self-interest in an anarchic world with no ideational factor playing a role in decision-making processes, liberalism emphasizes the state of interdependence and role of non-state actors that influence state policies, which today's global politics is experiencing. On the other hand, constructivism draws attention to influence of ideational elements such as ideology, identity, perception, and culture on state behavior, beside material factors. Based on these views, analytic eclecticism championed by Sil and Katzenstein, seeks to find out divergence points among these contending political explanations. This study too, prefers to adopt the method of analytic eclecticism as the complex relation between Turkey and Azerbaijan has elements privileged by the three contending theories elaborated previously.

Chapter 3 details the development of Turkish-Azerbaijani bilateral relations in a timeline. The emergence of the new Turkic republics has provided a new dimension for Turkish foreign policy. Among these republics, with the advantage of

geographical proximity, the “brother” Azerbaijan is evidently the closest one to Turkey with respect to political, economic, and cultural terms, despite some minor frictions. Turkey, welcoming the independence of “Outside Turks” with great euphoria, became the first state to recognize the Republic of Azerbaijan with a strong endorsement of the sovereignty and independence of the latter. Since the 1990s, Ankara has fostered ties with Baku on multifaceted and strategic level. Promoted as One Nation, Two States, the relations were crowned with more than 200 bilateral agreements in political, economic, and cultural areas. Ankara has provided considerable aid in the early years of the latter’s independence and has always taken a pro-Azerbaijani stance regarding the Karabakh issue. In addition to frequent high-level visits with amicable dialogue since the 1990s, mutual interests have paved the way for the inauguration of the milestone projects; BTC, BTE, TANAP, and BTK recently which have forged the links between the two countries, also enhanced by huge volume of reciprocal and mutual investments in various industries. On the other hand, with the 2000s, the relations evolved into an institutionalized form through various bilateral and trilateral cooperation mechanisms. In short, bilateral ties, which have been initiated by emotional factors have improved since the 1990s, maintained by mutual interests, and upgraded to the level of strategic partnership recently. As the fraternal discourse is always referred to as the definition of the ties, the question arises; what is the influence of Turkic identity on economic links?

Chapter 4 attempts to find an answer to this question by directly resorting to those who have in-depth experience in Turkey-Azerbaijan relations, either as a diplomat, businessman, or an NGO. Eleven interviews were conducted and their views are provided in detail here. The participants agreed on the fact that sentimental ties characterized by One Nation, Two States is not empty talk, as observed in acts of

of cheer such as the one in European games or through reactions of anger and disappointment as in the case of Karabakh reactions in Turkey or Turkish-Armenian rapprochement in 2009. According to interviews, sentimental ties have certainly enabled a strong initiation of the bilateral relations as a facilitator. However, being solely initiators, sentimentality is not enough to maintain and improve the ties, according to views; it needs to be consolidated by mutual strategic and material concerns at the end of the day, to serve a purpose in international relations. Through acts of aid, economic policies, and opening to Azerbaijan along with other new republics, launching strategic regional projects, and precipitating the legal framework for the commercial world, it is what Turkey has been doing since the early 1990s, enhancing the Turkish-Azerbaijani sentimental background with mutual strategic and material interests. Participants also outlined various advantages of Turkish companies operating in Azerbaijan, compared to their Western rivals. The sentimentality and Ankara's policies have precipitated a welcoming business environment for Turkish firms. No existence of language barrier and cultural familiarity ease the penetration to Azerbaijani markets and provide a convenience for labor force imported from Turkey. Geographical proximity also eases the import of material from Turkey while lowering costs of projects; a significant point in Azerbaijan's business world. Fraternal relations at the political level is argued to provide an advantage to Turkish entrepreneurs as they are claimed to have direct impact on commercial realm. Compared to Western firms, Turkish businessmen are repeatedly referred to for their easy adaptation to way of doing business and bureaucratic processes in Azerbaijan.

Equally important, all the participants acknowledge the dominance of liberal market dynamics in Azerbaijan. Accordingly, they state that the success of Turkish

firms is the direct result of their compliance with these liberal expectations. Well-known expertise of Turkish businessmen especially in the contracting and construction industries and their capability of delivering high-quality projects in a cheaper way and timely manner are pointed out as the primary reason of their preference. The expertise also stimulates another incentive in Azerbaijan, to gain know-how from their Turkish counterparts in joint projects. Without meeting business requirements, the sentimentality can only lead to disappointment in Azerbaijan. In short, sentimentality is an existent factor, but it needs to be fed by realist policies both in political and commercial realm in order to lead to a concrete result in Turkey-Azerbaijan ties.

Chapter 5, Analysis of Empirical Data through the Prism of IR Theory, attempts to examine the knowledge presented in previous chapters in a systematic way; through the lens of analytic eclecticism. Put differently, how assumptions privileged by contending paradigms define the same relations along with their effect on one another is illustrated here.

From a realist view, One Nation, Two States manifests itself as both states approached each other with pragmatic considerations and strategic interests. With the disintegration of the Soviet Bloc, Ankara always endorsed the independence and sovereignty in Azerbaijan to counterbalance Russia in the region, to get a share of Caspian energy resources, to evade the threat emanating from the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict for the sake of regional security and prosperity, to improve her trade network in the new republics. Baku, on the other hand, welcomed Turkey's political and economic aid especially in the years of its independence, considered Turkey as a bridge to the west particularly for energy exports, and an ally voice on the international arena regarding the Karabakh conflict.

Complex interdependence, built upon these national interests, privileged by liberalism in its explanation of world politics, also strongly enhance this One Nation, Two States motto. Since the 1990s, the parts have endeavored to accomplish joint energy projects which serve both to satisfy some of Turkey's energy need and ambition to become an energy transit route, and Baku's principal foreign policy objective of monetizing her energy reserves. Today, Turkey is a major transit route for Azerbaijani oil exported to the West and a significant buyer of Azerbaijan gas. In addition to two existing pipelines, TANAP is also underway to reinforce the interdependence along with newly inaugurated BTK railway project. Moreover, the two countries are among each other's top foreign investors; especially with huge volume of Azeri energy investments in Turkey and Turkish firms' operations in Azerbaijan especially in construction and contracting sector along with other industries. Having said these, the interviews all pointed to compliance of Turkish firms to liberal market dynamics as the reason of their success in Azerbaijan; the relevant expertise and delivering high-quality projects in a timely manner with cheaper prices than their Western rivals.

In this rational atmosphere of national interests and complex interdependence, the place of ideational factors is investigated as the ultimate question this study seeks an answer to. According to interviewees, cultural, ethnic, and linguistic ties have definitely played a facilitator role especially in the early 1990s. However, these ties, initiating the interaction in the post-Cold War era cannot be separated from mutual strategic interests that have enabled the continuation and consolidation of bilateral links on a material basis. Enhanced by the repeated acts of cooperation, amicable political ties and Armenia factor, the "we" paradigm has prepared a welcoming business environment for Turkish entrepreneurs in Azerbaijan.

Linguistic and cultural familiarity, accompanied by Turkish' firms easy adaptation to Azerbaijani bureaucracy and way of doing business, are pointed as the primary advantages of Turkish businessmen assuming their competitiveness under free market conditions.

Hence, the major finding of this study is that, historical and cultural links have certainly facilitated the formation of relations between Turkey and Azerbaijan both at the political and commercial level, but they have advanced thanks to pursuit of national interests that complement each other and Turkish businessmen's successful compliance to the competitive Azeri business world directed by liberal dynamics. Therefore, according to this study, One Nation, Two States discourse refers to an eclectic explanation of the relations; that is the formation of an alliance between two states, who require each other with their own strategic and material concerns, under the roof of being "one nation" that facilitates this cooperation.

Like in every academic study, this project also has its limitations. First of all, apart from mentioning sympathy of Turkish public opinion towards Azerbaijanis, it does not take domestic factors or contending political views in power into account in examining relations with Baku. A further eclectic research can be conducted taking into diverse political views such as nationalist, Kemalist, Islamist, Eurasianist, liberalist, and Westernist strands in Turkey and contending political backgrounds in Azerbaijan and their perception of Turkey-Azerbaijan relations. Likewise, the impact of third parties such as the EU, the U.S, Russia, or Iran is not illustrated in detail. Hence, this study limits itself solely to Turkey-Azerbaijan relations rather than an overall foreign policy analysis. A future research with a wider scope that examines the place of third-parties in the overall foreign policy contours of Ankara and Baku,

and economic relations would be more enlightening to find out the true weight of One Nation, Two States in the bilateral links.

The current research investigates the impact of ideational elements on economic relations. In doing so, considering the Turkish perspective, the interviews primarily focus on Turkish diplomats and businessmen operating in Azerbaijan rather than vice versa. However, a further project mostly sharing the views of Azerbaijani diplomats and businessmen having operated or still operating in Turkey, with regard to One Nation, Two States perception would be complimentary to the current project.

Lastly, taking the case of Turkey-Azerbaijan ties, this study has some implications for both theoretical viewpoint and Turkish foreign policy in general. Through a theoretical lens, the project stands as a case study that illustrates the influence of ideational elements such as identity and culture on material factors such as bilateral economic relations and commerce. From a practical view, the study has attempted to understand the relations between Turkey and Azerbaijan as well as the dynamics of a shared commercial world under a fraternal motto. In a broader context, future research that could use analytical eclecticism and a holistic view taking into consideration both material and non-material factors can improve our understanding of Turkish foreign policy in general. The foreign policy orientation of Turkey in recent years under the rule of AKP that prioritizes Middle East and Arab world over developing ties with the West has definitely an ideational aspect along with material incentives. Likewise, Ankara's relations with Israel can offer eclectic explanations as the former provides a clear support for Palestine while maintaining economic ties with Israel. Recent developments with regard to Russia and Eurasia, on the other hand, have risen debates about whether Ankara government is turning

away from the West in favor of the powers of the East. Turkey's interest in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Eurasian Economic Union, and Ankara purchasing S-400 missiles from Russia despite the reactions of NATO all can offer an eclectic understanding of Turkey's Eurasia perception coupled with material incentives. Moreover, taking holistic approaches such as analytic eclecticism seems more explanatory for countries like Turkey that shares various ideational commonalities with many others while having diverse foreign policy perceptions of contending ideological views at the domestic level. Hence, proving the influence of non-material factors such as identity, historical or racial ties on political and economic relations, a thorough meaning of Turkey's international relations and special labels such as One Nation, Two States can be put forward.

APPENDIX A

STATEMENTS IN THEIR ORIGINAL LANGUAGE

1. Süleyman Demirel (1992, April 27)

Bugün Türk Dünyası için tarihi bir gündür. Adiyatik'ten Çin'e kadar uzanan geniş coğrafya alanına yayılmış olan ve bağımsızlıklarına yeni kavuşmuş bulunan kardeş ülkeler, tek bir kulak, tek bir yürek olma imkanı ile karşı karşıyadır. Kader buralardaki kardeşlerimizi bizlerden ayrı düşürmüştür... Ortak dil, kültür ve inançlarımız bizi birbirimize kenetleyen bağlar teşkil eder... Asırlarca birbirlerinden ayrı kalmış, aynı medeniyetin, aynı kültürün, aynı inancın, aynı beraberliğin insanlarını biraraya getirecek köprü vazifesi yapacaktır Türkiye. Tabii ki Sovyet İmparatorluğunun çöküşünden sonra meydana gelen bu cumhuriyetlerin bağımsızlığına kavuşmuş olması, bizim için fevkalade sevinç vericidir... Biz bu ülkeleri idare edecek değiliz. Biz onların bağımsızlıklarını koruyarak, kendi ayakları üzerinde durmalarını istiyoruz. Her türlü manevi desteği, her türlü moral desteği onlara sağlayacağız.

2. Turgut Özal (1993, April 4)

1991 yılı sonbaharında bağımsızlığını kazanan bu cumhuriyetleri ziyaret edecek ilk Türkiye Cumhurbaşkanı olmaktan gurur duyuyorum... Sovyetler Birliği'nin dağılmasıyla bağımsızlıklarını kazanmalarını coşkuyla karşıladığımız kardeş cumhuriyetler... Türkiye de, ortak tarih, kültür, dil ve din bağları olan söz konusu cumhuriyetlere, bu yeni dönemde imkanları ölçüsünde yardımcı olmayı ve destek sağlamayı, siyasi ve manevi bir görev bildi.

3. Turgut Özal (1992, October 30)

Türkiye, yeniden tarih sahnesine çıkan egemen ve bağımsız kardeş cumhuriyetleri kucaklamakta gecikmemeye özen gösterdi... Egemen kardeş cumhuriyetlerle ilk temasa geçen, onları ilk kutlayan, onlarla ilk diplomatik ilişki kuran ve oralarda ilk Büyükelçiliklerini açan ülke Türkiye oldu. Bundan, haklı bir gurur duymaktayız... Zira bu ziyaretler sırasında ülkelerimiz arasında bir dizi belge imzalandı..ticari, ekonomik, kültürel, bilimsel vs. çok yönlü ikili ilişkilerimizin hukuki temellerini attık...Ancak, bizler yine de henüz işin başındayız kanısındayım..Bizler bu Zirve Toplantısında öncelikle ekonomik işbirliği üzerine eğilebiliriz sanıyorum...Çok taraflı işbirliği için el ele vermek şüphesiz ki kardeş halklarımızın yararına olacaktır...Hedefimiz ülkelerimiz arasındaki ekonomik duvarların kaldırılması ve nihayet aramızda bir serbest ticaret düzeni kurulması olmalıdır...Mevcut demiryolu ve karayolu bağlantılarını geliştirmeliyiz...Azerbaycan, Kazakistan, Özbekistan ve Türkmenistan petrolünün Türkiye üzerinden Akdeniz'e ve Avrupa'ya sevk edilmesi imkanlarını süratle incelemeliyiz. Türkmenistan ve diğer ülkelerdeki doğalgazın Türkiye üzerinden Avrupa'ya boru hattı ile nakli için paralel çalışmaları başlatmalıyız...İnsanlarımız bize umut bağlıyor. Bizler, halklarımızın büyük beklentilerini, büyük umutlarını boşa çıkaramayız.

4. Abdullah Gül (2007, November 6)

Bizler gerçekten bir milletiz, iki devletiz, aslında iki devletten de daha fazlayız... Azerbaycan'ın toprak bütünlüğü Türkiye için çok önemlidir. Azerbaycan için neyse, Türkiye için de böyledir. Bu vesileyle şunu da ifade etmek isterim ki; Azeri Türklerin kanayan yarası dinmeden Türkiye de hiçbir zaman huzur içinde

olmayacaktır... gnk dnyada ayrı devletler ierisinde olabiliriz ama iřbirlięi yapmak, kardeřlięimizi, dostluęumuzu gstermek, dayanıřmamızı gstermek mmkndr. Bu siyaseten de mmkndr, ekonomik iřbirlięi řeklinde de mmkndr, kltrel alanda da mmkndr... Burada Sayın Aliyev'e teřekkr ediyorum. Bazı iřadamlarınız buradalar. Bugn 140 iřadamıyla beraber geldik. Bir kısmı ancak burada. Onlar da řunu ok iyi biliyorlar ki, sizlerin verdięiniz imknlar sayesinde burayı zaten kendi vatanları, kendi evleri gibi grdkleri iin burada byk yatırımlar yaptılar, byk iřleri bitirdiler... Kltrel sahada da biz o kadar birbirimize baęlıyız ki, iřte ben Trke konuřuyorum, siz de Trke konuřuyorsunuz, birbirimizi anlıyoruz. Televizyonlarımız her iki lkede takip ediliyor. ęrenci programları erevesi ierisinde yzlerce, binlerce ęrenci hem Trkiye'de hem Azerbaycan'da tahsil grmektedir. Trk okulları ok bařarılı bir řekilde buralarda Azeri kardeřlerimizin eęitim hizmetlerindedir. Yine niversiteler arasında ok iyi iřbirlięi vardır. Btn bunlarla ok byk bir gurur duyuyorum.

5. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (2009, May 14)

Bu kardeřlik hissiyatımı Trkiye'nin ve Azerbaycan'ın byk řairlerinin dizeleriyle de ifade etmek istiyorum. Merhum Bahtiyar Vahapzade ne gzel sylemiř: 'Dinimiz bir, dilimiz bir, ayımız bir, ilimiz bir, eřkimiz bir, yolumuz bir, Azerbaycan-Trkiye, Bir milletiz iki devlet, Aynı arzu aynı niyet'... Bařbakan Erdoğan, ne yazık ki son dnemlerde speklatif ve yalan haberler zerinden bu kardeřlik ikliminin glgelenmeye alıřılmasına řahit olunduęunu belirterek, "adeta bir bardak suda fırtınalar koparıldıęını" syledi... Can kardeřlerim, Trkiye'nin her řeyden nce Karabaę'dan vazgemesi gibi bir keyfiyetin telaffuz edilmesi bile bizlere byk bir utantır. Bu iftirayı aıka bir kez daha huzurlarınızda reddediyorum... Trkiye-

Ermenistan kapısı ne zaman kapanmıştır? Ne zaman ki Yukarı Karabağ tamamıyla Ermenistan'ın işgali altına girmiştir, ondan sonra kapılar kapanmıştır. Dolayısıyla bu ortadan kalktığında o zaman kapılar açılır veyahut biz Azeri kardeşlerimizle bu noktada mutabık kalmadığımız sürece bir adım atamayız. Bunlar birbirleriyle bağlantılıdır, ayrı düşünülemez... Çünkü biz bir milletiz, iki devletiz. Bu anlayışımız bizim bir temeldir. Bu temelde bir değişiklik yoktur, olamaz... Tek gayemiz, bir yandan Türkiye ile Ermenistan arasındaki ilişkilerin normalleşmesi yönünde ilerleme kaydederken, bir yandan da Yukarı Karabağ sorununun Azerbaycan'ın toprak bütünlüğü esasında çözümü için uygun şartların oluşturulmasıdır. Bu at başı giderse biz varız, aksi takdirde biz yokuz.

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS IN THEIR ORIGINAL LANGUAGE

- İkili ilişkilerde "Bir millet, İki devlet" söyleminin önemi nedir?
- Azerbaycan'da iş dünyasında ve projelerde Türklerin tercih edilme nedenleri nelerdir ve Türklük bu tercihlerde ne gibi bir rol oynamaktadır veya bir avantaj sağlamakta mıdır?

1. Halil Akıncı

(Retired ambassador. He served the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as ambassador to Slovenia, India, Russia, as director General, as an advisor. After he retired in 2010, Akıncı had been appointed as secretary general of Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States (Turkic Council) for three years.)

Tarihi bağlar ve Azerbaycan'da Türkçülük kavramı 20. yüzyılın çok öncesine uzuyor. Öncelikle bunu bilmemiz lazım. Eskiden beri "biz Türküz" damarı var. Bu damarın dil açısından en fazla görünür olduğu yer de Türk coğrafyasında Azerbaycan'dır. Kırım ve Kazan Türklerinin yanı sıra, bizim milliyetçiliği öğrendiğimiz halklardan biridir Azerbaycan Türkleri. Mesela, Ahmet Ağaoğlu, ya da Ahmet Agayev, Türk milliyetçiliğinin önde gelen isimlerindendir. Kısacası Azerbaycan Türkleri'nin bize hep ciddi bir alaka ve ilgileri vardır. Duygusal tarafta önemli olan karşılıklı çıkar yaratmaktır. Bizim duygusal tarafımızla karşılıklı çıkarlar pekişti. Bugün Azerbaycan'a gitsem, gene "Çırpınırdı Karadeniz" desem onlar ağlar, ben ağlarım. Ama eğer çıkarlarımız uygun değilse, ertesi gün ben başkasıyla iş birliği yapsam daha iyi olur der.

Duygusal taraf, karşılıklı çıkarlarla desteklenmediği zaman uçuverir veya tam tersine döner. Bizim devlet politikası olarak yaptığımız karşılıklı ekonomik çıkarlar yaratmaktır. Benim Türk Dili Konuşan Ülkeler İşbirliği Konseyi'nde ilk yaptığım işlerden birisi ekonomi bakanlarını ve ulaştırma bakanlarını toplamaktı. Bunlar somut şeylerdir. Kültürel işbirliğinin yanı sıra, benim orda yaptığım, bir entegrasyonun altyapısını hazırlamak. Duygusal boyutu bir "facilitator" olarak almak gerekir. İlişkileri kurduran ama sürdürmek için yeterli olmayan. Muhakkak gerçekçi bir tabana oturtulması gerekir. Şunu da söylemek lazım bu duygusal boyut Azerbaycan'a Türk kamuoyu üzerinde bir güç sağlar.

Azerbaycan Türkleri ile Türkiye Türkleri iş dünyası iyi anlaşılır, bunun sebeplerinden biri de Türkiye'den gidenlerin oradaki bürokratik süreçlere aşina olması ve kolay uyum sağlamasıdır. Şunu da bilmek lazım, Türk dünyasında ateş yukarıdan yakılır. Siyasi seviyede kurulan ilişkilerin iyi olması ekonomik ve ticari bağları doğrudan etkiler.

Birbirini iyi anlama, ortak dil meselesi hala Azerbaycan'da önemli bir yardımcımız. Tabii ki Azerbaycan yüksek teknoloji konusunda Batı ile işbirliği yapacaktır ama konu bölgesel kalkınma olacaksa bu konuda onlara yardımcı olacak olan biziz. Ekonomik yardım, askeri işbirliği, Ermeni meselesi, İran meselesi hala bizi birleştiren unsurlar. İstesek te istemesek te birbirimize güvenilir müttefik muamelesi yapmak durumundayız. Tekrar edecek olursak, duygusallık işi başlatır, onun pekişmesi ortak çıkarla olur. Bu duygusallık Türkiye'yi Ermenistan'a müdahale ettirmiyor.

2. Özdem Sanberk

(Retired ambassador. Sanberk has served the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in various places such as Madrid, Amman, Bonn, Brussels, Paris, and London. He was also appointed to different offices in OECD and UNESCO, served as the foreign policy chief advisor to Prime Minister Özal, ambassador to the European Union, and permanent undersecretary at the ministry.)

Bu söylemin bir karşılığı var, bu boş bir söylem değil. Karşılığı var ama fazla da abartılacak bir şey değil. Bunun da çok basit bir sebebi var, Azerbaycan değince biz zannediyoruz ki Azerbaycan yekpare "iki devlet, bir millet" söylemini benimsemiş insanlardan oluşan bir topluluk. Oysa Azerbaycan'ın etnik yapısına bakmak lazım ki farklı etnik yapılardan oluşan bir toplum. Orta Asya'dan gelen çok önemli bir grubun yanında yine Orta Asya'dan ve Kafkas kökenden olup bu Türk boyuna ait olmayan da önemli bir grup var. Elçibey'i gördüğümüz zaman bu söylem bir nevi onun şahsında tecessüm ediyor. Aslında öyle bir şey yok. Azerbaycan'da türklüğe bağlı olmayan hatta onu sevmeyen birçok kesim var. Önemli bir nokta da Türklerin bir çoğunun Sünni/ Hanefi dindar olması ve Azerbaycan'da bunun hemen hemen olmaması. Çoğunluğu Şii olmasıyla beraber bunların bir çoğu dindar değil. Nitekim Komünist sistemin bıraktığı bir miras var. Bu tabi "iki devlet, bir millet" söyleminin kapsamını daraltan ve kültürün tüm öğelerini kapsamayan bir unsurdur. Ama başka kapsadığı şeyler var, bunun da basında dil geliyor. Yine de Azerbaycan'ın çok kültürlü yapısından dolayı - ki bunu anlamadan bu sloganı anlamamız mümkün değil- bu söylemin ırksal açıdan tam bir karşılığı yok. Burada unutulmaması gereken Rus kültürünün hem entelektüel hem de sanat alanında Azerbaycan'da hakim olmasıdır. Bu doğrultuda Rusça onların öz dili aslında. Aydın olupta Rusça bilmeyen yok. Tabii ki Türkiye'nin eğitim ve dil politikalarıyla dil orada biraz değişti. Ama

onlar Rusça düşünürler. Bu da sloganın etkisini azaltır. Bunlar karşılığı olmayan şeyler. Ama bütün bunlara rağmen, bu sloganın karşılığı olan şeyler var. Sovyet döneminde batı dünyasının liberal değerleri Orta Asya ve Kafkaslara gitmedi. Ama Azerbaycan'a Gürcistan ve Ermenistan ile birlikte bu değerler Türkiye'ye komşu oldukları için gitti. Dikkat ederseniz yalnız bu üç ülkede Sovyet zamanında muhalefet oldu. Bunlara ek olarak Elçibey esasında Türk milliyetçisiydi. Kurduğu parti de bu ideolojideydi. Fakat bizdeki algıya karşın, bu partinin temsil ettiği ideoloji resmin küçük bir parçasıydı. Azerbaycan bağımsızlığı ilan ettiğinde son derece fakir ve perişan bir haldeydi. Türkiye bu dönemde Azerbaycan ve diğer yeni devletlere büyük yardımlar yaptı. Bu yardımlar aslında Elçibey ve etrafı "vindicated" oldular. Dediler ki bak aynı millet dediğimiz insanlar yanımızdalar. Bu yardımlarla Azerbaycan'da bu algı yaratıldı. Bu sloganın oluşmasında asıl sebep budur. Bu yardımlar tabii Türkiye'nin 5 ayaklı stratejisinin bir parçasıydı. Moskova'ya alternatif ulaşım kanalları, alternatif iletişim kanalları, alternatif kültür platformu, alternatif ticaret, ekonomik ve bankacılık kanalları ve alternatif enerji ilişkileri kurma bu 5 ayaklı stratejisidir. Bu bağlamda Türkiye Sovyet sonrası için hazırlıksız yakalandı görüşüne kesinlikle katılmıyorum. THY seferlerinin başlatılması, faks, telefon, telex irtibatları, başlatılan televizyon yayınları, bankacılık hizmetleri Eximbank'ın kurulması ve tüm bunların ikili ticareti kolaylaştırması bu stratejinin parçasıdır. Bütün bunlarla Elçibey "bak, geliyor adamlar, bunlar bizim gerçek dostumuzdur" demiştir. Ruslar ve Amerikalılar gelmedi. Türkiye bu noktada, imkanlarının farkında olarak, Amerika'yı da bölgeyle ilgilenmeye teşvik etmiştir. Elçibey 'de ülkesini Rus boyunduruğundan kurtarıp dünyaya, bir taban bulduğu, Türkiye üzerinden açılabileceğini düşünmüştür. Aslında iki taraf ta birbirine pragmatik olarak yaklaşmıştır. Türkiye ilk başlarda burada tek başına ve çokta olumlu olarak at

koşturdu. Bunun karşılığında da enerji anlaşmaları yapıldı. Bakıldığı zaman Türkiye'nin o dönemdeki politikaları başarılı denilebilir.

Aliyev ise milliyetçilikle hiç alakası olmayan bir kişidir. Elçibey'in ilişkilerde Türkiye'ye öncelik vermesini yanlış buldu. İran'ı da Rusya'yı da, Amerika'yı da kapsayan politikalar benimsedi, ki bu bizim de teşvik ettiğimiz bir durumdu. Türkiye aslında Aliyev iktidarını öngörmüş ve buna hazırlanmıştır. Türkiye bu dönemde ilişkilerini daha gerçekçi sınırlara oturtmaya çalışmıştır ve çıkarlarımız, Ermenistan faktörü dahil, bu söylemle birleşmiştir.

Bununla birlikte, Ermenistan ile sınırların kapatılmasında da tek bir sebep yoktur. Türkiye bölgenin toprak bütünlüğünü, istikrarını ve refahını esas alan bir politika izlemiştir. Bundan dolayı Azerbaycan'ı desteklerken Ermenistan'ı da destekledik. Fakat Ermenistan'ın Karabağ'da yaptıkları, Türkiye'den toprak talepleri, Rusya faktörü ve karşılığı olan bir duygusallık, Türkiye'nin sınırları kapatmasına sebep olmuştur. Dediğim gibi bu olayın tek bir sebebi yoktur. Bölgenin çıkarlarını koruyan barışçıl bir politikadır bu.

Bu sorunun [Türklük Azerbaycan da iş yapmak için bir avantaj mıdır?] tek bir cevabı yok. Türklük orada iş yapmak için esas sebep değildir. Esas sebebi 5 ayaklı stratejimizdir. Açılan ulaşım ve iletişim kanalları, yapılan yardımlar, bankacılık faaliyetleri, ve ekonomik ilişkilerinin yürümesi için gerekli olan hukuki altyapıyı oluşturmak adına ilk yıllarda imzalanan sayısız ikili anlaşma esas sebeplerdir, duygusallık bunlara eklenmiştir. Çifte vergilerin önlenmesi veya yatırımların garanti edilmesi gibi ticareti düzenleyen anlaşmalar, uçak, telgraf gibi kanallar iş adamlarımızın orada büyük işler yapmasının önünü açmıştır. Dil ve duygusal arka plan bu durumun asıl sebebi değildir ama formülün içindedir.

Toparlamak gerekirse, Türkiye Aliyev'le birlikte ilişkileri sınırlı duygusallıktan çıkarmış olup karşılıklı çıkar temeline oturtmuştur. Yani ilişkilerimiz normalleşmiştir. Duygusal bağlar kaybolmamakla birlikte realist sınırlara çekilmiştir. Bugün baktığımız zaman da Erdoğan'ın dindar söylemlerini Azerbaycan'ın kabul etmesi mümkün değildir. Ve AK Parti'nin İslamcı söylemlerinin ikili ilişkilerin gerçek potansiyeline ulaşmamasında da payı olduğu rahatlıkla söylenebilir.

3. Ünal Çeviköz

(Retired ambassador. Çeviköz has served the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in various places such as Moscow, Sofia, Baku, Bagdad, and London. He was also appointed to different offices in NATO, served as deputy director general for Caucasus and Central Asia, deputy undersecretary for Bilateral Political Affairs. In 2009, Çeviköz prepared the protocols signed between Turkey and Armenia.)

Azerbaycan ile Türkiye arasındaki ticari ve ekonomik ilişkilerde "Türk" olmak veya kültürel yakınlık iki ülke açısından farklı etkilere sahiptir. Türkiye'den bakıldığında "tek millet iki devlet" sloganı duygusal bir yaklaşım ve samimiyetle sarılan bir slogan olarak öne çıkıyor. Azerbaycan tarafında ise bu slogan tatbikatta gerçekçi ve pragmatik bir anlayışla hayata geçiyor. Herhangi bir ticari ilişkide Azerbaycan kendi hukuk düzenini gerekçe olarak göstererek ortaya engel çıktığından söz ettiğinde Türkiye tarafı bunun aşılmasını bekliyor, aşılamayınca da hayal kırıklığına uğruyor. Bunun en bariz örneği vize uygulamasıdır. Türkiye Azerbaycan vatandaşlarına karşı vize uygulamamakta, ancak Azerbaycan Türkiye Cumhuriyeti vatandaşlarına aynı şekilde mukabele etmemektedir.

Türkiye'den Azerbaycan'a iş yapmak için giden ya da böyle bir ilişki içinde olup da başka uluslardan gerçek veya tüzel kişiliklerle rekabet içinde olan

vatandaşlarımız Azerbaycan'da sırf Türk oldukları için kayırılmayı bekleyebilirler. Böyle bir beklenti ve özel avantajlar sağlanması arzusu da bazen hayal kırıklıkları ile sonuçlanabilmektedir. Zira Azerbaycan özellikle etnik ya da ulusal kimlik üzerinden iş ve ticari ilişkiler kurulması anlayışı içinde değildir.

Azerbaycan'ın bağımsızlığını kazandığı ilk yıllarda Türk iş adamlarının bu gibi kazanımları olmuştur. Bunun sebebi Azerbaycan'ın yeni bağımsızlığını kazandığı dönemlerde dil ve kültür bakımından daha kolay anlayabildiğini düşündüğü Türk ortaklara daha olumlu bakılmasından kaynaklanmıştır. Zaman içinde bu unsur üzerinden kazanım elde edebilme olanağı azalmıştır. Türkiye'den Azerbaycan'a giden yatırımcıların ilerleyen yıllarda benzer kazanımları sürdürebilmelerinin sebebi Azerbaycan'daki anlayışı kavramaları ve ihalelere bu anlayışa uygun projelerle katılmalarından kaynaklanmaktadır.

Uyumun kolay sağlanmasının başlıca nedenini dil ve kültür oluşturmaktadır. Türkiye'de hakim olan iş anlayışı ve uygulamaları Azerbaycan'daki ortama yakındır. Bu da iş yapma ve iş sonuçlandırma yol ve yöntemleri bakımından birbirlerini daha iyi anlayan ortaklar arasında bir ilişki sonucunu doğurabilmektedir.

4. Alper Coşkun

(Ambassador. Before serving as ambassador to Baku between 2012-2016, Coşkun was appointed as deputy permanent representative in NATO, and deputy director of Intelligence and Security Affairs Section at the ministry. As of 2017, Coşkun serves as the director of International Security Affairs at the ministry.)

Türkiye ile Azerbaycan arasında ciddi ve çok kolay tespit edilebilen duygusal bir bağ var. İki ülkenin tarihin akışı içerisindeki yerleri, ölçekleri ve konumları farklı olduğu için bu duygusallık farklı şekilde tezahür edebiliyor. Azerbaycan uzun

tarihine rağmen genç bir cumhuriyet. Bu durumda Azerbaycan'da beklenti düzeyi Türkiye'ye nazaran daha güçlü olabiliyor. Bu tabii olarak "kırlanlık" ve "alınanlık" potansiyelinin Azerbaycan'da daha fazla olmasına neden olabiliyor. Ama konunuzun cevabı olarak, bu bağlar ilk adımlar atılırken etkili olabiliyor ve ilişkilerde bir hassasiyet yaratıyor. Fakat iki ülkenin potansiyeline baktığımız zaman ticari anlamda daha yapılacak çok fazla şey olduğunu söylemek mümkün.

Karşılıklı sevgi ve muhabbet çok derin olunca ilişkilerde başlangıç aşaması çok kuvvetli bir hal alıyor ama ortada çok ciddi projeler olduğu için bu heyecanı soğuklukla tahlil etmek lazım. Ama sorunun cevabı olarak bu yakınlığın çok ciddi bir zemin oluşturduğu aşikar.

İş adamlarımızın sağladığı tabii ki çok ciddi avantajlar var, dil bunların başında geliyor. Bunun yanında Türkiye'nin dinamik bir ekonomi olarak algılanması, iş adamlarımızın girişkenliği de önemli faktörler. Ama ilk attığınız adımdan itibaren herhangi bir yerdekine nazaran çok daha dikkatle ve heyecanla izlendiğiniz bir ortama gelmiş oluyorsunuz. Dolayısıyla iş adamlarımız avantajlarıyla birlikte çok ağır bir sorumluluğun da altına girmiş oluyor.

Türkiye özellikle doksanlarda rol model yaklaşımını çok benimsemiş ve dillendirmiştir. Bu rol model alımında duygusal boyut önemli bir başlangıç oluşturmuşsa da neticede herkesin karnının doyması gerekir. Kardeşlik çok güzel bir payda ama yetmiyor. Türkiye'nin bu noktada hem siyasi hem de iş dünyası olarak attığı ciddi adımlar olmuştur, ciddi yardımlar yapılmıştır ve o rolü layıkıyla doldurabilmiştir diyebilirim. Ama beklentiler hep en yukarıdadır ve o rol hiçbir zaman tam olarak doldurulamaz.

Şunu da tekrar söylemek lazım. Duygusal payda bir yere kadar. Bakü-Tiflis-Ceyhan projesi gibi üst düzey yatırım ve ticari kararlar alınırken, uluslararası siyasi

dengeler tabii ki gözetilmiştir fakat Türkiye'ye olan güven ve bir kader birliği algısı da kanaatimce belirleyici olmuştur. Ama eğer ticari ve güven bakımından bir anlam taşınmasaydı, tek başına bunlar yeterli olmazdı. Diğer bütün kulvarların olumlu göstergelerinin karara bağlanmasında ortak payda bence çok etkili olmuştur. Sonuçta bunlar bir araya geldiğinde kararı kolaylaştıran unsurlar.

Azerbaycan Türkiye ile bir projeye girecekse sıkı pazarlık yapar. Stratejik alanlar dışında proje fiyatları çok yüksek kaçarsa ihaleyi size vermez. Ama stratejik alanlar vardır, BTC, TANAP ve BTK gibi. Bu tarz projelerin maliyeti daha yüksek olmasına karşın Azerbaycan bunların Türkiye ile yapılması iradesini sergiler. Türkiye'de aynı şeyi yapar. Bu da son derece doğaldır çünkü ortak bir kader algısı vardır her iki tarafta da.

Ermenistan ile 2009'da başlatılan normalleşme sürecinde de Azerbaycan tarafında ciddi bir kırgınlık olmuştur. Derin bir iz bırakmıştır. Bu noktada her iki tarafın beklentileri tam olarak örtüşmüyor. Azerbaycan kendisinin ekarte edecek bir yaklaşım sergilendiğini düşünmüş ve bu noktada sevgi gibi kızgınlık en yüksek seviyede olmuştur. Bu tabii Türkiye tarafında kızılmaması gereken bir şey, Azerbaycan'daki etkisini ve beklenti düzeyini gösteren bir şey. Ama şunu da onlara da defaat le ifade ettim, Türkiye'de Azerbaycan'ın çıkarlarına ters bir karar bilinci olarak alınmaz. Sadece izlenilen yöntem farklı olabilir. Sonuç olarak herhangi iki ülke arasında anlaşmazlıklar olabiliyor ve bunlar çok doğaldır.

5. Akkan Süver:

(President of the Marmara Group Foundation. Süver is the founder of Eurasian Economic Summits. Dr. Süver has the title of honorary Ph.D. from various

universities in Azerbaijan and has been honored with the Friendship Order by İlham Aliyev.)

Azerbaycan ile Türkiye arasında ölçülemez bir dostluk vardır. Bu dostluk Elçibey döneminde başlamış olup, özellikle rahmetli Haydar Aliyev döneminde çok daha fazla gelişmiştir. Bakü-Ceyhan-Tiflis bu anlamda çok önemlidir. Yıllar geçmesiyle birlikte bugün ilişkiler doruk noktasındadır. TANAP, BTK, ve iki ülkede yapılan inşaat ve enerji yatırımları da bugün bunun en önemli işaretlerleridir. İkili ilişkilerde iki taraf ta dikkatlidir, iki taraf ta saygılıdır.

Bazı anılarımı sizlerle paylaşmak isterim. Viyana'da uluslararası konferans olurken, Ermenistan Cumhurbaşkanı neden Türkiye yok dediği zaman, İlham Aliyev ayağa kalkar ve "ben burdayım ya" der. Veya, bu beni çok etkileyen bir örnektir, Eurovizyon da birinci olan Azerbaycanlı gençler, ki onlar Londra'da yaşıyorlar, sahneye davet edildiklerinde doğal bir refleksle Türk tarafının yanına gidip bir bayrak alıyorlar oradan ve sahneye Türk bayrağıyla çıkıyorlar. Ben bunların planlı olduğunu düşünmüyorum. Yine bir anımı daha sizlerle anlatayım. Bakü'de Avrupa Oyunları'nın açılışına gittiğim zamanki yaşadığım bir olayı da hiç unutamam. Katılan bütün ülkeler stadta çıkıp bayraklarını sırayla geçit töreninde dalgalandırıyorlardı. O ülkenin şeref tribünündeki temsilcisi de o anda ayağa kalkıp onları selamlıyordu. Sıra Türk kafilesine geldiği anda ise, yetmiş bin kişilik bütün stadyum ayağa kalktı. Ve bütün millet "Türkiye, Türkiye" diye tezahürat yapmaya başladı. Tüylerimiz diken diken olmuştu. Bunlar planlı olamazdı, içten gelen bir duyguydu. Bu bağlar gerçek ve bu bağların küçümsenecek veya burun kıvrılacak bir tarafı yok. Atatürk'e de özel bir saygı duyarlar ve onu modern Türk devletinin kurucusu olarak görürler.

Elbette liberal ekonominin kuralları her yerde işler. Parada akrabalık olmaz. İki tarafta çok başarılı projelere imza attılar. Türk iş adamları orada çok iyi karşılanmıştır, buna şüphe yoktur. Şahsen çok iyi ağırlandım, çok iyi davranıldım. Yine de iş adamlarının deneyimleri kişiden kişiye değişir, iyi insanlarla çalışırsınız, memnun kalırsınız, çalışmazsanız memnuniyetiniz farklı olur. Ama Azerbaycanlılar Türk olmakla övünen insanlardır, bunu da unutmamak lazım. Biz gerçekten iki devlet, tek milletiz.

6. Nurengiz Eşki

(Turkey-Azerbaijan Business Council Coordinator at Foreign Economic Relations Board (DEIK))

Azerbaycan Türk iş adamlarının neredeyse dil bakımından hiç zorlanmadıkları bir ülke. Zaten herkes Türkçe konuşuyor, beklemediği şekilde iyi anlaşabiliyor. Kültürel konuda da aynı rahatlık söz konusu. Zaten kapılar açılınca ilk tercih edilen ülke Azerbaycan'dır. Geçmişte yaşanan bazı olumsuz örneklerle rağmen, bizim coğrafyada herkes Türklerin iyi iş yaptıklarını, kaliteli mal ürettiklerini biliyor. Yalnız doksanlarda bu yana çok şey değişti, hem Azerbaycan hem Türkiye'de. Dışarıya çok fazla açıldılar. Refah seviyesi çok yükseldi. Türkler artık ilk tercih olmamaya başladı. Prestij çok önemlidir. Mesela moda da İtalyan yada Fransız ürünleri Azerbaycan'da on plandadır. İnşaat sektörü için konuşursak, Türklerin çok iyi olduğunu, hem hızlı hem kaliteli iş çıkardığını herkes bilir. Kendi elemanlarını yetiştirmek için de ihaleleri Azerbaycanlı şirketlerle birlikte olmak kaydıyla Türklere verdikleri durumlar çok sık oluyor. İhalelerde fiyat ve kalite konusunda dengeli olduğumuzu söyleyebilirim. Azerbaycan'daki marketlerde çok fazla Türk mali var. Tercih sebebinde damak zevkine uygunluğun yanı sıra Türk kanal ve dizilerinin de

etkisi var. Bu doğrultuda Türk kanallarının tüketimde kesinlikle etkisi olduğunu söyleyebiliriz.

7. Mustafa Parapan

(Deputy General Manager at ANEL Group. Parapan has been working at big-scale contracting projects in Azerbaijan since the early 2000s.)

Öncelikle şunu ifade etmek gerekir ki Azerbaycan halkı bizi çok seviyor ve olumlu bakıyorlar. Ayrıca ülkenin yakın olmasından dolayı oraya sağlayacağımız malzeme ve iş gücü Türkiye'den rahat gidiyor. Götürdüğünüz iş gücünün de hiç bir dil bariyeri ile karşılaşmaması da Türk firmaları için büyük kolaylıklar sağlıyor. Orayı küçük bir Türkiye gibi düşünebiliriz. Devletle iş yaparken takip edilen yollar Batı'da daha keskindir, Azerbaycan'da ise bu sınırlar daha yumuşaktır ve Azerbaycan'daki bu alışkanlığı Türkler bir avantaja çevirebiliyorlar diyebiliriz.

Fiyat her zaman Azerbaycan'da öncelikli konulardan biridir ve Türkler pahalı olsa bile kesinlikle tercih edilir diyemeyiz. İhalelerde kalite önemli koşuldur fakat fiyat ile birlikte tercihler belirlenir. Fakat bunun yanında Azerbaycanlı firmalar Türklerle çalışmak istiyorlar, onlar için de dil bariyeri ortadan kalkmış oluyor ve bizi tercih etmek için fiyatları daha uygun hale getirmemizi bekledikleri durumlar olabiliyor. Ama öncelikli olarak işin kalitesinin ve fiyatının uygun olması gerekiyor. Zaten Türkler inşaat sektöründe projeleri Batılı firmalara göre daha yüksek kaliteyi ucuza mal ettikleri, daha ucuz iş gücü getirebildikleri için genellikle tercih ediliyorlar. Önemli bir noktada işin yapım tarafını genellikle Türklere fakat proje tarafını Batılı firmalara veriyorlar. Doksanlardan beri inşaat sektöründe Türklerin bir tık önde olmalarının sebebi mal ve hizmet alımını kendi ülkemizden gerçekleştiriyor olabilmemizdir. Bu durum Batılı firmalarla rekabette ciddi maliyet farkı ortaya

çıkartıyor ki Avrupa'da zaten üretim maliyetleri Türkiye'ye göre çok daha fazla. Kısacası Türk olmanın avantajlarını görmekle birlikte, orada iş yapabilmemiz için esas olarak Azerbaycan piyasa dinamiklerine uygun hareket etmeniz gerekmektedir.

8. Yalçın Bozduman

(Manager at ANEL Group. Bozduman has been leading contracting projects of ANEL since the early 2000s.)

Türk olmak Azerbaycan'da kesinlikle çok büyük bir avantaj sağlıyor. Azerbaycan tarihinde Türklerin önemli bir yeri var ve bizi çok seviyorlar. "Tek millet, iki devlet" sloganını benimsemiş durumdalar. Biz orada Azerbaycan'ı imar ediyoruz. İhalelerin bize verilmesinin ana sebebi Türklerin müteahhitlik alanında dünya çapında olması yatıyor. Dil birliği de çok ciddi bir avantaj sağlıyor. Bunun yanında Azerbaycan'lı firmalarında işi öğrenmek için Türk firmalarıyla çalışmak istemesi de bir tercih sebebi sayılabilir.

Fiyat konusu Azerbaycan'da çok önemli. Mesela Koreliler aynı projeyi daha ucuza yapıyorlarsa projeyi onlara veriyorlar. Ama fiyatlar çok yakın olduğu zaman Türkleri çağırıp "Biraz daha indirim yap biz seni tercih ediyorlar" dedikleri de olabiliyor. Yani noktayı koyarken serbest piyasa ekonomisi şartlarına Türkleri getirip Türklere veriyorlar. Ama başarılı türk firmaları yine söylüyorum, işi çok kaliteli yapan, hızlı yapan ve bunu iyi fiyatlarla yapan firmalar oluyor.

9. Mamed Abbasov

(Head of Baku Representative Office of AE Arma-Elektropanç. Abbasov has been working at/with Turkish firms in contracting and construction industries since 1992.)

İkili ekonomik ilişkilerde Türk olmak ve kültürel yakınlık kesinlikle bir avantaj sağlıyor. Türk şirketlerinin sayısının diğer ülke şirketlerine nazaran çok fazla olması bile bu yakınlığın bir göstergesidir. Doksanlı yıllarda Türkler çok büyük beklentilerle karşılanmakla beraber, bugün artan rekabetle birlikte, stratejik ve politik projeler hariç tutuyorum, fiyat, kalite ve serbest piyasa koşulları çok daha ön planda. Koreli firmanın ciddi fiyat avantajı varsa o proje Koreli'nindir. Şirketin prestiji de inşaat sektöründe çok önemli ve Türkler arasında çok iyi firmalar var. Birçok ihalede Türklerin rakipleri yine Türkler oluyor. Çünkü inşaat sektöründe prestijleri yüksek, ve yüksek kalitede iş çıkartıyorlar. Dahası, Türklerin Azerbaycan'da tercih edilmesinin önemli bir sebebi de politik ilişkilerin çok iyi olmasıdır. Bunun yanı sıra Türk kanallarının da etkisi olduğunu söyleyebiliriz.

10. Elchin Abbasov

(Technical Head of Performance Center in Azerbaijan. Being a popular figure in Azerbaijan regarding innovation and automobile industry, Abbasov appeared at numerous local TV broadcasts and TEDx talks as a speaker. He has been working with Turkish firms since the early 1990s in contracting projects.)

Ticari ilişkilerde en büyük avantaj dil birliğinin olmasıdır. Hem devlet hem de millet olarak Türk iş adamlarına ciddi bir destek var Azerbaycan'da. Türkler'in Azerbaycan'da tercih edilme sebebi duygusallıktan ziyade onlarla çalışmanın daha rahat olmasıdır. Hem yabancılara nazaran bürokratik süreçlere daha hakim olmaları, projelerde rahat anlaşmaya varılabilme, yüksek kalitede iş çıkarmaları ciddi bir

avantajdır. Fakat yabancı markaların global prestijleri de onların tercihini de zaman zaman kolaylaştırmaktadır. Unutulmamalıdır ki doksanlarda kapılar sadece Türkiye ile açıktı fakat şimdi imkanlar ve rekabet çok daha fazla. Bu bağlamda ticari ilişkiler duygusallıktan ziyade artık liberal bir bakış açısıyla yürüyor diyebiliriz. Yine de duygusal bir payın olduğu, bir yakınlığın hissedildiği kesindir.

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