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**THE ROLE OF PIVOTAL STATES IN AMERICAN
HEGEMONY: A CASE STUDY OF TURKEY**

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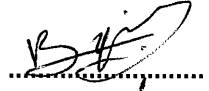
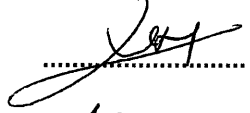
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I hereby declare that this master's thesis titled as “**THE ROLE OF PIVOTAL STATES IN AMERICAN HEGEMONY: A CASE STUDY OF TURKEY**” has been written by myself in accordance with the academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that all materials benefited in this thesis consist of the mentioned resources in the reference list. I verify all these with my honor.

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ABSTRACT

Master's Thesis

The Role of Pivotal States in American Hegemony: A Case Study of Turkey

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The Cold War which emerged with the end of the Second World War was concluded with the triumph of the United States, and it ultimately showed up as a leader of the unipolar world. However, the U.S. had to spend its resources to establish a new world order, to dominate the world and to extend its hegemonic control during this process that lasted more than forty years. Dealing with every country one by one and developing foreign policy in this direction have tired the U.S. out and now a more practical foreign policy has been required to maintain the current order. This new foreign policy aims to maintain U.S. world leadership and the continuation of its national interests by determining the pivotal states which have the capacity to affect their regions and neighboring countries with their advantageous locations and distinguishing features.

Turkey which is among the chosen states in this policy occupies a significant place due to its location and deep-rooted bilateral relations with the U.S. Besides, the U.S. pays particular attention to Turkey which connects Asia and Europe and forms a border with a very important geography, the Middle East, from which the U.S. derives benefits. As Turkey's pivotal status is indisputable, new Donald Trump Administration pursues an unfavorable

foreign policy that disregards Turkey's significance, sabotages the dialogue between the two countries, threatens Turkey's national security and still remains uncertain in international relations. In this study, I aim to scrutinize the current pivotal status of Turkey under existing conditions and U.S.-Turkish relations on the basis of the Syrian question.

Key Words: United States of America, Turkey, Syrian, Pivotal State, The Cold War, Foreign Policy, Donald Trump



ÖZET

Yüksek Lisans Tezi

Amerikan Hegemonyasında Eksen Ülkelerin Rolü: Türkiye Örneği

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İkinci Dünya Savaşı'nın sonundan itibaren ortaya çıkan Soğuk Savaş Amerika Birleşik Devletleri'nin zaferiyle sonuçlanmış ve ABD tek kutuplu dünyanın lideri olarak ortaya çıkmıştır. Ancak kırk yıldan fazla süren bu süreçte ABD, yeni dünya düzenini kurmak, dünyaya hükmetmek ve hegemonik kontrolünü genişletmek adına kaynaklarını bu yönde harcamak zorunda kalmıştır. Her devletle ayrı ayrı ilgilenmek ve bu doğrultuda dış politika geliştirmek ABD'yi yormuş ve mevcut düzenin devam ettirilebilmesi için yeni ve daha pratik bir dış politikanın geliştirilmesi hasıl olmuştur. Bu yeni dış politika, bulunduğu konum itibarıyla kendi bölgesini ve çevre ülkeleri etkileyebilen, ayırt edici özellikleriyle bölgesinde lider olarak kabul edilen eksen (pivotal) devletleri belirlemeyi ve bu devletler üzerinden Amerika'nın dünya liderliğini ve ulusal çıkarlarını devam ettirmeyi amaçlamaktadır.

Belirlenen bu eksen devletler arasında Türkiye, bulunduğu konum ve ABD ile sahip olduğu uzun ikili ilişkiler neticesinde çok önemli bir yere sahiptir. Bununla birlikte ABD, Asya ile Avrupa'yı birbirine bağlayan ve çıkarları açısından Orta Doğu gibi çok önemli bir coğrafyaya sınır olan Türkiye'ye özel önem vermektedir. Türkiye'nin eksen ülke olma özelliği tartışılmazken Donald Trump yönetimi Türkiye'nin önemini yok sayan, iki ülke arasındaki diyalogu

baltalayan, Türkiye'nin milli güvenliğini tehdit eden ve uluslararası ilişkiler açısından her geçen gün belirsizliğini koruyan negatif bir dış politika yürütmektedir. Bu tez, bir eksen ülke olarak Türkiye'nin mevcut şartlar altındaki konumunu ve Amerika Birleşik Devletleri ile Türkiye arasındaki ilişkileri Suriye platformu üzerinden incelemeyi hedeflemektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Amerika Birleşik Devletleri, Türkiye, Suriye, Eksen Ülke, Soğuk Savaş, Dış Politika, Donald Trump



**THE ROLE OF PIVOTAL STATES IN AMERICAN HEGEMONY:
A CASE STUDY OF TURKEY**

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ABBREVIATIONS

BRIC	Brazil, Russia, India and China
BTC	Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Pipeline
CENTCOM	United States Central Command
EU	European Union
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
KCK	Kurdistan Communities Union
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OECD	Organization of European Economic Cooperation
PKK	Kurdistan Workers' Party
PYD	The Democratic Union Party
SDF	Syrian Democratic Forces
UN	United Nations
U.S.A.	The United States of America
U.S.S.R.	The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WTO	World Trade Organization
YPG	The People's Protection Units

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INTRODUCTION

When the Second World War ended, the whole world encountered a bipolar world order. The British hegemony had already lost its existence and there emerged two new hegemonsin the stage of history: the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. This was, in the full sense of the word, a new era in the 20th century and it was called the Age of Hegemons. Therefore,the first chapter will deal with the concept of hegemony so as toprovide an infrastructure to the argument of the thesis. In order to internalize the meaning of American hegemony; general concept of hegemony, its meaning, functions and usage in both literature and international relations must be construed in the first place. By focusing on hegemony at the beginning of the study, I also aimed at describing the power relations between the countries and how hegemonic power has been exercised over the world.

The Second World War was a turning point in American history because the whole world uncomplicatedlyrealized that the United States, by owning various nuclear weapons, deterrent power and capability of eradicate everything in front of it, was an invincible and omnipotent power factor from that day forth.The world was also divided into two as the West and the East. Both the United States and the U.S.S.R. did their best to create an atmosphere for the world countries that forced them to be a part of one side. Both countriesgenerated a common perception that there was no way to be impartial. Accordingly,the whole world witnessed the lean times and was on the verge of anotherWorldWar many times. However, the Cold War period arrived at the conclusion with the collapse of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and the United States declared its world hegemony as a global superpower in a unipolar world.In the second chapter of this study my purpose is toexamine the disappearance of the British hegemony and the emergence of the American hegemony in the contemporary world history because the American hegemony constitutes the backbone of this study. I also aimed at explaining the reasons of the transfer of hegemony from the United Kingdom to the United States and how the American hegemony has evolved throughout the years and confirmed its power in the world.During this period, the United States cemented its world

hegemony with two effective tools: hard power and soft power. Hard power is its destructive atomic bombs, deterrent nuclear power and armaments. However, "Soft power rests on the ability to shape the preferences of others" (Nye, 2004: 5). The United States used its soft power such an extent that the whole world adopted its culture, habits, life style, value judgements, ideas and values in the strictest sense of the word. "If a leader represents values that others want to follow, it will cost less to lead" (Nye, 2004: 6). In other words, the United States became the leader of the free and democratic world and infused its hegemony into every corner of the globe. Since the end of the Cold War, by using its soft power strategy effectively the United States has made out to settle its set of rules and ideas and values in the world without trouble. Leading countries in the world have begun to imitate the image of America and accepted its hegemony voluntarily.

"The United States, of course, is the sole state with preeminence in every domain of power -- economic, military, diplomatic, ideological, technological, and cultural -- with the reach and capabilities to promote its interests in virtually every part of the world" (Huntington, 1999: 2). It is nearly impossible to find any country in the world that gathers four very significant power elements in its body at the same time; military, economic, political and soft power. However, if everything is fine and there is no need to worry about U.S. world leadership, why does it need a new and more practical foreign policy to maintain its hegemony and the current world order? In that case, in the third chapter of this study I aimed at explaining the need of a new foreign policy that the United States has to develop to sustain the current order. In its competition with the U.S.S.R. during the Cold War and then following the post-Cold War era, the United States has made use of its economic and military power, its valuable resources and has spent trillions of dollars in order to continue its hegemony and leadership in the world and this has become a desperate down-draw process. This omnipotent presence in every corner of the globe is unsustainable. The United States feels the need of finding a solution to rule the world with less labor, trouble and economic burden. "With the end of the Cold War and the consequent early end of the twentieth century (and even, according to some, the end of history) a new geopolitical framework, a new strategic construct, is needed" (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 379). In other words, the United States no longer wants to use its

resources to continue this unsustainable system and thus the concept of *the Pivotal States* has emerged in U.S. foreign policy. The United States needs to make a strategic plan to maintain its world hegemony by choosing specific countries in specific regions. These specific countries will be the protectors and the supporters of the current order and American national interests. In this context, the world has been divided into seven regions and nine states have been chosen as the pivotal states. Mexico, Brazil, Algeria, Egypt, South Africa, Turkey, India, Pakistan, and Indonesia have been chosen due to their geostrategic position, military power, population, size, and economic potential, capacity to affect regional and global issues. These countries have been chosen in the context of a broader foreign policy perspective and their possible success or failure will absolutely influence the future of their regions. “Yet the United States need not respond to every instance of chaos and instability in Latin America, Africa, and Asia. Limited resources prohibit it from doing so in any case. Instead, the United States should focus on pivotal states in the developing world”(Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 381). It is unnecessary and time wasting to be interested in every nation-state one by one. It takes a lot of time and effort. It will now be easier for the United States to stabilize the order in the remote regions by means of *the Pivotal States Policy*.

A pivotal state is a key player in its region. They are considered as a bridge that help establish stability in the region and create cooperation between the great powers and the Third World. In other words, the United States does not have to deal with, spend its money and resources and show special interest to tiny, destabilized and underdeveloped countries. It has its own pivotal states to penetrate these countries and help them improve their external and internal dynamics. On the other hand, it is possible to come across a common misconception in this policy that only the pivotal states are important and other countries are insignificant. It is worth noting that the pivotal states have the potential and strength to smooth away major regional problems, and they have strong territorial and regional sovereignty, economic and political power and are necessarily considered a regional leader among the countries in the region. Therefore, they deserve special American attention. “The United States should adopt a discriminative policy towards the developing world,

concentrating its energies on pivotal states rather than spreading its attention and resources over the globe” (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 35).

In this study, *Turkey as a Pivotal State* has been scrutinized in many aspects as well as other pivotal states and Turkey constitutes the main section of the third chapter. Turkey’s geostrategic, economic, political, cultural features and regional dynamics make it a shining star in this hot region. In other words, it is almost impossible for the great powers of the world to develop a foreign policy without Turkey’s involvement in this region. In that case, the United States has always needed Turkey’s alliance and strategic partnership to reach the Balkans, the Caucasus, and the Middle East since the end of the Second World War. Turkey was a significant member of NATO during the Cold War and was a valuable article for the Western bloc as a powerful ally against the Soviet Union and in the later years Turkey has become a main partner of the United States in regional issues. Turkey has always been extremely significant to the United States and the continuation of American influence in this region as well. “The United States considers Turkey as an active pivotal state because of having strategic position, regional power, crowded population, economic potential, and the capacity to affect regional and international stability” (Ayata and Ercan, 2007: 24). As a pivotal state, Turkey has a significant dominance over a huge geographical region and this centrality gives it a momentous role of stabilizing the regions of major instability and confusion. Turkey is situated in the center of the Balkans, the Aegean, the Caucasus, Syria, Iraq, Iran, Central Asia, Russia, and Europe and its pivotalness is instrumental in reaching a common ground between these critical regions and countries. Moreover, Turkey plays a vital role in bringing long-term peace and stability in the Middle East in which the United States has strategic interests. Peace and stability in the Middle East literally affect the peace of a very broad region, and most importantly the security of energy. In this case, If Turkey holds firm, its sphere of influence and periphery will ultimately see an ongoing peaceful atmosphere in the future. If something goes wrong and Turkey falls into a decline, this will have irrevocable repercussion effects and disturb the balance of the region for the long haul. In a nutshell, Turkey can necessarily be considered as the backbone of this pivotal state project because its possible instability or

vulnerability may create a domino effect in the region and this may turn into a regional and then international nuisance.

As there is no doubt that Turkey constitutes an integral part of U.S. foreign policy, new Donald Trump Administration makes light of its strategic partner and NATO ally in bilateral relations. Since he took office, Trump has continued to follow a policy of marginalizing and disregarding Turkey in key regional issues especially in Syrian Crisis and has cooperated with terrorist organizations (the PYD/YPG) to create so-called stability in the Middle East. However, Turkey is decisive to annihilate the formation of any terrorist groups around its borders. With his unbalanced statements, uncertain policy and disconnection between U.S. institutions, Trump Administration is seen as an unreliable partner and somehow a threat risk by the Turkish Government. The fourth chapter of this study aims to scrutinize the organic link between the PYD/YPG and the United States, U.S. military aid to terrorist organizations, and how these unfavorable steps have changed Turkish foreign policy and Turkey as a pivotal state. I also aimed at questioning the current pivotal status of Turkey under existing conditions and Turkey's deviation from the West and turning its face to the East by forming a regional alliance with Russia and Iran.

CHAPTER ONE

1.1.THE CONCEPT OF HEGEMONY

The power itself is the one and only means in international relations and hegemony may generally be considered as power by people. As a matter of fact, hegemony literally means leadership in its broad term and it is implicitly used to describe the power relations between the states in the world. "Hegemony is as old as mankind" (Brzezinski, 1997: 3). In order to figure out how the concept of hegemony has evolved over the years, it must be significant to brush up the pages of history.

The word "hegemony" was used originally to describe the relationship of Athens to the other Greek city-states that joined it in an alliance against the Persian Empire. "Hegemony" in this case "mean[t] that [Athens] organized and directed their combined efforts without securing permanent political power over the other[s]. (Ferguson, 2003).

"In Wallerstein's historical perspective, hegemonic power was exercised on three occasions in the modern world system: by the United Provinces in the mid-17th century, by Britain in the 19th century, and by the United States in the 20th century" (Strange, 1987: 558). However, its meaning, differently from the first usage in the ancient time and latter usage in modern time, turned into something political within years and "...by contrast, according to the 'world-system theory' of Immanuel Wallerstein, 'hegemony' means more than mere leadership but less than outright empire. A hegemonic power is a state ... able to impose its set of rules on the interstate system, and thereby create temporarily a new political order" (Ferguson, 2003).

"Hegemons not only aspire to leadership, are not only endowed with military, economic and other resources. They necessarily have to have political and socio-economic visions about their trans-national environments, and a political willingness to implement those visions" (Habib, 2003: 3). Hegemony is a widespread concept in economic, military, global or local spheres. It is frequently called as supremacy, leadership, dominance, power and so on. "The concept of "hegemony" adopted here, in contrast, refers specifically to the power of a state to exercise functions of leadership and governance over a system of sovereign states" (Arrighi, 2010: 28) It is

possible to come across many definitions and comments of the concept of hegemony in the survey of international relations. In order to illustrate the concept, it will be useful to attach some important definitions of the international relations theoreticians. "Hegemony is the best way for any state to guarantee its own survival" (Mearsheimer, 2001: 4). "Single power, possessing superiority of economic and military resources, implemented a plan for international order based on its interests and its vision of the world" (Keohane, 1984: 31). "Hegemony is an attractiveness that is obtained through exercising soft power" (Nye, 2004:12). "It is a condition in which one state enjoys exceptional material predominance; hegemony has been considered a threat to the viability of international society..." (Clark, 2011:1). "Hegemony (defined as the dominance of one state over others) is not a necessary condition for its continued existence. Thus, this approach gives significant weight to transnational social forces in its explanation of order and change in the global political economy" (Gill, 1992: 25).

However, the person who brought the word hegemony into political sphere was Antonio Gramsci, founding member of the Italian Communist Party. According to Gramsci "hegemony at a global level is not to be equated with mere material or military dominance (as in realism), nor is it to be regarded as a desirable public 'good' (as in neoliberal institutionalism) (Griffiths, 2000: 116). He has put forward a very different definition of hegemony and today's concept of hegemony in the world is generally perceived within this frame. "Gramsci used the concept of hegemony to express a unity between objective material forces and ethico-political ideas in which power based on dominance over production is rationalized through an ideology incorporating compromise or consensus between dominant and subordinate groups" (Griffiths, 2000: 116).

The key word ought to be understood in order to understand today's definition of hegemony. The key word is consent. The hegemonic power establishes common interests and aims and tries to convince other states to recognize them as their own. When cooperation and relationships between states increase, the concept of consent comes into prominence. "According to Gramsci, economic and political power are not enough to become hegemon or to continue it. The consent of dependent groups is also necessary" (Karacasulu, 2009: 60). In order to establish a

hegemonic order in the world, there must be the consent of other states and consensus among them. It is not possible to establish it by exercising oppression, disintegration or exclusion. It is also not possible to maintain it without international law and international organizations and institutions that bind every country in the world. Legitimization of hegemony by using legal, economic, military and political power is essential in order to pursue it. "At their peak, hegemons use their power to build frameworks of acceptable rules, institutions, and customary usages that will maintain economic order in money and trade" (Strange, 1987: 558)

It is possible to come across the usage of hegemony more often after the end of the Second World War. The reason is that the United States of America used its influence upon world politics by implementing the Marshall Plan (European Recovery Program) which aimed at recovering Europe from the depression of the war and the economic crisis. The United States tried to establish an order because if there were not an order, there would be a chaos. In this case, because the main concern of this study is American hegemony and its various effects upon the pivotal states, it will continue from (general) definition of hegemony to more specific one that is American hegemony.

CHAPTER TWO

2.1.AMERICAN HEGEMONY

The United States of America comes to the stage of history and becomes significant as a hegemon state three times in the 20th century; after the First World War, after the Second World War and after the Cold War. The First World War can be considered a period in which the United States planted its seeds to assert itself as a powerful and stable country. When it comes to the Second World War, the United States became a country that every human being in the world thought it was invincible, omnipotent and the leader of the free and democratic world. Ultimately, the end of the Cold War has declared that America is the one and only superpower of the world that no one can take a stand against it. In order to express the historical background of the hegemonic power of the United States, this chapter has been divided into three so that it will be easy to follow the stages and the process in which America has shown itself in history.

The international atmosphere in which this hegemony has first been felt becomes more of an issue when the condition of the 21st century is analyzed. As Gideon Rachman, who is a famous columnist of the New York Times, propounds as follows: “This has been a process in which capitalism, democracy and technology have developed at the same time and global peace has become the ultimate product” (Rachman, 2011: 5). In order to scrutinize the history of American hegemony, it will be quite useful to go back to the historical and cultural foundations of the nation. American hegemony definitely goes back to the Manifest Destiny, a political philosophy that is first put forth by John O. Sullivan. He asserts; “Our Manifest destiny is to overspread the continent allotted by Providence for the free development of our yearly multiplying millions” (O’Sullivan, 1845: 2). This notion supports that America has the right to expand on the continent where it lies and God himself has given this right to this privileged nation. It is a kind of divine responsibility to expand and rule the world. Thus, American people have established their thought upon this belief throughout the years.

Figure 1: An Epic Painting “American Progress” by John Gast in 1872



Source: Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress

People who came from Britain to the territory of the United States have a special place in American values and culture. From past to present, the relationship between England and the United States has always been different as it is compared to other nations. One of the most significant aspects that affects the creation of today's America has absolutely been the political, cultural, military and economic relationship between Britain and the United States. The expansionist policy of Britain has deeply affected the way America created its values, and this expansionism has always become a source of inspiration for them. About the Manifest Destiny, Rodney P. Carlisle and J. Geoffrey Golson also assert:

The roots of Manifest Destiny grew in English soil in the Old-World centuries before the British North American colonies transplanted the idea as part of the cultural baggage they brought to the New World. Ideas of military, political, and cultural dominance and the economic slave labor and indentured servant system that the British established in the New World are based on Manifest Destiny, as would be the British and later American attitudes and treatment of the Native American people. (Carlisle and Golson, 2007: 50)

American hegemony can best be understood if British hegemony is given a look in the first place because the values and notions that today's America has come from the former British Empire. "Britain was in a position of apparently unequalled dominance in an international system that has been characterized as unipolar. It was Europe's arbiter and possessor of a worldwide and unchallenged colonial empire..." (Layne, 1993: 20). Britain made the whole world accept its hegemony in the 18th and the first quarter of the 19th century by using its dominant role in industrial production and it ultimately became a financial center of the world. "Each moment of industrial expansion in England was integral to an ongoing financial expansion, restructuring, and reorganization of the capitalist world-economy, in which England was incorporated from the very start" (Arrighi, 2010: 214). "... 'gifts' of history and of geography made England a particularly suitable locale for one kind of industrial expansion or another" (Arrighi, 2010: 214). However, the invention of the steam engine, economic outcomes of the distribution of production and power, international politics are all alarm signals to cast a shadow over the British supremacy. "After 1880, there was among statesmen "a prevailing view of the world order which stressed struggle, change, competition, the use of force and the organization of national resources to enhance state power" (Layne, 1993: 21).

By the time the United States came out as a new power, British hegemony had already begun to lose its importance. One of the most important reason of this situation was that the means of production began to be transferred from Britain to the United States and this made America a prominent and a new shining power of the world. As Giovanni Arrighi states;

At the same time, the capacity of the United Kingdom to hold the center of the capitalist world-economy was being undermined by the emergence of a new national economy of greater wealth, size, and resources than its own. This was the United States, which developed into a sort of "black hole" with a power of attraction for the labor, capital, and entrepreneurship of Europe with which the United Kingdom, let alone less wealthy and powerful states, had few chances of competing. (Arrighi, 2010: 60)

The United States of America had many positive features to show up as a new world power. As soon as it obtained its freedom from the British Empire in the year of 1776, the first thing it did was to expand in the territory and use its various advantages.

Its continental dimension, its insularity, and its extremely favorable endowment of natural resources, as well as the policy consistently followed by its government of keeping the doors of the domestic market closed to foreign products but open to foreign capital, labor, and enterprise, had made it the main beneficiary of British free- trade imperialism. (Arrighi, 2010: 62)

After a long process of time, praiseworthy economic, social and military efforts that the United States carried out through the years ultimately showed themselves after the ends of the First and Second World Wars. That is to say, America made use of the two world wars so as to secure its position in the world. Therefore, first, it will be logical to put forth the place and the importance of the United States in the First World War. The United States began to be well heard in the international community especially in the First World War. In this period, the whole world needed a country that had a bright and planned economy, attracting social structure, powerful, responsible to its allies and finally yet importantly, a country that is strategically conscious. These fundamental characteristics can easily be regarded to make the United States a hegemonic country in the world. According to famous strategist Zbigniew Brzezinski;

During the twentieth century, America's global standing twice reached soaring heights. Its first occurrence was in the immediate aftermath of World War I, and its second was at the end of the Cold War. America's then new international status was symbolized by President Wilson's idealistic Fourteen Points, which contrasted sharply with Europe's imperial and colonial legacies. To the practitioners of international power, it was evident that America's militarily significant intervention in World War I and, even more, its preeminent role in defining new principles of national self-determination for the intra-European rearrangements of power marked the entry on the world scene of a mighty state endowed with unique ideological and material appeal. That appeal wasn't diminished even by the fact that for the first time the idealized America was closing its gates to foreign immigration. More important, so it briefly seemed, was that America's new global engagement had begun to reshape the basic patterns of international affairs. (Brzezinski, 2012: 40)

The First World War was the turning point in the hegemonic history of America because this war constitutes the historical background of American hegemony. "World War I and the postwar revolutions still formed part of the nineteenth century. The conflict of 1914-18 merely precipitated and immeasurably aggravated a crisis that it had not created" (Polanyi, 2001: 21). The war became a global war that would affect not only the warfighting countries but also the whole world. This war also brought about many radical and political changes to the countries. However, what really makes the First World War considerable in the history is that England was no

longer the hegemonic power at the end of the war. “The First World War simply transformed this regional supremacy into an instrumental of global dominance, primarily through the massive redistribution of assets from the declining to the rising hegemon brought about by the sale of wartime supplies” (Arrighi, 1999: 78). During the war, hegemonic power and its features began to be transferred from Britain to the United States especially in terms of military and economy. “The British state became heavily dependent on extensive military and economic resources coming from the American state” (O’Brien, P.K., and Clesse, A., 2002: 153). In this case, Britain became the biggest debtor country; the other way around, the United States became the biggest creditor country of the world. The roles changed irrevocably. Not only the United States advanced money to the warfighting countries, it also sold out many weapons and war equipment. In addition to this, London lost its importance as a financial center and left its position to New York as an international financial center. Consequently, achievements of wartime trade, economic growth and the opportunities of overseas expansion had been evaluated in a proper way by the United States and both the winners and losers were in debt with it. It wouldn’t be wrong to propound that America became the bank of the world, that is to say, an economic superpower. It also increased its power in the Pacific and it became a sole power in South America. Production and the increase in wealth created a general affluence in the country. In the light of these developments, it cannot be gainsaid that the role of Britain in managing and controlling money, power, international relations and politics was handed over to the United States and Britain was no longer regarded as a sole hegemonic power in the world. In spite of the fact that the United States got out of the war as a superpower, the transfer of hegemonic mission was still partial at that time, yet complete transfer would be after the Second World War.

However, the result that the First World War brought about did not bring peace but a long-drawn out tension among countries.

The dissolution of the system of world economy which had been in progress since 1900 was responsible for the political tension that exploded in 1914; the outcome of the War and the Treaties had eased that tension superficially by eliminating German competition while aggravating the causes of tension and thereby vastly increasing the political and economic impediments to peace. (Polanyi, 2001: 22)

Europe was in complete destruction when everything was over. The hegemonic structure that the United States established after the war, Fordist accumulation regime and Keynesian economic model would help Europe resolve the destructive effects of crisis. “Fordist production entailed an intensified industrial division of labor: it required increased mechanization and coordination of large scale manufacturing processes (e.g., sequential machining operations and converging assembly lines) to achieve a steady flow of production” (Rupert, 2000: 24). The economic performance and success that the United States set forth and consequently the wealth increased the irresistibility of capitalism and strengthened its position. Other industrial countries in the world also took this model as an example inevitably. “The promise of massive increases in productivity led to the widespread imitation and adaptation of Ford’s basic model of production through the industrial core of the US economy, and in other industrial capitalist countries” (Rupert, 2000: 25).

If the truth were known, when it is looked back on the history, the results of the First World War prepared the reasons of the Second World War in the proper meaning of the word. Because of the fact that they were fiercely punished due to the First World War, “By the early 1930s the rapidly rearming and increasingly revisionist Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia were already plotting against the status quo” (Brzezinski, 2012: 25). Besides, economic, political and military events that happened in almost every part of the world revealed that the world was going to a kind of confrontation again which was later called the Second World War. “When war erupted in Europe, and the United States did not intervene as France and Britain became embroiled in conflict with Germany and Italy, Japan noticed. America, it seemed, wanted neutrality: perhaps they would overlook expansions in Asia” (Smith and Laurier, 2001: 9). American people did not want their country to go to war again as well because they had some significant concerns. “Some public opinion held that America had been dragged into World War I by arms manufacturers and business opportunists seeking profits, and no one wanted to repeat that scenario” (Poolos. 2008: 36). However, “On December 7, 1941, at 07.50 hrs., the situation exploded. Within hours, the United States was no longer neutral” (Smith and Laurier, 2001: 9). The United States was attacked by Japan and went to war undoubtedly. This incident also became the determinant of the bottom line. “The project would cost an estimated

\$2 billion and contribute not only to the end of World War II (1939–1945) but also to the United States' prominence as a world power for decades to come" (Poolos, 2008: 21). At the end, the United States used atomic bombs against Japan, ended the war and became the most influential and powerful country of the whole world. Yet surprisingly, the United States could not easily go back to its continent after the war because of the insistence of its European allies. They wanted America to save themselves against Soviet threat. "Coupled with this common threat was the common understanding that only the United States possessed the power to deter it. For most Europeans, and for most of America's Asian allies, too, America's widely agreed-upon role as principal defender against the Soviet threat gave it a very broad mantle of legitimacy" (Kagan, 2004: 110). Thus, European countries ensured their own safety by agreeing the leadership of the United States. A strategic anti-communist alliance was put into practice between European countries and the United States. In addition, global market mechanism, which was in the hands of the United States anymore, began to be shaped after the Second World War. When all is said and done, America benefited a lot from this global crisis and declared its supremacy, yet now coming up next was the Cold War after which the United States came to existence as a superpower of the world and attained its majority globally, militarily, economically, politically and ideologically.

"Explanations for the onset of the Cold War must begin with World War II. A conflict that ranks, by any conceivable measure, as the most destructive in human history, World War II brought unparalleled levels of death, devastation, privation, and disorder" (McMahon, 2003: 1). After the Second World War, the whole world clearly understood that the United States, by owning nuclear weapons, deterrent power and capability of destroy everything in front of it, was an invincible and omnipotent power factor in the world. "Complementing the common strategic threat was a common ideological threat. During the Cold War the United States prided itself on being the "leader of the free world" against the totalitarian world, and most Europeans agreed" (Kagan, 2004: 110). However, on the other side, there was a Soviet side that had the power to sweep over all Europe with its huge armed forces and technology. Just after the Second World War, two ideologically different opposed blocs emerged in the world stage and this rivalry would be called the Cold

War. They got into a competition in almost every sphere such as economy, politics, armament (atomic weapons, long-range missiles) technology, aviation etc. to assert dominance. However, when it comes to the explanation of hegemonic power, one of the most significant points of this period for American hegemony is that the United States used its power as a tool for the free world and laid the groundwork of its ideology. Both the United States and the U.S.S.R. tried to create an atmosphere for the world countries that forced them to be a part of one side. They created a perception that there was no way to be impartial. In this situation, the United States symbolized the free and developed West and had a role to strengthen the Western countries from the crisis of the war. "This level of expenditure was necessary to avert "economic, social and political" chaos in Europe, contain communism, prevent the collapse of America's export trade, and achieve the goal of multilateralism" (Hogan, 1989: 42). Thus, Europe would stand on its own feet and preserve its independence politically from the U.S.S.R. and communism. By undertaking that kind of mission, the United States also began to set the rules of international politics. In addition to that, the expenditures that the United States incurred in defense, armament, foreign trade and economic aid were immensely skyrocketed.

The Cold War is breaking point for American hegemony in terms of a show of strength. Because of the fact that America used its destructive atomic bombs on Japan, it aroused the whole world's attention and made them fear of itself. The United States literally strengthened its hegemony by using its tough side. Besides, in addition to that tough side, it also exercised a soft power to redesign the world the way it wanted. "Soft power rests on the ability to shape the preferences of others" (Nye, 2004: 5).

Soft power is a staple of daily democratic politics. The ability to establish preferences tends to be associated with intangible assets such as an attractive personality, culture, political values and institutions, and policies that are seen as legitimate or having moral authority. If a leader represents values that others want to follow, it will cost less to lead. (Nye, 2004: 6)

Instead of threatening or intimidating the countries it wanted to pull up, the United States used its soft power to establish its hegemony. "Soft power uses a different type of currency (not force, not money) to engender cooperation-an attraction to shared values and the justness and duty of contributing to the achievement of those values"

(Nye, 2004: 7). Following the post-Cold War era, the United States easily succeeded to settle its set of rules, ideas and values among the other states by means of its soft power strategy. One of the most significant example of this situation is that nearly all European countries and other developing countries tried to be close to the United States and they were in a competition to take part in NATO because they thought it was a prestigious condition to be in that powerful organization. To illustrate, Turkey was one of those countries to take part in NATO at that time. These countries tried to imitate the image of America and accepted its values as their own. This is an explicit example of soft power that the hegemon country convinces a country without forcing and makes them accept its goals, values, culture and position as their own. It is possible to state that soft power equals to consent. "It is the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments. It arises from the attractiveness of a country's culture, political ideals, and policies. When our policies are seen as legitimate in the eyes of others, our soft power is enhanced" (Nye, 2004: x).

When the U.S.S.R. fell apart and the Cold War ended, according to many, the United States emerged as the only global superpower and this period was also called; "Not only the twentieth century but even the twenty-first century then seemed destined to be the American century" (Brzezinski, 2012: 6). Just because of a turning point in American history, the Cold War era has always been one of the most referred topic in international relations. After the end of the Cold War, a new term has been coined for the rivalry between the United States and Russian Federation, which is *warm war*. This term has begun to be used in many international articles and news media. Lastly, together with analyzing of the importance of the Cold War, American hegemony is studied in three parts historically. Now it will be favorable to scrutinize the foundations of American hegemony.

"The United States, of course, is the sole state with preeminence in every domain of power -- economic, military, diplomatic, ideological, technological, and cultural -- with the reach and capabilities to promote its interests in virtually every part of the world" (Huntington, 1999: 2). The United States of America is an exceptional and superior country in many aspects. According to Brzezinski; "The troika of a hegemon are money, production capacity, and military power"

(Brzezinski, 2004: 87). However, Susan Strange expresses that “America ensures its hegemonic capacity through its own structural power enabled by security, production, finance, and knowledge capacity in international economy-politics exceeding regional dimensions” (Strange, 1987: 565). Over and above this, there are some other significant points that make America a true hegemonic power. For instance; *dollar* is an international unit of currency and because America has an immense political and economic power, this currency has become a world-wide medium of exchange. The United States of America has military troops and bases all around the world as well as owning nuclear weapons in order to pursue its power and hegemony. “The United States maintains a military force primarily to protect the homeland from attack and to protect its interests abroad” (Wood, 2016). Since the Second World War, America has become a leader and a strong intermediary of international and local crisis. When a crisis happens somewhere in the world, other countries feel the need of America to solve it or find a compromise. This clearly shows its superiority. When something happens and America does not wish it to be happened or this incident is against its interests, *the super power* immediately objects and pro-American countries, the pivotal states and periphery countries show strong support to it. Exceptions do not break the rule, yet its political power is so strong that the countries that America help financially feel obliged to support its world policy unconditionally. Furthermore, its cultural influence has been accepted by the whole world and American life style and cultural elements have always been identified with the Western values and ideas. This influence shows itself everywhere from eating and drinking habits, clothes, spare time activities to news media, film industry, family order and so on. If it is taken into account all of these factors, it is nearly impossible to find any country in the world that gathers four very significant power elements in its body; military, economic, political and soft power.

In this chapter, the components of hegemonic power and the global hegemony of the U.S. have generally been summarized in terms of global dynamics of the world, however what makes *the Policy of Pivotal States* come to light in U.S. foreign policy is the decline of the United States itself. It doesn't mean a complete collapse or destruction. Its decline stands for that the United States has used its economic, political and military power and resources so much in order to become the

world's superpower and this situation has clearly made it worn out throughout the years. In addition to this, some substantial global incidents have also made the U.S. run down. Since 1945, the U.S. has spent huge amounts of money to sustain its dominance in some very critical regions in Asia, Africa and Europe due to the necessity of its hegemonic world role. To illustrate, in order to pursue the containment policy in the Cold War, the U.S. spent trillions of dollars to strengthen the military capabilities of Europe and other countries. "The term "particularly heavy" is rather subjective; in fact, United States expenditures for nuclear weapons and weapons-related programs between 1940 and 1996 consumed nearly \$5.5 trillion in adjusted 1996 dollars" (Schwartz, 1999). In the meanwhile, the Vietnam War, for example, was a big disappointment and loss for the superpower. The details are explained as follows:

The Department of Defense (DOD) reports that the United States spent about \$168 billion (worth around \$950 billion in 2011 dollars). However, \$168 billion was only the direct cost. According to Indochina Newsletter of Asia Resource Center, the United States spent from \$350 billion to \$900 billion in total including veterans' benefits and interest. Out of 2,594,000 personnel who served in Vietnam, there were 58,220 Americans dead, 153,303 wounded and 1,643 missing. More than 23,214 soldiers suffered one hundred percent disabled. (Rohn, 2014)

Besides, lengthy wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have dealt big blow to the economy of the U.S. "The lives of 6,852 American military personnel - not to mention immense financial expense, estimated to be as high as \$6 trillion" (Bryant, 2015). The attack and destruction of the Twin Towers in 2001 and the collapse of Lehman Brothers in 2008 were also a big strike to the morale and again to the economy of the U.S. "In a survey of estimates by The New York Times, the answer is \$3.3 trillion, or about \$7 million for every dollar Al Qaeda spent planning and executing the attacks" (Carter and Cox, 2011). "Lehman went bust with \$613 billion of debt, of which \$160 billion was unsecured bonds held by an array of investors around the world" (Collins, 2011: 227).

The 20th century was the American Century in many ways. However, "With the end of the Cold War and the consequent early end of the twentieth century (and even, according to some, the end of history) a new geopolitical framework, a new strategic construct, is needed" (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 379). According

to the long-term U.S. foreign policy, the 21st century also needs a more collaborative and strong order urgently when the current developments are taken into account. The U.S. is no longer willing to execute its leadership in some messy regions of the world. The U.S. no longer wants to use its resources to continue this system. It is unquestionable that the system of omnipotent responsibility is unsustainable. Therefore, the U.S. needs to make a strategic plan to maintain the status quo by determining specific countries in specific regions. These specific countries will be the protector and the supporter of the current order and American national interests. "Even though a conservative focus on the major players is required, the rest of the world cannot simply be ignored" (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 381). Order and stability of the rest of the world will be regulated via pivotal states. "Yet the United States need not respond to every instance of chaos and instability in Latin America, Africa, and Asia. Limited resources prohibit it from doing so in any case. Instead, the United States should focus on pivotal states in the developing world" (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 381).

In this day and age, the U.S. is still growing in many areas, but other countries in the developing world are growing faster. New regional and global powers and strong rivals such as China, Russia, Iran have begun to come to the forefront in the world markets and politics and if the U.S. tries to struggle with all of them alone and spends all its resources, it will languish as a superpower and lose its dominant role in the long run. Instead, the U.S. has chosen some specific and significant countries as pivotal states and allies to stabilize the order in the remote regions. The U.S. can also pay sufficient attention to its own people and order at home by implementing this policy. If all these declining factors and points are taken into account, the United States should urgently need countries that can be qualified as pivotal. These countries have been chosen in the context of a broader foreign policy perspective and their possible successor failure will absolutely influence the future of their regions. Pivotal states and their specific features will be scrutinized in a detailed way in the following chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

THE PIVOTAL STATES

3.1.THE CONCEPT OF A PIVOTAL STATE AND ITS FEATURES

Throughout history, great powers have always been the key countries in international politics and security by exercising their powers upon the rest of the world. They have continuously tried to maximize their interests and widen their sphere of interests at any time in order to pursue their existence. However,

Over the past two decades, the international system experienced a process of fundamental political and economic transformation. This process spurred unprecedented degrees of interconnectedness of societies worldwide and contributed to similarly exceptional low levels of interstate war. (Sweijts, et al, 2014: 6)

In that case, there are some states that harbor strategic interests of great powers and they are always in the limelight and a center of attention. A great power can do whatever it takes to win it round. If a *focal point state* comes under the hegemony of one great power, the whole system may come up against the deterioration of the equilibrium. “However, if the capability advantage of the leading state is small or is eroding, other states may choose to attempt to alter the hierarchy. The challenges may be directed against the leading state or lesser states within an increasingly unstable international order” (Geller and Singer, 1998: 119). Therefore, the existence and managing of the pivotal states was and has always become more of an issue in international order. As Chase, Hill, and Kennedy states that:

A pivotal state is so important regionally that its collapse would spell transboundary mayhem; migration, communal violence, pollution, disease, and so on. A pivotal state's steady economic progress and stability, on the other hand, would bolster its region's economic vitality and political soundness and benefit American trade and investment. (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 153)

As it is stated before, the main concern of this study is the pivotal states and *Turkey* as a pivotal state. In order to make things clear it must first be understood what the concept of the pivotal states is. The concept of the pivotal states was first put forth by Robert Chase, Emily Hill, and Paul Kennedy in the year of 1999.

America's national interest also requires stability in important parts of the developing world. It is vital that America focus its efforts on a small number of countries whose fate is uncertain and whose future will profoundly affect their surrounding regions. These are the pivotal states. (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 33)

As it is figured out, a pivotal state is a country in which some significant positive or negative changes can easily and profoundly affect the countries around it and this change may also affect the interests of the great powers. Therefore, it is called pivotal state and it is also possible to suggest that it is a key state in a very critical region. "Some of these countries are geostrategically important to the U.S. and its allies; severe social and political turbulences in countries such as Indonesia, Turkey, Egypt and Mexico would certainly affect American security interests" (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 6)

There are some other definitions for this concept. For example, "Pivot states are states that possess military, economic or ideational strategic assets that are coveted by great powers" (Sweijts, et al, 2014: 1). "The pivot is not a state as much as it is a region, occupied by an important power "with limited mobility" relative to "the surrounding marginal and insular powers" (Sweijts, et al, 2014: 7). Apart from these definitions, the term "pivot" or "pivotal" has been adapted according to different security roles that have been played by regions and countries. Other definitions are; "Shatterbelts, belts of political change, crush zones, lynchpin states, asymmetrical states, gateway states, cleft countries, hinge states, middle tier states and second-order states" (Sweijts, et al, 2014: 7).

The chief point in this project is that a country is chosen as a pivotal state for some reasons and only the pivotal states have these special features to be chosen when they are compared to other states in the world. "A pivotal state is a hot spot that could not only determine the fate of its region but also affect international stability" (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 33). A pivotal state is a key player in its region. They are like a bridge that help establish stability and create cooperation between the great powers and the third world. In other words, the great powers do not have to deal with and show special interest to tiny, destabilized and underdeveloped countries. They have their own pivotal states to penetrate these countries and help them improve their external and internal dynamics. At this

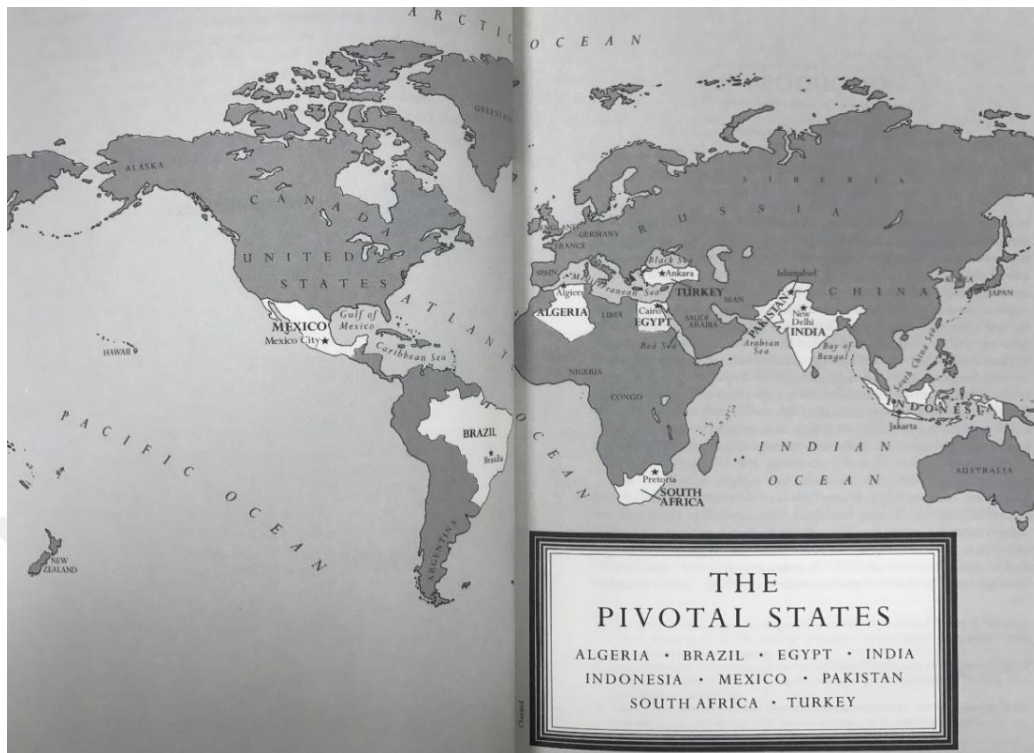
juncture, pivotal states are indispensable partners of the great powers to widen their influence and exercise their politics upon the third world. Additionally, the pivotal states have the possibility of being a great power in the future. It may take years to be a great power for them, yet they have the potential to put it into practice. “A change in a pivot state’s association has important repercussions for regional and global security. States that find themselves in overlapping spheres of interest are focal points of where great power interests can collide and also clash” (Sweijts, et al, 2014:1). However, there is also a possible gloomy feature for these countries. “As modernizing countries that still face Third World challenges, pivotal states have uncertain futures. Our pivots are wobbly or tippy, admittedly some much more so than others” (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 6) In other words, every pivotal state is on a knife-edge in terms of being either successful or unsuccessful. In the long run, it is not absolutely certain which scenario will prove to be right. It completely depends on the productivity and performance they show during this process. A pivotal state is always in the shadow marking of the great powers of the world. In the twentieth century, for example, the whole world was a kind of artificial battlefield of two countries: The United States and the U.S.S.R. These two great powers were always in search of exercising power and penetrating some pivotal states in order to widen their sphere of influence. For the United States, it was essential to protect its pivotal states from communism during the Cold War; “Twentieth century American policymakers employed their own version of pivotal states theory. Statesmen from Eisenhower and Acheson to Nixon and Kissinger continually referred to a country succumbing to communism as a potential “rotten apple in a barrel” or a “falling domino” (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999:34). “Its core was about supporting pivotal states to prevent their fall to communism and the consequent fall of neighboring states” (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 34). Neighboring states are quite significant because, as it is stated above, a pivotal state can absolutely affect bordering countries positively or negatively. Therefore, they need special attention in terms of critical matters such as regional cooperation that may affect international order. However, the Cold War ended and the threat of communism is no longer a problem that the United States has to pay attention. Now it is time for the United States to collaborate with the pivotal states in the fields of

human rights, environmental issues, global economic and political stability, regional development, terrorism and fundamentalist movements.

There are 196 countries in the world whose independence have been officially registered. From the viewpoint of the United States, it is impossible to take care of or deal with all these countries. Some of these countries harbor more importance than others in terms of American national interests. Furthermore, it is unnecessary and time wasting to be interested in every nation-state one by one. It takes a lot of time and effort. "Washington should concentrate its efforts on pivotal states whose destiny will be crucial to world politics" (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 215). Therefore, these *some* chosen critical countries, *pivotal states*, are always paid special attention in American strategy. It should not mean that only the pivotal states are important to America and the other countries are not necessary or insignificant. What is remarkable here is that these chosen countries have the potential and strength to smooth away major regional problems, and they have explicit territorial and regional sovereignty, economic and political power and are necessarily considered a regional leader among the countries in the region. As the United States work jointly with these countries, it will be easy to transform the region the way it wants and eliminate regional and then global economic and political instability. "The United States should adopt a discriminative policy towards the developing world, concentrating its energies on pivotal states rather than spreading its attention and resources over the globe" (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 35). In a few words, this pivotal state strategy is to choose and support these prominent and special states that are more significant than others in terms of American security and interests around the world. As for security matters;

Some of the security implications related to pivot states are rather straightforward, since they principally relate to the strategic goods of these pivot states. As such, shifts in the position of pivot states can, amongst other things, affect military staging rights, create new military - strategic perimeters, limit or open up lines of communications, and affect the world's energy supply dynamics. But beyond these fairly straightforward security risks pivot states harness plenty of perils and promise, which, if understood well, can be usefully leveraged by policymakers. (Sweijds, et al, 2014:3)

Figure 2: The Pivotal States Map by R. Chase, E. Hill, P. Kennedy in 1999



Source: THE PIVOTAL STATES, A New Framework for U.S. Policy in the Developing World, ISBN-13: 978-0393975833

The Pivotal States Project may, if the necessary steps are taken, prevent regional and global instability and support general welfare in the world. It can be considered a project that can be a remedy for chaos and disorder in some critical regions of the world. There are some really serious security concerns, apart from military, in the developing countries that can be a great menace to national and international stability. These concerns are mainly population, immigration, environment problems and fundamentalist movements. These problems have to be taken into consideration as soon as possible by putting the pivotal states project into practice, and cooperation among the developed and the developing countries plays a critical role to put it into effect. Involvement of pivotal states in solving regional and global problems are essential because;

Pivotal states have the potential to work a significant beneficial or harmful effect on their regions. These are not desperately poor, war-stricken countries such as Rwanda and Haiti. All of them are large, populous states with a growing (often very substantial) middle class, considerable infrastructure and educational investments, and an emerging markets potential that involves

increasing integration into the global economy. (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 7)

Another momentous feature of this project is that it can take precaution to possible problems instead of waiting them to happen and create chaos, so pivotal states ought to get in touch with the United States not when the problems occur but when they need now. Therefore, these pressures can best be coped with by strong and close relations between the United States and the developing countries. Some of these countries are significant for both America and its allies geostrategically. What is significant hereby is that the countries which directly affect America's security and interests are directly called pivotal states. Every pivotal state has a wide range of economic and political ties and they can easily affect the periphery countries by using these major features. Pivotal states have a possibility of growing powerfully and smoothly, and they can transfer their success to other countries and generations. The Pivotal States' involvement in international platforms such as WTO, NATO etc. is also critical. "If we want the World Trade Organization regime to function well and the global economy to open further, the pivotal states must be involved. If the American export economy needs to rely ever more on big emerging markets, our pivotal states provide most of the latter" (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 8). In that case, if all these factors are taken into account, it will be meaningful to explain these countries one by one and their importance in the following section. On an introductory basis, there are nine pivotal states in the world that have been chosen particularly. They constitute one-third of the world population. The significant point is that when these countries tilt to a direction, most of the countries in the developing world will also tilt to that direction in the future. Their position and stability are highly important.

On the basis of the criteria listed above, we identified the following states as pivotal: Mexico, Brazil, Algeria, Egypt, South Africa, Turkey, India, Pakistan and Indonesia. Given their size, population, geostrategic position, economic potential, capacity to affect global or regional issues, and the related criteria, they demand focused American attention. (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 8).

In the following section, these pivotal states will be scrutinized in terms of their strengths, weaknesses, regional and global importance.

3.2.IDENTIFYING THE PIVOTAL STATES

There are nine pivotal states in the world for the time being and these countries spread over the world from west to east within the American strategy. The importance of these countries will be explained further on, yet to create a mental picture it will be helpful to locate them on the world map.

The United States' plan is to have the American continent under its spell by using Mexico and Brazil. American continent is particularly important because the United States is located on it and the more the United States widens its influence and exercise its power on the continent the more it will secure its interests at home. Then, when it comes to Africa, which is the world's second most-populous continent, the prominent countries are Algeria, Egypt and South Africa. Algeria and Egypt play critical roles in the pivotal states project in terms of important geostrategic space and closeness to Europe. Besides, their positions as Arab states become more of an issue when it comes to regional stability. South Africa is also significant because it dominates its region in terms of economy (importation and exportation), energy and political and democratic movements. Yet another continent is Asia. America's target pivotal states in Asia are Turkey, Pakistan, India and Indonesia which lies on both Asia and Oceania. These countries are extremely momentous because they are close to the major rivals of the United States that are Russian Federation and People's Republic of China, they are also very close to oil reservoirs and natural resources in the Middle East and America can have an edge over Indian Ocean and South China Sea to secure its interest by using Indonesia. There are, of course, many features to explain, yet in order to enter the topic the information above will help comprehend the core of the pivotal states project. In this section, all the pivotal states except Turkey will be explained in a general context. In other words, because the focal point of this study is *A Case Study of Turkey*, eight pivotal states will be given sufficiently. However, Turkey will be explained in detail.

As the pivotal states are organized from west to east in the American strategy, it will be accurate to commence from Mexico. Since the nineteenth century, the two countries have close political and economic ties. They are linked to each other

politically, geographically and economically. Mexican economy is and has always been a big market for American goods and services. What gives Mexico a pivotal state feature is explained as follows:

By any conceivable criterion, Mexico is certainly a crucial state. It has a large territorial expanse, possesses key natural resources, including petroleum. It has strong economic prospects, having been heralded by Wall Street and the international community as one of the world's most promising emerging markets. It also shares 3,200-kilometer border with the United States. Unlike Brazil, in fact, Mexico stands on the northern fringe of Latin America, not in its heartland, which makes the country especially significant to the United States. (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 216)

The long border between Mexico and the United States plays a critical role in this region. Because of the fact that the two countries are trading partners and indispensable to each other, regional stability, peace, security and intelligence cooperation are essential points for U.S. national security and international trade. “Mexico represented the United States' second-largest trading partner (after Canada), accounting for roughly 13 percent of total U.S. exports. The United States, on the other hand, represented Mexico's largest trading partner, accounting for nearly three-fourths of Mexico's total exports” (Krause, 2012). Another significant point is that the two countries are closely connected to each other demographically. “The Latino population in the United States has reached nearly 58 million in 2016 and has been the principal driver of U.S. demographic growth” (Flores, 2017). “More than 35 million Americans have Mexican roots” (Sonnenfeld, 2017). California, Arizona, New Mexico and Texas, which are the southern states of the U.S., have a huge Mexican population and this number is expected to increase in the long run. Apart from this, the two countries are the members of international organizations such as United Nations, Organization of American States and NAFTA which is “the free trade zone linking Mexico, Canada, and the United States” (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 217). It has facilitated the free flow of goods and services by removing duties and tariffs, and thus has made Mexico, Canada and the United States of America one of the most powerful and remarkable rivals of the other great powers such as European Union, Russia and China.

There are, of course, disagreement, trials and tribulations between them such as “counter-narcotics; transmigration flows; developing a paradigm for common

energy security, efficiency and independence for North America; or water resources on the border — and decouple our strategic interests, seeking out other powers” (Sarukhan, 2017). Apart from these problems, when it comes to Mexico’s pivotal role in the region, it has always been limited by the hegemonic power of its neighbor, the United States, because Mexico has not showed its pivotal features completely and assert its power and leadership over other Latin countries owing to the existence and the proximity of the United States. “Those places where Mexico might exert the most impact are also well within the U.S. sphere of influence, so Mexico’s performance as a pivotal state is continually subordinate to the overwhelming presence of the United States” (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 217). “It is the United States, not Mexico, that predominates throughout the region” (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 217).

However, no matter what happens adversely, collapse of Mexico, its elimination in world trade, a possible economic crisis, domestic disturbances and a period of upheaval or instability are unimaginable for Washington. Whatever happens within Mexico will absolutely have rapid repercussions in the United States. Instead of being just a pivotal state or a regional actor, Mexico is an essential trading partner, and bilateral connections and ties between them cannot be ignored or undervalued by the United States. They are neighboring countries and this geographical proximity is what makes Mexico a focal point state in American foreign policy. “Mexico may or may not qualify as a pivotal state in the strict sense of the term, in other words, but it is undoubtedly a critical state” (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 218). Finally, of course, Mexico is a prominent developing country, a significant emerging market and an essential regional actor on the continent, yet what makes Mexico different from other eight pivotal states in this project is not its power and effect on the periphery countries and the Latin world but its impact on the United States of America itself.

Just after Mexico, with its significant regional and global role, Brazil is another pivotal state in South America in which the United States has momentous future plans. Brazil’s position as a global actor, opportunities in its emerging market for the United States economy and regional security and stability are the first essential features that make it a pivotal state. “Brazil has transcended its

status as the largest and most resource-rich country in Latin America to now be counted among the world's pivotal powers" (Bodman, et al, 2011: 7). Brazil is undeniably a critical country for the United States and relations between the two countries have a long history. "The United States and Brazil traditionally have enjoyed robust political and economic relations. The United States was the first country to recognize Brazil's independence in 1822" (U.S. Relations with Brazil, 2018). "Brazil was the only South American nation to send troops to fight alongside the Allies in World War II" (Farnsworth, 2015). In addition to historical background, by means of its immense landmass, Brazil predominates South America and it has ten border states to the north, west and south which give Brazil natural influence over them. At this juncture, its location tells everything about its importance. Over and above this, Brazil has a voice in the world economy as well. "It ranks as the world's fifth-largest landmass, fifth-largest population, and eighth-largest economy" (Bodman, et al, 2011: 3). As a matter of fact, Brazil is a key player in both South America and in the world. "Brazil's immense and diverse territory is rich in natural resources. Exports of raw materials drive the Brazilian economy. Brazil is the world's largest producer of beef, cane sugar, and coffee and the second-largest producer of soybeans" (Bodman, et al, 2011:10). In the eyes of the United States, such a player has to be taken into consideration as early as possible.

"The United States now faces a Brazil that has undertaken a peaceful economic and social transformation to become the cornerstone of South American growth and stability and a significant power and presence on the world stage" (Bodman, et al, 2011:3). Brazil is the B of the BRICs countries together with Russia, India and China. As it is seen, Brazil is one of these enormous growth markets and its economic stability and potential in South America promotes the importance of region and makes Brazil a leader country in Latin America. This is especially important to the United States which is the hegemonic power of the continent. Brazil is also a strong member of Mercosur countries that is "an economic and political bloc comprising Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay, and Venezuela" (Felter and Renwick, 2017). Because of the fact that Brazil is the leading country among them, it is essential for the United States to stay warm and strengthen the collaboration in order to continue to sell goods and services. In other words, the United States'

exportation might continue to increase if it is on good terms with Brazil. Given these circumstances, Brazil and the United States should normally build bridges and strengthen multidirectional communication.

“Beyond the geostrategic characteristics that bring Brazil and the United States together, the two countries are also remarkably similar: both are multiethnic, young democracies that uphold common values with respect to free markets, rule of law, individual rights, religious freedom, and diversity and equality” (Bodman et al, 2011: 4). In addition to these similarities between the two countries, Brazil’s growing stability, regional leadership, development and democracy merit sustained and multifaceted relations in the long run. When it comes to its pivotal feature, Brazil completely fits general criteria of the project:

The United States will need to adjust to a more assertive and independent Brazil. And Brazil must adjust to its new role as a global power. While the United States adapts to Brazil, it should also encourage Brazil to use its newfound multilateral and diplomatic influence in ways that look not only to its own national interests but to those of its neighbors and beyond. (Bodman, et al, 2011:5)

Brazil’s pivotal features involve many critical issues such as “the resurgence of democracy, the acquisition of weapons, diplomacy and cooperation, economic and trade issues, and human rights” (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 183). To the exclusion of Cuba, all the countries of Latin America are democracies. Despite the fact that democracy has generally been on the knife-edge owing to some periods of military rule, it has been maintained most of the time. Brazil, as a pivotal state, is the biggest democracy in the region and that is what constitutes a major pillar of stability. As for the acquisition of weapons, the international community and the United States itself were in a state of distress because “from the 1970s to the early 1990s, Brazil appeared to many outside experts to be using its robust nuclear energy program to develop a hedge capability for nuclear weapons development” (Brazil, 2015). However, in the 1990s, Brazil gave up its desire in nuclear weapons and stopped ballistic missile program when a civilian government came into power instead of a military one. Diplomacy and cooperation is another significant point for Brazil’s pivotal status. Regional cooperation between South American countries has grown significantly over the last decade. The Rio Group, which aims at creating

better political relationship between Latin America and Caribbean countries, is an important means to maintain “peace, development, and democracy in the region” (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 185). “Brazil also plays a leadership role in a bloc of countries making up the Portuguese-speaking world, including Portugal and the former Portuguese colonies of Africa and Asia” (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 186). Economic and trade issues are what make other pillars of stability in the region. Regional economic integration has been an opportunity for both Brazil and naturally the United States to widen their areas of influence in many aspects. The formation of Mercosur was also a big move for economic cooperation between the countries in the region. Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay and Venezuela constitute one of the most successful common market in the whole world after NAFTA and EU. “Brazil is key to the success of Mercosur because it has about 80 percent of the total population of the five countries and also about 80 percent of their combined GDP” (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 187). Such a powerful Brazil is and will always be an essential pivotal and multifaceted partner of the United States. Human rights issue is also an integral part of the pillar. Since the change of military rule into more democratic civilian government, human rights violations have been decreased dramatically. Such a country that is democratic and a supporter of human rights can affect the region in a positive way and become a guarantor of regional stability.

Shortly, the United States of America has many critical interests and future plans in Brazil. Foremost among them are economic, political, human rights, nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction, regional development, regional leadership, security and stability. As a pivotal state, when Brazil takes a decision or takes action it will absolutely affect the world’s economy, trade and finance, environment, energy issues, diplomacy, peace and stability. “Brazil is on the short list of countries that will most shape the twenty-first century. U.S. and Brazilian foreign policy must adjust accordingly” (Bodman, et al, 2011: ix). Such a pivotal Brazil, in the strictest sense of the word, completely fits the national interest of the United States.

The United States of America shares its continent with the two of its pivotal states Mexico and Brazil. To be secure and peaceful at home, the United States is to

know the significance of its pivotal states and adjust its foreign policy accordingly. However, there is also a world outside of its own continent, so America has to pay its attention to the rest of the world so as to strengthen its world hegemony. In that case, the following case of the project will be about three important pivotal states in Africa: Algeria, Egypt and South Africa.

Throughout the centuries, Africa has always been considered by the whole world as the source of richness, abundance and new opportunities to expand. Africa is “the most centrally located place on earth, not to mention the fact that Africa is the world’s richest continent in terms of mineral resources—with the most arable land and waterpower in the world” (Africa, 2015). Great powers have always showed special interest to this region due to many reasons. The very last hegemonic power, the United States, is also interested in Africa, and Algeria is the first step to make future plans and determine new policies on the continent. It is possible to ask a question: Why did the United States choose Algeria as a pivotal state, why not Tunisia or Morocco? Is Algeria really a pivotal state? or what makes Algeria special in the national interest of the United States? Answers will be explained in the following paragraphs, yet to begin with, they are not economic, political or demographic features that make Algeria special. When Algeria is compared to other developing countries in the third world, it is not one of the first countries that spring to the national interests of the United States. “There are other countries in the developing world that are larger in population (Bangladesh), export more oil (e.g., Libya, Nigeria, Venezuela and Iran), and seem to be more reliable partners of the Western democracies (Chile, Argentina)” (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 202). Its geopolitical position in North Africa and proximity to Europe together with its natural resources are essential points that make Algeria special in the eyes of the United States. As it is described above, Algeria is a special country in the region, but in the strict sense, it will be wise to be slow and sure to declare that Algeria is a pivotal state. The United States has chosen Algeria not because it has direct special and critical interests in the country, but because relations between Algeria and other pivotal, regional or partner states important to the United States. “There is no formal alliance, as with Turkey; there is no strong strategic interest, as with Egypt; and there is not much of an American presence or a developed political relationship with

Algerians in any walk of life” (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 208). However, because the United States has some critical *indirect* interests instead of direct interests in Algeria, this situation does not necessarily make America indifferent to Algeria.

Algeria is geographically very close to Europe and this proximity, location and multifaceted relations with European Union promote Algeria to a different and higher position in the eyes of the United States. Algeria is very important to Europe and especially to south Europe in terms of energy transfer (oil and gas), cheap raw material and goods. There are also other aspects such as “governance, rule of law and fundamental rights, strategic and security dialogue, migration and mobility, public and cultural diplomacy, cooperation and dialogue on research and development, financial cooperation, higher education, sustainable development and water security” (Algeria and the European Union, 2018). Besides, “Algeria has high security capacities, enabling it to effectively fight terrorism and cross-border crime and has begun discussions with the European Union in these areas. Algeria continues to play a key role in mediation, particularly in Libya and the Sahel” (Report on the state of EU-Algeria relations, 2017.). After all, Europe itself is one of the most important partners of the United States. It is easy to figure out that whoever is important to the EU can be considered critical to the U.S. Therefore, if these multi-pronged and triplex relations are taken into account, Algeria cannot be undervalued in American foreign policy.

“Algeria has the second largest reserves of oil in the African continent. Algeria has the largest defense budget in Africa. It is the largest country in Africa” (North African Countries, 2017). Algeria is an important Arab state in North Africa that have seven border states. Two of these border states are very critical to the U.S. “What happens in Algiers can also have an immediate impact on Morocco and Tunisia. And in both countries the United States has significant interests, including military access agreements with Morocco and some joint training and exercises with Tunisia” (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 209). Algeria’s possible anti-western policies or stance will absolutely have rapid repercussions in these countries and affect the military cooperation between the United States and the two countries adversely. Instead of being a strict Islamist country like Iran, Algeria’s

democratization and western-oriented policies can also be considered highly positive steps for the integration of Algeria and the western world. This can be regarded as a significant point that Algeria may become a pivotal state. Over and above this, Algeria attaches great importance to some really fundamental issues that make it very promising among other African countries. Efforts of bolstering up the judicial system and encouraging the role and importance of civil society, becoming a strong supporter of regional stability and security, supporting peace in the region, fighting against fundamentalism, radicalism and terrorism, struggling against illegal migration to Europe, environmental awareness and becoming a partner of the protection of the Mediterranean, providing vital oil and gas transfer to Europe and strong economic relations with both Europe and sub-Saharan countries are the most significant features of Algeria. As a conclusion, for better or worse, Algeria's path will be a determinant in the region and its involvement in the pivotal states project will become even more important in the immediate future of U.S. foreign policy.

The United States strategy has two very important interests in the Gulf; the first one is, of course, geopolitical, and the latter is economic. The U.S. has an everlasting interest in the Middle East and expects a stabilized, thriving and well-governed Egypt; in return, the Egyptians and the government have a deep interest in forging closer ties with American government and economy. In that case, it is quite true to declare that Egypt is not only one of the most important arbiters in Africa and the Middle East but also one of the most strategic and indispensable partners of the United States. Egypt is a keystone country and what happens in Egypt has a determinative impact on the other countries in the Arab world. "Egypt has been a country of international strategic importance since at least the time of Napoleon's expedition in 1798. More recently, and specifically since 1945, it has assumed additional significance as a neighbor of Israel, as the cultural and often the political center of the Arab world" (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 120). "Egypt as one of the largest countries in the Middle East has had a great impact on regional developments especially on Arab issues, Palestinian issues and the developments of North Africa" (Khani, 2013: 94). It is situated at the core of the Arab world and has been a leader country since the foundation of Israel in the year of 1948. "From 1948 to 1973, Egypt as an important player in the Arab and Palestinian conflicts, led the

Arab nation in its war against Israel” (Khani, 2013: 94). “However, with the Camp David Accords and the 1979 Egypt-Israel Peace Treaty, a new era of relationships between the two countries began” (Gerges, 1995: 70-71). After the Peace Treaty of 1979, Egypt began to lose its strong leadership on the Arab world and endeavored to establish close relationships with the United States and Israel. “Since the 1979 Peace Treaty between Israel and Egypt, there has been a continuous trend of animosity and strategic relationships between the two countries and as a result, the relationship between these two countries has come to be known as the *cold peace*” (Dowek, 2001:176).

The Gulf itself and Israel in this region play critical roles for United States foreign policy and Egypt is a major strategic ally on its own part. “The basic aims of American policy towards Egypt since the mid-1970s have been, first, to encourage it to make peace with Israel and, second, to preserve and expand this peace by drawing in other Arab regimes” (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 133). According to the U.S. government, in order to ensure an ongoing peace between Egypt and Israel, American involvement in the region is essential. The United States cannot keep its hands off the region. An ally Egypt is a guarantor for Israel’s strategic security. “Israel’s defense anchors are based on: preserving and strengthening its peace treaties with Egypt and Jordan” (Dekel, et al, 2014: 136). “Cairo remains a key player in avoiding another Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and in finding ways forward in the stalled Israeli-Palestinian and Israeli-Arab peace processes. It enjoys special standing in Tel Aviv and Ramallah” (Wisner and Salem, 2017). In this sense, the United States gives utmost importance to protect Israel and its interests, and peace and strategic cooperation between Egypt and Israel are two pillars that will promote the region in the eyes of the U.S. Apart from the security measures, cooperative relations in economy and politics should also be strengthened for regional development and a long-term stability.

In today’s international relations, countries need each other for many reasons and Washington has some very critical interests in both Egypt and the Middle East. Cooperation in all spheres between the United States and Egypt will serve the purposes of two nations. Both governments, Cairo and Washington, should work

together in order to overcome potential threats and tribulations in the region and notice their potentials in all areas.

The United States and Egypt agree on the need to defeat terrorism, to push for a more moderate Islamic narrative, to end civil wars and stand up failed states, and to reduce interstate proxy wars. Both leaders understand the urgency of rekindling economic growth and job creation. They also agree on the need for progress on the Israel-Palestine and Israel-Arab peace process. (Wisner and Salem, 2017)

The war on terror is the primary issue. Egypt has powerful military and security forces and capabilities to fight against the fundamentalists, radical terrorist groups and global jihad groups, and thus, it is critical to the United States to create a peaceful environment in the Middle East. Peaceful environment is essential to transfer petroleum from the Middle East to Europe and the United States. Besides, Egypt is critical to secure the Suez Canal for the safe transit and maintains marine security in the Red Sea. The management of Nile waters and its own regional environment are also Egypt's critical roles. Additionally, another feature that makes Egypt significant in the eyes of the United States is that it is a strong barrier for the lasting efforts of Iran in order to become a menacing nuclear weapons state in the region. "It could also play a role in working towards a less conflictual relationship between Iran and its Arab neighbors, based on principles of state sovereignty, withdrawing support for armed nonstate actors, and noninterference in domestic affairs of other countries" (Wisner and Salem, 2017). As a pivotal state, Egypt is a balance state to establish stability in both North Africa and the Middle East. It is the warden that will protect American goals and interests in the region. Geo-strategic location, ongoing commercial ties, Israel's strategic security, fighting against terrorism and intelligence exchange are what make Egypt a true pivotal state and these features and significant points will always increase its significance in the long-term U.S. foreign policy.

The last country to mention as a pivotal state in the African continent is South Africa that literally dominates the southern African region and a key country in terms of multifaceted relations with Western world and, more specifically, the United States. "As one of the African continent's largest and most sophisticated economies,

South Africa offers a myriad of opportunities for engagement with the United States on diplomatic, commercial, security, and social fronts” (Carroll, 2017: 1).

“South Africa is a multi-racial, majority black southern African country of nearly 52 million. It held its first universal suffrage elections in 1994, after a transition from white minority rule under apartheid, a system of state-enforced racial segregation and socioeconomic discrimination” (Cook, 2013: 1). It is a very influential country in the African Union as well and has a widescale political, economic and investment relations both with other African countries and abroad. “It is a self-sufficient, complex, and dynamic country in a struggling, complex, and dynamic region” (Carroll, 2017: 1). South Africa is a strategic partner of the United States and a true pivotal state in a critical region in terms of “trade and investment, development, democracy and youth leadership development, and peace and security” (Cook, 2013: 1). Socioeconomic development of South African region, improvement of health care services, appeasement of post-apartheid conflicts, the potential to take part as a peacekeeper for the African world and being an economic leader for the whole Africa are other significant *pivotal* features of South Africa to the United States. “South Africa is an important global partner for the United States... When I look around the world I see few relationships as vital as advancing our common interests as the U.S. – South Africa relationship” (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 152).

When it is looked back to the recent history, South Africa has done its level best to get out of the race war. “Congress has long been engaged with South Africa, notably during the anti-apartheid struggle, and with regard to post-apartheid socioeconomic development efforts, a key focus of bilateral ties” (Cook, 2013: 1). For the last two decades South Africa has been the chief country that has received the most of the financial aid from the United States when it is compared to other countries in the African continent. This aid has generally been spent on health expenses such as AIDS/HIV, food security, education, trade and investment. It has enjoyed a considerable economic growth; however, “South Africa remains a racially unequal society with respect to wealth and income distribution and access to jobs, social services, and utilities. There are also significant regional, rural-urban, and intraracial disparities” (Cook, 2013: 3).

When examined in terms of United States interests, “South Africa is the largest non-oil-focused U.S. trade partner in Africa in 2012, and the second-largest overall, after Nigeria. It is the third largest, on average, over the past decade” (Cook, 2013: 20). The United States and South African trade and investment relations have become more of an issue in the eyes of U.S. policy makers due to the fact that South Africa is one of the most convenient countries in the African continent in terms of using United States economic power, developing United States foreign policy aims and empowering the United States economy abroad. The two countries have close bilateral relations with regard to socioeconomic growth, reinforcement for democratic values, security, defense, nonproliferation and other critical improvement goals. South Africa is also an important open bazaar for American products and these goods and services can easily be transported to border countries such as Botswana, Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Namibia. In that case, South Africa is used as a mediator for the United States to reach the whole southern African region. “South African government administers “various small-scale development projects” in Africa that “directly” serve U.S.-South African “mutual political, economic, and commercial interests. (Cook, 2013: 26-27). Besides that, South African army has participated in many U.S. regional military training exercises with regard to “maritime and border security, peacekeeping training, and military humanitarian/civic action” (Cook, 2013: 27). South Africa’s possible failure or success will absolutely have critical repercussions on the southern African region and on the American interests in the region. Stable and powerful South Africa maintains its leadership and serves the purposes of American interests in many ways. It is important to state that Africa has always been seen by the United States as a foreign policy priority with regard to the U.S. national security. Consequently, the United States’ duty is to support South Africa’s passage through arduous economic and political period and help maintain a significant progress in all kinds of bilateral relations to pursue its long-term strategic interests.

After finalizing the African continent, it is now possible to go on to the next stage; the Asian continent, and Pakistan will be the first pivotal state in this context. In the first place, what makes Pakistan significant in the eyes of the United States is its geographical location. Pakistan’s location is unprecedented because of the

proximity to the Middle East, having a common border with India, China, Iran and Afghanistan. Its closeness to central Asia is another significant aspect. "Pakistan's significance is enhanced as it lies near the Persian Gulf where %65 of the world's oil is produced" (Tagar, 2012). Pakistan may be considered as a junction point of South Asia, West Asia and Central Asia. By means of its geographical location, it plays an instrumental role in redressing the balance of power in the Asian continent and most especially between the great powers in the world. It can also be considered as a strategic bridge between South Asia and South West Asia. Furthermore, it is an important entrance gate for central Asian countries such as Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan to the Indian Ocean. All these features make it special in the region and having Pakistan as a pivotal state in such a critical region can absolutely serve the critical purposes of the United States of America.

Pakistan can easily be considered as a pivotal state for the United States for a variety of reasons. The first one, as it is clearly stated above, is its strategic location to the world's one of the most populous and promising countries that is India. "As East and West Germany were to each other, as South and North Korea are to each other, and as Russia and Ukraine are to each other, Pakistan and its subcontinental twin India, are coeval; moreover, they contain one-fifth of humanity" (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 64). Therefore, it is a crystal-clear fact that Pakistan's strategic position, critical features and closeness to significant hot points in Asia have always made it a pivotal state in the standpoint of United States. Second, Pakistan has done its best to use its Islamic identity to create favorable political, economic and security relations with Muslim world and the Persian Gulf.

At a time when extremist Islamic movements are threatening many regimes in the Muslim world and there is often talk of Islamic "fundamentalism" or "orthodoxy," Pakistan represents a relatively moderate and democracy-oriented face of Islam, and it has traditionally maintained cordial relations with the West. Pakistan can facilitate a dialogue between the Islamic world, especially the Islamic movements, and the West. (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 64)

Third, Pakistan's population is increasing expeditiously. This large population is a momentous bazaar/market for American goods and services and enables opportunities for profitable trade and investment. By using Pakistan, the United States can create new markets in neighboring countries and utilize new

opportunities to boost its economy. Fourth, “Pakistan, the world’s sixth most populous nation and second largest Muslim country, is today at the crossroads of the pressing issues of our time: terrorism, extremism, development and democracy. As a nuclear armed, pivotal state, Pakistan’s stability is crucial to regional and global security” (Lodhi, 2008). Another way to describe this situation is that Pakistan is critical to the United States with regard to controlling illegal drug trade, terrorism and nuclear weapons nonproliferation. Its stability in every respect has always been more of an issue in the region and relations with Afghanistan and India have critical repercussions both regionally and globally. “A pro-American Pakistan could play a positive role, whereas a disgruntled and alienated Pakistan might be a major spoiler” (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 65). By the same token, “Pakistan stands as a bulwark against the unrest and instability that have engulfed southern Tajikistan and Afghanistan. If Pakistan collapses for one reason or another, the whole region will be overwhelmed by chaos and disorder” (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 65). Finally, the United States gives utmost importance to Pakistan not because Pakistan is the only country that could affect the region alone but because the U.S. has significant foreign policy aims in its neighboring country that is India. For this reason, improving favorable multifaceted relations with Pakistan will absolutely have a positive effect on both Pakistan – India relations and the United States – India relations. This will also help the United States establish peace, prosperity and stability in the region in the long run. “Finding ways, whether direct or indirect, to assist this more favorable outcome is clearly in America’s best interests” (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 65).

To sum up, Pakistan can make great contribution to American foreign policy aims in Asia to maintain “peace and stability, democracy and social development, market economy and free trade, control of narcotics, containment of international terrorism, and nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction” (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 82). As it is stated before, it is a kind of entrance gate and provides a short transit route for the central Asian countries to the Indian Ocean via its port of Karachi. This can help these countries develop their international trade and commerce, so that the aforementioned countries will shape their own destinies instead of becoming truly dependent on Russian Federation. They will be more

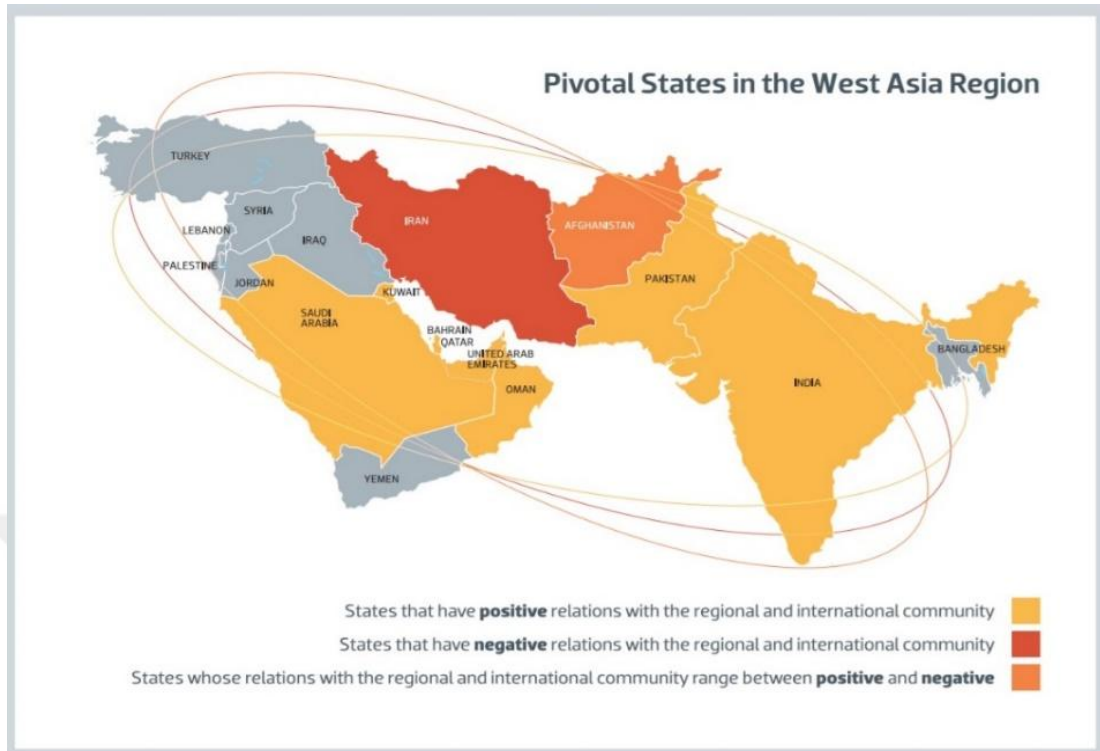
independent in terms of economic activities. Over and above this, in order to help solve both border and domestic problems with Afghanistan, there needs to be a strong and stable Pakistan. Without Pakistan's role, it is impossible to create a peaceful, coherent and stable regional order. "If Pakistan descends into chaos and turmoil like that in Afghanistan and cannot continue as a political entity, the whole region from the southern parts of Tajikistan to the shore of the Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean will be in turbulence" (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 83). This could be one of the worst things not only for the region itself but also for the international order. Pakistan's effectiveness and power in the region is also an instrumental tool for the long term United States foreign policy so as to estop Afghan linked drug trafficking and transnational terrorist activities. These are the most challenging problems of both region and the world, and without Pakistan it will be impossible to fight off these trials and tribulations. The United States and Pakistan will combine their all kinds of forces to hinder the development of these unfavorable affairs. By the same token, Pakistan's proximity to the Gulf region is what makes it indispensable in United States foreign policy. "Major U.S. interests in the gulf region include an uninterrupted flow of oil to the West and Japan, trade and investment, the recycling of petrodollars, and the sustenance of pro-West regimes" (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 84). Taking into account of all these vital topics, major powers such as China, Russia and India have always wanted to maintain their interests in this region and it is unthinkable for the United States to become distanced from this power game. Pakistan's pivotal feature will always remain on the agenda of the United States.

After Pakistan, the continent-size India will be another significant pivotal state that has great power and potential to affect the current objectives in the region either positively or negatively. There are some very critical reasons that make India a true pivotal state in United States foreign policy. The strategic importance of India is explained in the article *India as a "Global Swing State": A New Framework for U.S. Engagement with India*;

India is now the world's third-largest economy. Sitting at the edge of the Middle East and East Asia, it occupies the majority of the South Asian landmass and has a land or maritime boundary with every state in the region, as well as China, Burma, Indonesia, and Thailand. Democracy in India has endured with only a single brief interruption since independence in 1947. (Fontaine and Kliman, 2013: 2)

Its geographical position, which is within striking distance of the Persian Gulf, is of paramount importance to the United States. As stated previously, the oil-rich Persian Gulf is considered as a matter of life or death for the U.S. Therefore, having such a big, powerful and populous country as a pro-American ally can change the equilibrium in the region in the United States' favor. India has also strong multi-pronged relations with Central Asia, and its strong influence upon Southeast Asia could be regarded as pivotal to the U.S. "Further, India maintains powerful military forces and manufactures a wide range of advanced military equipment for its million-man army, its forty-five-squadron air force, and its small but expanding navy" (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 40). Besides that, when it comes to its economic importance to the United States, India is one of the greatest emerging markets in Asia. "Today the two countries have a \$115 billion two-way trading relationship, growing foreign direct investment, and an increasingly shared vision of the region's strategic outlook that has bolstered bilateral defense interests" (Meltzer and Singh, 2017). It is strategically situated at the heart of the trans-Indian Ocean route that connects Europe in the West and the East Asian countries. "It also has the world's third largest pool of scientifically and technically trained personnel" (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 40). Finally, it is an undeniable fact that India has a huge impact on the West, on China, and on Asia with regard to history, culture, and civilization. These substantial features make India a vital priority for United States foreign policy.

Figure 3: Pivotal States in the West Asia Region



Source: Potential Strategic Cooperation between Pivotal States in West Asia in Light of Current Changes

In the 21st century China and the United States are great global rivals in terms of economy, military, technology, and so on. Whatever India does within its sphere of influence or a serious attempt to change its direction to one side can absolutely affect the current world equilibrium. “India is not only a Central Asian power, but that since it abuts two of the richest regions of the world – the oil generating and unstable Middle East and the immensely productive Southeast Asia – it must be treated as a major state” (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 50). Most importantly, India, in addition to all these, is located between three hegemonic and high-power states which are Iran (a rogue state in U.S. foreign policy), Russia (a long-standing rival), and China (a new but rising, formidable and powerful rival). Strategic challenges from these countries force the U.S. to take action and establish strong multifaceted relationships with some critical nations which have “large and growing economies, occupy central positions in a region or stand at the hinge of multiple regions, and embrace democratic government at home” (Ling, 2016: 126). “In U.S. foreign policy, a focus on these nations can deliver a large geopolitical payoff

because their approach to the international order is more fluid and open than that of more established powers like China or Russia” (Klieman, 2016: 152). When considered from this point of view, India, which is regionally in between these three critical countries, is of the essence to the U.S. In the case of India, when these three significant countries are examined in terms of United States foreign policy, Russia is a dominant power in Ukraine, the Caucasian region, the Central Asia and the Middle East (the Case of Syria). China is an undeniable great power in Asia in the strictest sense of the word. Additionally, Iran, as a rogue state, is always enthusiastic about being a regional leader, interfering in the internal affairs of neighboring countries, and developing their nuclear weapons and missiles of increasing range. When this is the case,

A single hegemony on the Eurasian land mass threatens U.S. markets, our ability to keep conflict at a distance, regional stability, and democracy. At a minimum, the three hegemonies would overturn the current liberal international order. If the U.S. does not take effective action to prevent this, its run as a pre-eminent global power will end. Proximity to the oceans and seas offers the U.S. the opportunity to leverage its still-dominant sea power as the key to countering or if necessary opposing the three would-be hegemonies. (Cropsey, 2016)

At the present time, there are some critical matters that arouse the United States’ attention to Asia. “Several factors such as a resurgent American economy, reduced dependence on oil from the Middle East and a partial draw down of forces from Afghanistan have created a conducive geopolitical landscape to revitalize American efforts in the Asia Pacific” (Mishra, 2016). In that case, an ally and a pivotal India serves all kinds of aforementioned interests of the United States. “Presently the Asia Pacific is synonymous with growth and economic development and it is in the best interests of all the countries in the region to maintain peace and stability for future economic progress” (Mishra, 2016). Apart from economic progress, political stability and regional security are also vital points for a whole and undivided India and the region itself. As it is stated in the article *Potential Strategic Cooperation Between Pivotal States in West Asia in Light of Current Changes*;

It is necessary for the pivotal states in West Asia to reach a consensus on essential, internationally-accepted principles such as non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries and not using religions to fuel extremism especially as the core of most religions is tolerance and moderation. (Ghaffar, 2013: 19)

In the present case, stability, security and peace in India and in the neighboring countries such as Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh and Bhutan can be considered as a safeguard for the long-term multi-pronged collaboration with the West. In spite of the fact that India itself is a pivotal state for the U.S., it has also its own pivotal states in the region. As it is stated in the book *The Pivotal States, A New Framework for U.S. Policy in the Developing World*;

Nepal is seen as a critical buffer between India and China, and Indian strategists worry that a weak or collapsing Nepal might provide opportunities for direct Chinese interference in South Asia. They hold the same view of Bangladesh. In the case of Nepal, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka, it is widely appreciated in India that the collapse of any one of these states, or a spell of instability, would be detrimental to vital Indian interests... Moreover, the vulnerability of these states invites outsiders: Chinese 'meddling' in Nepal; American, Israeli, and Pakistani 'meddling' in Sri Lanka; and so on. (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 50)

In short, a weak and chaotic India would have some deep repercussions on all of the South Asian countries and this could be one of the worst scenarios for the future American interests in the region. Although this is actually not the case in the near future, the United States should direct more attention to this continent-size hot spot country anyway. What must be done urgently for India are that political, military and economic bilateral relations must be given utmost importance and developed by the U.S. politicians and businessmen. Besides that, India shouldn't be left to the hands of China. As a new global power, China has great potential to attract or draw in India in many ways and if it comes true in the long term, it will certainly be a huge forfeit for the U.S. "India is destined to play a great role in the world" (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 53) India and the United States have a great potential together to shape international security order in the region. India must always stand by the U.S. side. As a critical ally, a major international player and a supporter of American interests in Asia, India is certainly a momentous pivotal state for the United States to improve capabilities to reciprocate to diplomatic, economic and security hardships in one of the most critical regions in the world.

After India, the last country counted as a pivotal state is Indonesia that has always been a vital security and economic partner of the United States and an active and constructive international player in Southeast Asia since its independence from

the Netherlands. The significance of Indonesia is stated by *the U.S. Department of State* as follows:

Indonesia is the world's third largest democracy, has the largest Muslim-majority population, is the tenth-largest economy in the world by purchasing power, and possesses the world's greatest marine biodiversity and its second greatest terrestrial biodiversity. Indonesia also borders the South China Sea, which has the world's busiest sea lanes -- over \$5 trillion in cargo and as much as 50 percent of the world's oil tankers pass through the South China Sea every year. (U.S. Department of State, 2017)

Indonesia's regional and global significance makes it a very momentous pivotal state in U.S. foreign policy and serious bilateral relations between the two countries date back to old times. "The United States was one of the first countries to establish diplomatic relations with Indonesia in 1949, following its independence from the Netherlands" (U.S. Department of State, 2017). Since then they have established close partnership in maritime, defense and energy issues, cooperation on global and regional issues, and close relations in economic growth and development. The U.S.-Indonesia partnership in Southeast Asia in terms of U.S. foreign policy has such a significance that the two countries are the world's second and third largest democracies, and their cooperation can create an enormous positive atmosphere in economic well-being, peace, stability, promotion of human rights and democracy in the whole region. Indonesia's another current importance, which is a vital safeguard for a general stability in the region, is also stated as follows:

Indonesia has the world's largest Muslim population—more than all the Middle Eastern Arab states combined. The vast majority of Indonesia's Muslims have historically been noted for their moderation. There is one of the few Muslim majority nations in which Islam is not the state religion. (Masters, 2003: 9)

Much as it is the most populous Muslim country in the world, there are no serious extremist movements that could lead to chaos and turbulence in the country. Their Muslim identity is not defined with extremism but with moderation.

Indonesia's geographic position in Southeast Asia is of vital importance for global economic sustainability. Indonesia's geostrategic position enables it to become an arbiter in the region. Another way to state that its geographic position makes it a natural leader. "Its geography has given Indonesia potential rights over sea lanes that are essential to the survival of Singapore and Malaysia, to the foreign trade of Australia, and to the supply of Middle Eastern oil to Japan, Korea, and Taiwan"

(Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 21). It is also the most populous country in Southeast Asia and “Indonesians make up 40 percent of the entire region’s population” (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 21). According to *World Population Review*;

Indonesia is a sovereign archipelago in Southeast Asia and the fourth most populous country on earth after China, India, and the United States. Indonesia is made up of more than 17,000 islands with over 1.9 million square miles of land, which makes it the 15th largest country. Indonesia has a population estimated at 266.79 million in 2018, up from the 2015 estimate of 257 million. About 56.7% of Indonesia's population lives on Java, the most populous island. (World Population Review, 2018)

Indonesian economy is more grounded and solid when it is compared to other countries in Southeast Asia because of its rich mineral resources, and it has strong international economic relations with both neighbors and the world. “Oil and natural gas, deposits of tin, iron, bauxite, nickel, copper, silver and gold, all of which Indonesia exports in significant quantities through working arrangements with major multinational corporations from East Asia, North America, and Western Europe” (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 21). It will also be useful to touch upon the significance of Indonesia in terms of investment and trade for American economy. What makes Indonesia a pivotal state is its economic weight in Southeast Asia and economic relations with the U.S. Indonesia has one of the largest economies in Southeast Asia and it is one of the leading and arbiter countries in the region. It has been a vital market for American goods and services for a long time. “Indonesia was among those countries that are not only key markets for U.S. exporters, but are also crucial to our efforts to promote growth, peace and prosperity throughout the world” (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999:15). Momentousness of American economic activities and investments are stated in *Report of the National Commission on U.S.-Indonesian Relations*;

It has vast natural resources and is strategically located astride major lines of communication between the Pacific and Indian Oceans. Half of the world’s merchant fleet capacity passes through straits with Indonesian territory on one or both shores. Including its oil and mineral sectors, Indonesia is home to about \$25 billion in U.S. investment, with more than 300 major U.S. firms represented there. (Masters, 2003:9)

Sustainable and positive U.S.-Indonesian multifaceted relations are critical to the national interests of both countries. Indonesia’s stability and future steps will

affect not only the Asia-Pacific region but also the whole world. Indonesia is critical to the U.S. for another occasion. When it is considered from a wider perspective, if Indonesia's economy suffers from a possible crisis or if Indonesia's stability breaks down in the near future, the whole Asia-Pacific region and the global economy will be affected by this negative outcome. The reasons are stated as follows:

Singapore and Malaysia have extensive political, economic, and military ties with Indonesia that are the closest in the region. Thailand, the Philippines, and Vietnam are also united with Indonesia in growing bonds of common political and economic purpose, including a free trade area in which Indonesia represents far and away the largest future market. Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and Australia all have extensive economic and security interests in Indonesia as well, not the least of which is the passage through Indonesian waters of much of their vital international trade. All these nations and the United States too would be affected, some perhaps profoundly. (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 24)

Finally, the last but quite significant issue to mention about Indonesia is its security for an ongoing American hegemony in the region. Thousands of islands of Indonesia are a vital gateway between the Pacific Ocean and the Indian Ocean. What is important hereby for the U.S. is that this gateway cannot be hindered or blocked by an international or hegemonic power. Its security is essential for the global economic activities. "The state that has the greatest potential to fulfill the role of regional hegemon is undoubtedly China, which is currently enjoying a very rapid rise in its economic output, in its foreign export earnings, and in its capacity to finance the modernization of its armed forces" (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 30). China's rising position in the region can be balanced by giving all kinds of support to Indonesia and this can naturally be considered a significant priority for American national interests. Consequently, given these realities above, in order to pursue peace, stability, economic sustainability, prosperity and most importantly, American national interests in South Asia, Indonesia is an indispensable country. Obviously, the center of global power and economic dynamism has begun to move from the West to the East, so the U.S. and Indonesia should direct their attentions to strengthen political and security cooperation, economic relations (trade and investment), military, science and technological cooperation in order to sustain the current order in the long run.

3.3. TURKEY AS A PIVOTAL STATE

The central topic of this study is *Turkey as a pivotal state*, so in this section the significance and pivotal status of Turkey will be scrutinized in many aspects. At the end of the study, its significance will show how pivotal Turkey is to the United States in the world order. Because of the fact that the main concern is the pivotal status of Turkey, it will be useful and easy to follow if the significant points and pivotal status of Turkey are divided into three sections successively; geopolitical significance, economic significance and political/cultural significance. Turkey's *pivotalness* can inclusively be explained under these three subtopics.

“Turkey has a geopolitically, geo-economically and geo-culturally proper nature that could enable it to serve inter-culturally and inter-religiously as a bridge of dialogue and tolerance in Anatolia as well as to bring it to a situation where it could cooperate politically and economically with both Asia and Europe”(Arslan, 2012: 1). First of all, when it is looked from a geopolitical perspective, Turkey's significance is emphasized as follows;“Geography awards a privileged geostrategic and economic position to Turkey. It sits on a natural hub of the Mediterranean, where thousand-year-old land and maritime trade routes meet and cross” (Liechtenstein, 2018). Turkey is situated in one of the most critical regions in the world (between Asia, Europe, Africa, the Caucasus, the Middle East, and the Gulf) and this position gives Turkey a great elbow room in the world politics. Having an advantageous location enhances the pivotal importance of Turkey in international relations. Besides, because of being located in such a critical area, Turkey has deeply aroused the great powers' attention throughout the years. For instance, when the Ottoman Empire collapsed after the end of the First World War, Turkey's territories were invaded by many great powers such as Britain, France, Italy, and Greece. They knew the value and importance of this geography and divided the territories between each other under the Treaty of Sevres in 1920. However, Turkish nation was able to chuck them out after the War of Independence.

Most importantly, Turkey literally connects Europe and Asia by way of the Turkish Straits. Its location is a point where Europe, Asia and Africa are the closest

to each other. Turkey is surrounded by the seas on its three sides. Thus, being located at the center of very critical waterways enables Turkey a tremendous advantage in its own sphere of influence. As it was in the past, Turkey has always been on the agenda of the world powers in this day and time.

Turkey's multi-faceted geopolitical position gives it considerable leverage over the major European powers as well as Russia, the United States, and even China. Sooner or later, all great powers learn that they cannot hope to conduct a successful policy towards a very long list of countries and organizations without Turkish cooperation or acquiescence. (Freeman, 2017)

As it is stated above, Turkey is a key country in Eurasia. It is impossible for great powers of the world to develop a foreign policy without Turkey's involvement in this region. Turkey contains all regional dynamics in itself. Turkey is also a country that is a transition point of world economic power and energy transfer. Its location between the Caspian (energy producer) and Europe (energy consumer) is indispensable for the West in terms of being a transit country. It harbors significant energy resources and it is an industrialized country that becomes the neighbor of non-industrial countries. "Located in geopolitical terms for so many decades in the south-eastern corner of Europe, today Turkey lies at the center of a rapidly evolving new geopolitical region of Turkish peoples from Eastern Europe to Western China-a region in which it will be the central player" (Fuller, 1993: 1).

Turkey's location is what makes it a junction point and a pivotal state between the West and the East. "The Turkish Straits, which consist of the Dardanelles, the Sea of Marmara and the Bosphorus, are all parts of the sovereign sea territory of Turkey. This gives it control of the waterways from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean, and further on to the oceans, that are critical especially for Russia" (Liechtenstein, 2018). Its territory can easily be considered as a bridge between the two continents. Therefore, this key feature makes Turkey a true regional power and a pivotal country in this area. From a recent historical perspective, Turkey has been a very substantial state at the same time. It was a member of NATO during the Cold War and was a valuable article for the Western bloc as a powerful ally against the Soviet Union. At that time, Turkey was also considered as a kind of buffer zone or an outpost for the West in the strictest sense of the word. Just because of its geopolitical position and proximity to the former Soviet Union, it was impossible for the West to

exclude Turkey. Over and above this, by controlling the Straits, Turkey's territories have been of great importance for the U.S.S.R. and modern Russia because of the fact that it has always been impossible for Russia to open up to the warm water without the Turkish Straits. To sum up, at one point or another, due to its location all eyes have always been on Turkey through long ages.

Figure 4: Turkey's Geopolitical Position



Source: Geopolitical Intelligence Services

The importance of the West (Europe and the United States) has been diminishing relatively, whereas the importance of the East (China and India) has been increasing in recent years. By means of China and India, the importance of Asia has explicitly shown itself in the new world. In this sense, between Western Asia and Eastern Europe Turkey is considered as a promising and a key country that can throw its weight around regional and global issues. When it is evaluated from an economic perspective, Turkey is a rapidly emerging and urbanized country. It has ambitiously maintained its economic and cultural integration with the world. In addition, it is possible to connect Turkey's geopolitical significance with economic significance because these two have intermingled with each other and cannot be separated.

Turkey is situated between major energy producers and consumers. Its geopolitical position gives it a strategic advantage and enhances its economic significance when it is compared to the neighboring countries due to the fact that it

lies between the Middle East, Russia and the Caucasus which are major energy producers of the world and the West which is explicitly one of the greatest consumers of the world. “This privileged natural bridge position provides Turkey with both opportunities and responsibilities in terms of energy security. In this regard, while developing its energy strategy Turkey aims to strengthen its position between East-West and South-North Energy Corridors” (Turkey’s Energy Profile and Strategy, 2017).

One thing is certain that Turkey can wisely take advantage of using its pivotal status with handsome profits in the long run. When it is considered from its current pivotal status, Turkey is on the way of creating a critical role for itself in the global energy market because it is able to control the energy-transport corridors whose security is vital for the West. Without Turkey’s guarantor position, secure flow of energy from the East to the West would not be possible and this would affect many countries negatively in the West which are desperately in need of the energy of the East. More importantly, using Turkey as an energy hub and bypassing Russia is very momentous to the U.S. In the eyes of the United States and the West, Turkey is the most agreeable country in the region to put Russia out of action in terms of being an arbiter on energy issues in Central Asia. The U.S. might break Russia’s supremacy in this region by using Turkey as an energy corridor. This clearly shows how pivotal Turkey is for the United States. Meanwhile, significant gas pipeline projects on the territory of Turkey are explained as follows:

The East-West gas pipeline projects which are envisaged to bring gas from Caspian and the Middle East regions to Europe through Turkey are referred to as “Southern Gas Corridor” (SGC). South Caucasus Pipeline (SCP), Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum Natural Gas Pipeline (BTE), Turkey-Greece Interconnector (ITG) are existing pipelines while the Trans-Anatolian Natural Gas Pipeline (TANAP) and the Trans-Adriatic-Pipeline (TAP) are planned projects within the context of Southern Gas Corridor. The delivery of gas to Turkey through TANAP will start in mid-2018 and to Europe in 2020. (Turkey’s Energy Profile and Strategy, 2017)

Turkey is absolutely a pivotal state in terms of economy not only for the United States but also for the European Union, namely for the West. Europe is desperately dependent upon the energy of the East. It is unquestionable that the external energy need of the West has been increasing consistently. “As the world’s largest energy consumer without its own significant energy reserves, the Union is today one of the

world's fastest-growing energy markets and the biggest energy importer" (Krause, 2002: 10). Just because of this concernment, the EU cannot disregard Turkey in many aspects because Turkey is a transit country for its survivability (the flow of energy). When it comes to the United States, Turkey's geopolitical and economic position in the region are of vital importance too. In spite of the fact that the U.S. is a huge energy producer, it imports half of the oil and energy it consumes and this is a long-term risk and a problem with regard to foreign energy producers and energy options. Maintaining energy security and energy supplier diversification are a matter of life and death for U.S. trade and foreign policy. It does not matter long term or short term, a possible instability or vulnerability in this energy region can have deep adverse effects on the countries in the world. U.S. Assistant Secretary for Economic and Business Affairs, E. Anthony Wayne emphasizes Turkey's economic significance in *Remarks to the American Turkish Council Conference*:

The U.S. Administration has highlighted the role of Turkey as an energy hub and especially as a crucial link between Caspian and Central Asian energy reserves and world markets. In its efforts to promote Turkey's role, Washington emphasizes its own importance in supporting the cooperation of Turkey and the EU in energy security matters. (Wayne, 2006)

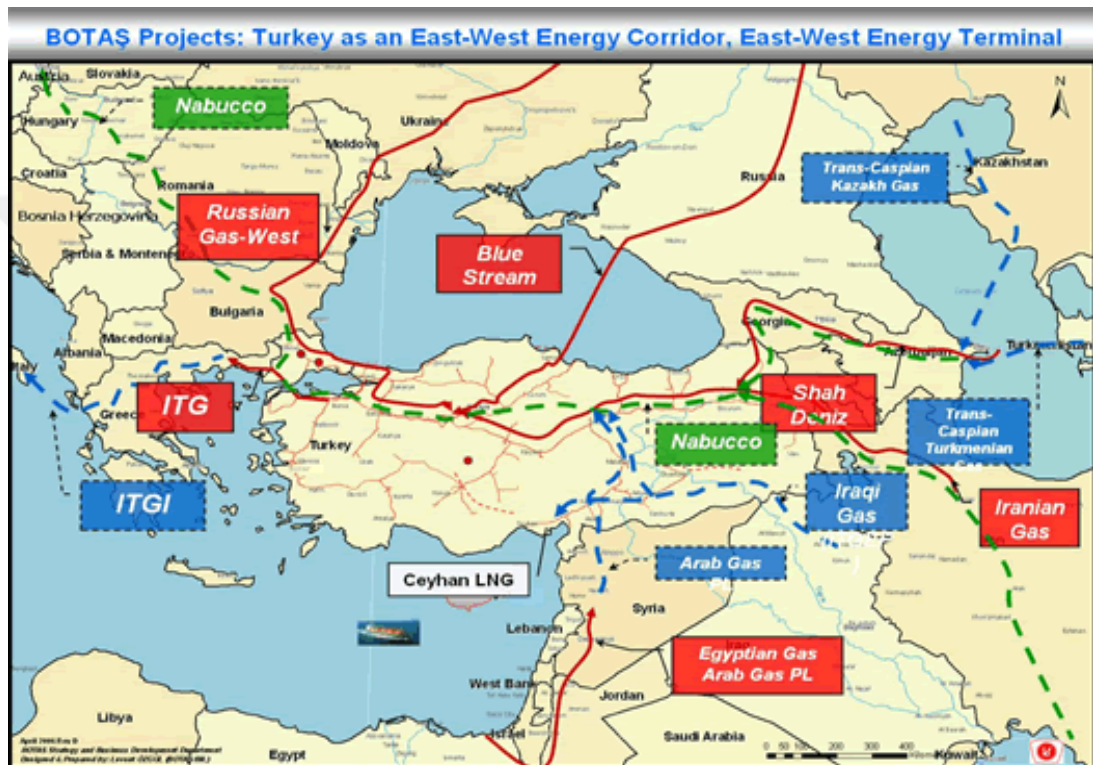
Additionally, the efforts that the United States has done since the end of the Cold War to change the system of energy transportation in the region are substantial. The U.S. tried to establish vital connections with countries in the region to develop new infrastructures in the 1990s. "American efforts to promote construction of new pipelines through the Caucasus to the Black Sea and Turkey were a part of a larger campaign to break Russia's monopoly of control over the transportation of oil from the region" (Klare, 2008: 154). Turkey's pivotal status shows itself right here. Turkey's position as a NATO ally and its geographic location advantage enabled it to take action at that time. Turkey and the United States played a critical role in creating the BTC (the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan) pipeline in 1999 to maintain the flow of oil from Baku, Azerbaijan to Ceyhan, Adana, Turkey. Thus, the Caspian Sea oil and gas has been transferring to Western markets since then. This economic significance is what makes Turkey a pivotal state in such a critical region.

If Turkey became a major energy transit corridor into the EU, the Union would be able to increase the diversification of its energy suppliers and transit countries to a rather significant extent. An energy transit corridor through

Turkey would enable more diversification to the United States. (Tekin and Walterova, 2007: 92).

In brief, Turkey is an important alternative energy route for the United State and the West and it has a great potential and role in maintaining the security of energy supplies regionally and globally. Turkey's economic and strategic position can be clearly seen on the map below.

Figure 5: Turkey as an East-West Energy Corridor, East-West Energy Terminal



Source: US EIA - <http://www.eia.doe.gov/cabs/Turkey/NaturalGas.html>

Turkey has also achieved an economic model that is developing steadily. According to the World Economic Outlook Report of the World Bank that was published in 2017, “Turkish economy is the 13th largest in the world and 5th largest in Europe” (Economic Outlook of Turkey, 2017). Turkey has begun to allocate more money to public investments in order to uncover regional potentials during the recent years. “These investments involve the urban development and social infrastructure projects in the assisted regions and the action plans for ongoing regional development projects (GAP, DAP, DOKAP and KOP)” (Özbek, 2015: 87). Build operate and transfer model has been in great demand by the government and many major infrastructure services such as bridges, sub-sea tunnel, airports, highways,

hospitals, universities and schools etc. have been carried out by means of public-private sector cooperation, and more investments are on the way. Besides that, Turkey is also a significant country in West Asia that has been popular for foreign direct investments from all around the world. "Ranking 71st in global competition index in 2002 Turkey rose to the 55th place in 2017. Accordingly, Turkey has managed to attract 176.6 billion USD worth of foreign direct investments (FDI) between 2003 and 2016. In 2016, FDI figure was 12.3 billion USD despite the ongoing regional tensions" (Economic Outlook of Turkey, 2017). What is significant to mention hereby is that a pivotal state is a state that is powerful and promising in terms of economy in its sphere of influence and affects and contributes to its region in a positive and constructive way. Therefore, Turkey shows itself as a leader and regional determinant in terms of being a pivotal country. Another advantage that should be stated is that it is possible for Turkey to reach approximately 60 countries in a short span of time by means of its advantageous location. "Istanbul is the largest city of Turkey and one of its most important gateways to the world. The city is a major aviation center, as well as the main national and international hub in Turkey with approximately 70 million passengers per year (2013)" (Düzgün and Tanyaş, 2014: 2). Apart from industry and investments, "Turkey is the 6th most popular tourist destination in the world (2015), attracting more than 30 million tourists annually and continuing to show positive growth year-on-year. The tourism sector has set a target of 50 million tourist arrivals and of USD 50 billion tourism revenues by 2023" (Economic Outlook of Turkey, 2017). Considering all of these, Turkey's promising economic growth and potential will positively affect the relations with its neighbors and the world. Therefore, economically strong pivotal Turkey will be a safeguard for the regional order, stability and welfare.

When it is looked from political and cultural significance, Turkey is the one and only secular, democratic and Islamic country in the world. "Approximately 99 percent of the population is officially Muslim, the majority of whom are Sunni" (Turkey, 2004). This religious legacy historically goes back to the Ottoman Empire. Once the biggest Muslim empire in the world, the Ottoman Empire carried out both political and religious authority on its territories and this strong influence was far too much on the Middle East, Africa and Asia. After the end of the Ottoman

Empire, new Republic of Turkey abolished the caliphate in the year of 1922 and became a secular and democratic country with its Muslim identity. However, this Islamic influence has always become a tie between Turkey and the Middle East. Namely, Turkey has not lost its cultural tie with the Arab world. Although there are, of course, disagreements on regional and international issues historically, current Turkish Government which has an explicit Islamic identity can easily create favorable relations with the Muslim World.

“Turkey was actually the first Muslim state in Islamic history to declare secularism as the basis of the state – as early as 1924” (Fuller, 1993: 9). Secularism is a state principle of Turkey and it is possible to consider Turkey as the most democratic country of the Muslim world. Turkey completed critical democratic reforms without loss of time and became a member of many European organizations such as United Nations (UN), North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Organization of European Economic Cooperation (OECD), the Council of Europe and so on. “With the foundation of Turkish Republic in 1923, European political and legal systems were adopted by the new republic for further development and European values were incorporated into Turkish culture although some of them could not be internalized” (Öner, 2006: 9-10). Turkey has always been between eastern and western values culturally. Once a truly Muslim country with Eastern values, Turkey has always struggled to become a part of western countries with the help of Atatürk’s reforms. Turkey has tried to incorporate eastern and western values in society. This in-between situation is clearly stated by Mesut Yılmaz, former Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey;

Some characterizations about Turkey related to the terms ‘Orient and Occident’ highlight, that it stands, from a geographical and cultural point of view, at a point where the West and East intersect. Observers often characterize Turkey as a bridge between ‘Orient and Occident’ or as a product of both of the western and eastern influences, reflecting their belief that Turkey achieves an East-West-synthesis that cannot be found elsewhere. (Yılmaz, 2004: 19)

Turkey declared its commitment to the West by being a NATO ally and promoted relations with Israel as a Muslim-populated country. There is no country in the world except Turkey that was able achieve such a radical modernization process in a short span of time. In that case, Turkey is the best representative of a modern,

democratic and secular Muslim country in the world. This feature not only makes Turkey a regional key power but also makes it a key country in the Muslim world. “Islam is the world's second most widely practiced religion. It is also one of the fastest growing religions and today, has approximately 1.7 billion followers” (Pariona, 2017). As it is stated above, this is a huge group of people and being the only country in the world with unique features, Turkey can easily take action or issue a call for something in the Muslim world. This is leadership in the proper meaning of the word. Turkey’s word on an issue in the world is taken serious by the Muslim countries. Accordingly, this creates reaction in the whole world and highlights the significance of Turkey in the eyes of the world. This is Turkey’s one of the most remarkable pivotal status.

In terms of regional influence, nearly all the neighbors of Turkey are former territories of the Ottoman Empire. They can be considered new states in the world history; however, ties with those countries and relations with those people living in those countries date back to old times and are still strong and active. At this point, Turkey can become a strong western option for these countries against Russia and Iran. “Turkey’s historical, ethnic, linguistic, cultural, and religious ties to people in the region – reinforced by the ethnic presence of these peoples in the mix of Turkish citizenry – gives Ankara long-term opportunities for special influence in the region among Muslims of the Balkans, the Caucasus, and Central Asia” (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 95). Russia and Iran are eternal rivals or adversaries of the U.S. Whatever vitiates their influence in the region is an important value for the U.S. In that case, Turkey is again an indispensable state and determinant of balance in the region for U.S. foreign policy. Technically, the U.S. should not run the risk of losing Turkey in such a critical region. Turkey is a central country and has a significant influence over a huge geographical region. This centrality gives Turkey an important role of stabilizing the regions of major instability and confusion. Turkey is situated in the center of the Balkans, the Aegean, the Caucasus, Syria, Iraq, Iran, Central Asia, Russia, and Europe. Turkey’s political and cultural role is instrumental in reaching a common ground between these critical regions and countries because “Turkey’s own national interests are perhaps more immediately and vitally affected in some of these areas of conflict that are Western interests themselves” (Fuller, 1993: 9). Besides, as

opposed to the other Muslim countries in the region, Turkey's achievement depends on its self-determination and political liberty. Turkey is a democratic constitutional state. The existence of check and balance distinguishes Turkey from other autocratical states or dictatorships in the Middle East, Asia and Africa. Turkey shares the same western values with the West to a certain degree and harbors the eastern cultural elements with the East. "Turkey's experience with the evolution of a relationship between democracy and Islam is very important for the future of the whole Muslim world; it needs to be examined for its implications by Western policymakers as well" (Fuller, 1993: 9).

"Abutting several regions of high priority in U.S. foreign policy, Turkey is of demonstrated importance to American security interests" (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 88). Turkey is situated in one of the most critical regions and an ally Turkey is extremely significant to the United States and the continuation of American influence in the region. The U.S. is willing to stay in the Middle East at one point or another and without Turkey or its support and alliance, the U.S. cannot maintain its influence in the long run. Regional dynamics are critical to establish a new order and Turkey is one of the most important cornerstones in the region.

Turkey is pivotal because it is vital to U.S. interests in many of the regions that it borders, including the Balkans, the Persian Gulf, the Arab-Israeli arena, the former Soviet Union, and the Mediterranean, Aegean, and Black Seas. Were Turkey to turn decidedly away from its alignment with the United States and the West, serious harm to American interests and greater instability would likely result in all these areas. (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 88)

Geopolitical, economic and political/cultural features make Turkey a prominent country among the countries in the region. These features are the pillars on which Turkey stands. "Turkey is potentially pivotal in yet two other respects as well: as a 'paradigm of the possible' for both relations between Western Europe and a Muslim state, and for the adaptability of a Muslim majority state to Western-style democracy" (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 89). Since its foundation, the Republic of Turkey has always been different and vital in the eyes of the West when it is compared to other Islamic countries of the Middle East. Turkey is the one and only Muslim-majority country in North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Additionally, it is also one of the most populous countries of NATO and has one of

the most powerful and efficient army in NATO. “Turkey has the second-largest military force in NATO, after the US” (Mortimer, 2017). Since its accession to NATO in 1952 Turkey has always become the southern guardian of the western world. The Straits of Bosphorus and the Dardanelles have been one of the most critical parts of the world and Turkey’s sovereignty here is an important determinant in international relations. Historically, Turkey stood a guarantor for blocking the Soviet expansionism and imperialism during the Cold War. Over and above this, Turkey put support behind the United States in Iraq War in 1991 by enabling Incirlik Air Force Base to help attack Iraqi forces. Additionally, “Turkey has been a useful supporter of the peace process and a peace setter in Muslim-world normalization with Israel. For thirty years, from 1949 to 1979, Turkey was the only Muslim state to recognize Israel. (In 1979, Egypt became the second.)” (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 94). Turkey has generally supported U.S. interests in the region that are critically important for U.S. foreign policy, and more powerful Turkey can play this role efficaciously in the world politics. Turkey has also become a natural partner and supporter of the West in international relations even if its Islamic tendency goes against the western values. However, “Given Turkey’s geostrategic importance, the United States is likely to try to establish close ties with Turkey, as it has with Saudi Arabia, whatever its political and religious orientation. But pursuing those ties would be far more difficult with an Islamist regime than it would be with a secular one” (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 116-117). It should not be forgotten that “Whoever rules in Ankara, Turkey’s geostrategic importance will remain intact” (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 119). This shows that Turkey’s pivotalness will always be U.S. priority in the Middle East whatever happens.

Turkey plays an instrumental role in bringing long-term peace and stability in the Middle East. Accordingly, peace and stability in the Middle East affect the peace of the whole world, and most importantly the security of energy. In this case, If Turkey holds firm, its region will ultimately see an ongoing peaceful atmosphere in the future. There are some countries in the world that are considered as rogue states by the United States. These states are imposed sanctions by both the U.S. and the West. As an American ally, “Turkey is the only state in the world to border three states on the list of state sponsors of terrorism – Iran, Iraq, and Syria” (Chase and

Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 95). Turkey is in a critical region in which terrorist states or terrorist groups exist in the eyes of the U.S. Therefore, it is critically important that Turkey's stability and military strength will block any terrorist activities to spread other parts of the region. Turkey is the leading country in the region that fights against terrorism effectively. Fighting against these groups is a national security priority for Turkey, and the U.S. must give utmost support militarily and show that it is at Turkey's elbow in international relations. If Turkey falls into a decline in a sort of way, this will have serious negative repercussions in the whole region and throw off the region's balance lastingly. It is possible to consider that Turkey's possible instability or vulnerability may create a domino effect in the region and this may turn into a regional and then international distress. Consequently, taking into account of all the things stated here, Turkey constitutes the backbone of U.S. foreign policy and without Turkey's role, which is a true pivotal role, the U.S. cannot conduct a strong and accomplished policy in such a broad and fragile region.

CHAPTER FOUR

REDEFINING U.S.-TURKISH RELATIONS UNDER PRESENT CONDITIONS

4.1.U.S. FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS SYRIA AND THE ARMS AID TO THE PYD/YPG

The United States of America has witnessed a big transformation and reorganization both in domestic policy and foreign policy since Donald Trump took office. In some ways, Trump has adopted a policy of conducting what is completely opposite to Obama's equilibrium policies in the Gulf, Iran, the question of Israel and Palestine and Turkey. "It does not want any one power to become too dominant. America lukewarmly supports Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Israel, Egypt, and is attempting to diminish tensions with Iran, all in the hopes of creating a balance of power in the Middle East where one nation cannot exercise too much power" (LeBlanc, 2015).

However, Trump's marginalizing policy is continuously creating tension in this hot region. Trump is definitely against Iran, using loyal customers Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates as a kind of tool to form a block against Iran and Russia, giving complete support to Israel with respect to Palestine, and neglecting its strategic partner and NATO ally Turkey in decision making process in the Middle East. Trump has continued to follow a policy of marginalizing and disregarding Turkey in fundamental regional issues especially in Syrian Crisis and has collaborated with terrorist organizations to bring so-called stability to the Middle East. Yet, these terrorist organizations are clearly a big menace for Turkey's national security and these damaging steps which are taken by the United States are unacceptable. On the other hand, this policy has just ruined Turkish – American relations and caused a confidence crisis from the viewpoint of Turkey. "U.S. support for the SDF has put enormous strain on ties with NATO ally Turkey, which views the YPG as an extension of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) - a group that has waged a three-decade insurgency in Turkey and is considered a terrorist group by the EU, Turkey and the United States" (Perry and Coşkun, 2018). Apart from that, Trump

has also maintained an attitude of passing over international alliances with other countries without any concrete explanation. This has made the United States (Trump Administration) as a country that is unreliable and unbalanced in international relations. In that case, Turkey, which is atop-line regional power and a true pivotal state for U.S. foreign policy, has looked over and changed its foreign policy in terms of its relations with the United States and needed to form a new block with Russia and Iran to equilibrate in its own sphere of influence. All in all, one thing is certain from the incidents stated here that the United States is no longer in favor of equilibrium policy, on the contrary it has developed a protectionist and interventionist foreign policy and is giving irreparable damage to the Middle East.

Before clarifying U.S. foreign policy towards Syria, one significant point must be unclosed. There are many terrorist organizations within the border of Syria and it is quite possible to cause confusion while mentioning and giving details about these organizations. Therefore, it will be useful to clear up the issue briefly in order to figure out who the PYD/YPG is and why the U.S. supports it.

There is plenty of evidence which illuminate the organic linkage between the PYD and the PKK terrorist organization. Above all, the PYD was established at the 8th Congress of the PKK, upon the orders of the instigator Abdullah Öcalan, sent from İmralı where he is imprisoned and the decisions made for “the restructuring in Iran, Iraq and Syria, alongside Turkey” on 17 October 2003. (İçişleri Bakanlığı, 2017: 2)

Instability, domestic disturbances and chaos in Syria also created convenient time and atmosphere for the PKK/KCK to enlarge its power outside of Turkey and Iraq. “The PKK/KCK terrorist organization has found a margin of maneuver following the authority gap emerged as a result of the political incidences and civil war conditions after 2011 in Syria, and then the armed wing of the PYD terrorist organization, the YPG (People’s Protection Units) was established” (İçişleri Bakanlığı, 2017: 5). It is obvious that the PYD is just an extension of the PKK in Syria and they have the same objectives in this region. As it is described above, the YPG is also an armed extension of the PYD. “PYD and its armed wing People’s Protection Units (YPG) have been terrorizing the people of Syria for quite a while. The U.S.-backed YPG forces have been committing ethnic cleansing and forced displacement in different parts of Syria that it has captured in the name of battling ISIS” (Paksoy, 2017). Just because of

fighting against the Islamic State, the PYD/YPG gained regional and international reputation. They gained the sympathy of the United States and the West and aroused attention of the world. “The YPG has enjoyed a great amount of freedom in Syria for years. The only reason why such a terrorist group received so much “fame” can be explained by their alleged ultimate goal: Fighting ISIS terrorists” (Paksoy, 2017). Over and above this, the PYD took a stand of Assad Administration, developed intimate relations and did not participate in Assad’s opponents. Namely, they did not cause trouble to Assad. Therefore, Assad permitted the PYD/YPG to bear arms and create political settlement in Northern Syria. This was the scene in northern Syria when the United States began to support the PYD/YPG against the Islamic State.

The United States of America has actually no concrete Syrian policy under Trump Administration. This is one of the biggest problems for Turkey. Trump Administration has not thrown its political weight about Syria and it is not possible to mention about a new and constructive U.S. policy. Decisions are generally taken by Pentagon in the field. Obviously, Trump’s statements and Pentagon’s steps are in contradiction with each other. This situation is also against the deep-seated state tradition of the United States of America. At the beginning, Obama Administration established a tactical, reportedly temporary, relationship with the YPG during the Kobane (Ayn el-Arab) crisis. The United States aided the YPG and pushed back Islamic State (IS) fighters together with an international air strike led by the U.S. However, this relationship has completely turned into a strategic and permanent one within this process. “The U.S.-led coalition is working with its Syrian militia allies to set up a new border force of 30,000 personnel, the coalition said on Sunday, a move that has added to Turkish anger over U.S. support for Kurdish-dominated forces in Syria” (Perry and Coşkun, 2018). This is a border security force for the United States; however, it is absolutely a terror army for the Republic of Turkey.

Apparently, the major aim of the United States in Syria was to defeat ISIS and deploy the YPG forces in these areas in order to create safe zone and so-called stability in the region. Immediately afterwards, the United States aided to the YPG to be a part of the conflict in Syria. By way of using the YPG as a proxy, the United States found a place to involve in Syrian war.

Initial aid for the YPG was primarily prompted by the US' need to have a stake in the conflict and monitor the situation in regards to Daesh. The SDF has been largely successful in this regard, driving out Daesh militants from numerous areas in Syria, including the group's strongholds in Raqqa, Mayadeen and Deir Ez-Zor, and also gaining control of strategic oil reserves in the process. (Hasan, 2018)

However, what is important hereby is that the United States has not only promised to eradicate ISIS from Syria, but also it wants to make the PYD/YPG permanent in northern Syria. Namely, terrorist organizations in Syria want to establish a de-facto Kurdish state and they see the United States as their big brother and trust it for further help and support. This new geopolitical move whose foundation was laid by the United States in Kobane has turned into a grand strategy that is aimed to leave Turkey's Syrian border from Haseke-Kamışlı to Afrin to the control of the PYD and its armed wing the YPG. The main objective of the PYD/YPG is to create the North Army and take control of a geographic region alongside the northern border of Turkey, and the United States (Trump Administration) has apparently given utmost support to this terrorist organization notwithstanding all the warnings of Turkey. The United States also wants to break Iran's influence in the region by being in sight in the region. "The US intends to maintain an open-ended military presence in Syria, not only to fight Isis and al-Qaida but also to provide a bulwark against Iranian influence, ensure the departure of the Assad regime and create conditions for the return of refugees" (Borger, et al, 2018).

When this is the reality, U.S. would-be aims in Syria have been officially proclaimed by Rex Tillerson, who served as the former Secretary of State, as follows: "In his Stanford speech, Tillerson laid out five US goals in Syria: the defeat of Isis and al-Qaida, a UN-brokered resolution for Syria that involved Bashar al-Assad's departure, a curb on Iran, conditions for the safe return of refugees, and the complete elimination of remaining chemical weapons" (Borger, et al, 2018). Apart from that, the United States is also uneasy about the close relationships between Turkey, Russia and Iran. Put it differently, Trump Administration is not content with this regional alliance. On the other hand, it is also against Turkey's purchase of S-400 missile defense system from Russia because of being a NATO ally; however, it does not provide Turkey with significant ammunition that Turkey urgently needs. In brief, it is possible to see a contradiction in U.S. foreign policy towards Turkey.

Figure 6: A US Officer Visits A YPG Camp on April 25, 2017



Source: TRT World

Syria is a place for the United States that cannot be left to the ultimate authority of Russia and Iran, a rogue state for the U.S. For this reason, being far away from Syria or withdrawing its forces and influence from these territories do not suit the United States' book and as it is stated before, despite Trump's statement about withdrawing from Syria, the United States will be permanent in Syria and the YPG will continue to be its unofficial land force in the field.

With supporting the YPG proving helpful for the US to fulfil arguably their three primary objectives, it is unsurprising that Washington opted to continue to support them under the guise of the SDF. With little other side to support and a need to monitor the ever-changing situation in the region, as well as the relationship between Turkey, Russia and Iran, such an offer seemed better than any other alternative. The only practical benefit, at least for the moment, is that US backing the Kurds gives America a continued foothold in Syria to oversee the ongoing events. (Hasan, 2018)

Turkey and the United States are both NATO allies and strategic partners. These two partners should complete each other in the world politics, attach importance to each other's national security, and pay regard to their vital priorities under normal circumstances. However, notwithstanding the fact that Turkey is willing to maintain relationships with its strategic partner, the United States pays no attention to Turkey's calls. The United States is unmindful of Turkey's national security and leaves Turkey, a pivotal state, alone in Syrian crisis. The United States

has generally made conciliatory statements on the subject of the steps they have taken in Syria. “We want to reassure the people and government of Turkey that the U.S. is committed to preventing additional security risks and protecting our NATO ally, Pentagon spokesman Eric Pahon said” (Daily Sabah, 2018). Yet, they publicly back terrorist organizations. Despite Turkey’s objections for U.S. support to the PYD/YPG, the U.S. has continued to consolidate its relations and back them with money and ammunition. U.S. President Donald Trump, despite his promise to stop aiding the PYD/YPG in Syria, approved U.S. defense budget and allocated huge amount of money for the terrorists in the last days of 2017.

In its 2018 budget, the U.S. Department of Defense has decided to give \$500 million of weaponry, ammunition and vehicles to the YPG-dominated Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) to "fight against Daesh." In spite of Turkey's strong criticism of its cooperation with the YPG, the U.S.'s ratified defense budget will set aside half a billion dollars of military support to the SDF in Syria. In the details of the budget, it is stated that there are 25,000-armed people in the field, with an additional 5,000 people to be trained in 2018. (Daily Sabah, 2017)

Figure 7: Members of the YPG Unload the Ammunition Given by the U.S.



Source: Daily Sabah

The United States is planning to increase the number of terrorists in the border, and U.S. aids to the YPG (money and ammunition) will continue in the following year. In that case, Turkey is rightfully concerned that the weapons that are given to the YPG will ultimately be transferred to the PKK which is an explicit survivability question. Therefore, it is not possible to mention about positive bilateral relations between

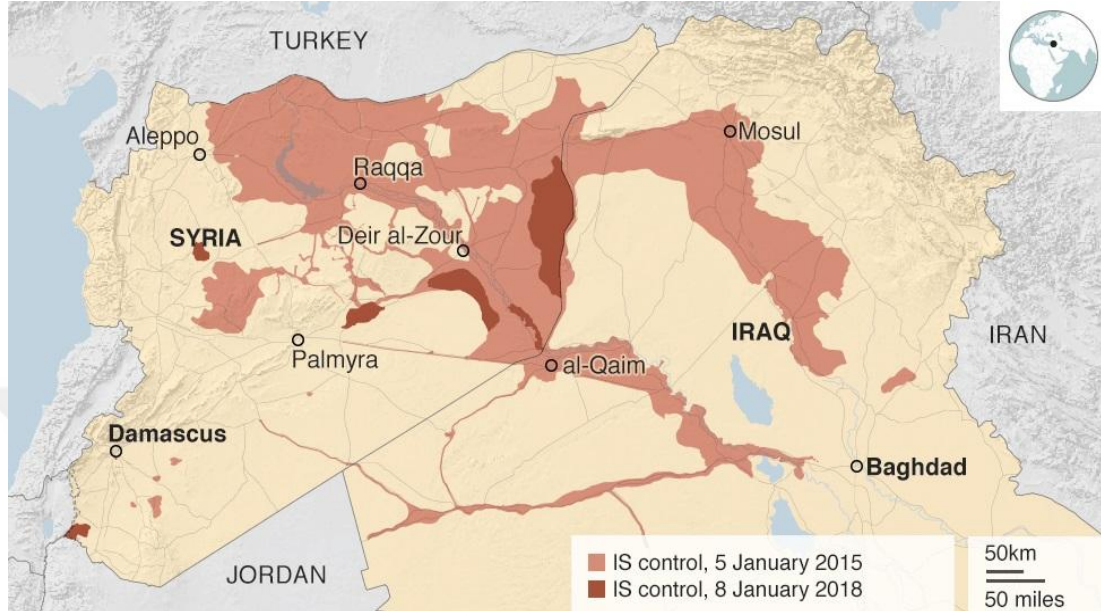
them under these circumstances and Turkey has the right to protect its borders and national security in any case.

4.2.U.S. AND RUSSIAN INTERVENTION IN SYRIA AND ITS EFFECTS ON TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY

It will be helpful to summarize the background of the chaos in Syria in order to figure out the current power struggle. Chaos in Syria literally began with the Arab Spring in the year of 2011. “The Arab Awakening/Arab Spring is a concept denoting a revolutionary sweeping tide of demonstrations, protests and other forms of opposition to the authorities (both violent and non-violent), riot and protracted civil wars in the Arab territories which started on December 18, 2010” (Abdelsalam, 2015: 121). There occurred civil rebellions and large scaled protests in Syria against the current government and President Bashar al-Assad tried to suppress these anti-government incidents by using disproportionate force and heavy weapons and this turmoil turned into a military conflict and then became a civil war that has lasted until now. “The situation in Syria was basically characterized by mass protests, brutal police crackdown on protesters as well as armed rebellion from some of the protesters” (Richard, 2014: 41). During this civil war, many great and small armed and opposite groups emerged and began to fight against each other and Assad regime. Apart from that, the Islamic State (ISIS) found a room for maneuver in this turmoil and gained an advantage over the Assad regime in many parts of the country after Iraq. First of all, the ISIS militants captured Mosul in Iraq and then created a terror corridor towards Raqqa and Deir al Zour in Syria. They captured many strategic points including oil reservoirs and extended their sphere of influence quickly. After all that’s happened, great powers of the world such as the United States, Russia, France, England have also become the parts of this chaos, and now it wouldn’t be wrong to assert that Syria has become a chessboard in the strictest sense of the word. When great powers make a strategic move here, it changes the balances profoundly. “The intervention of Great Powers, expansion of the NATO and invasion of ISIS worsened the original civil war in Syria. Those factors make the civil war no longer an internal matter, but an interstate conflict” (Yu Li, 2016: 7). Obviously, Syria has

become a struggle and conflict center between Russia and the United States, namely the East and the West, at this point.

Figure 8: Territories Under ISIS Control in Iraq and Syria between 2015-2018



Source: IHS Conflict Monitor

When the ISIS militants captured Mosul and oil reservoirs and then exercised power over strategic parts of Iraq in 2014, U.S.-led global coalition was formed to defeat them as soon as possible. As the militants became a strong menace for peace and stability in the Middle East, U.S. Government pioneered the eradication of this terrorist organization together with the West. The significance of the threat of ISIS is defined by U.S. Government as follows: “The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) has dramatically undermined stability in Iraq, Syria and the broader Middle East and poses a threat to international peace and security” (U.S. Department of State, 2014).

Forming a coalition with its Arab and European allies, the United States kicked off a military campaign against ISIL that would become active primarily in the north of Syria. Moreover, cooperating with Turkey and Jordan, the US introduced what it called a “train and equip program,” for which it recruited Syrian militants from the ranks of anti-Assad groups. (Özertem, 2015: 2)

In spite of the fact that U.S.-led coalition increased its influence and power in Syrian civil war, the ISIS militants perseveringly went on controlling new territories in Iraq and Syria. “ISIS takes control of Al-Qaim, a town on the border with Syria, as well as three other Iraqi towns. ISIS takes control of Syria's largest oilfield and seizes a

gas field in the Homs Province, conquer a 90-mile stretch of Syrian towns, from Deir Ezzor to the Iraq border” (ISIS Fast Facts, 2017). This point was very significant because the Western block could not easily bring the situation under control. Besides, the PYD/YPG began to make more powerful in the north by means of the United States and posed a challenge for Turkey’s national security. Under these circumstances, Assad’s power and efficiency began to go down dramatically and current incidents continued to work against him. At this point, Russia’s intervention in Syria has changed the balances both politically and militarily. As it is described above, Assad had difficulties to suppress anti-regime forces, he was unable to create a national consensus, and armed groups began to increase their influence all over the country and this made the current situation even worse in the wake of the Arab Spring. However, Russia’s direct involvement, sending its jets to Syria, establishing airbases and sending weapons and vital equipment became a turning point and gave Assad Administration technical, military and morale support and Assad could relatively get the whip hand against anti-regime forces in some parts of the country. “In addition to its air support, the Russian Military also deployed artillery units, T-90 tanks, and aircraft within the country” (Özertem, 2015: 2). Although Assad could not outmaneuver these groups effectively, Putin’s strategic move was a morale booster for the regime itself and it was also a big show off that Syria was not alone and Russia was here with all its power. Upon being a major player and an arbiter in Syria, President Vladimir Putin confirmed Russian presence in Syria as follows:

We act based on the United Nations Charter, i.e. the fundamental principles of modern international law, according to which this or that type of aid, including military assistance, can and must be provided exclusively to [the] legitimate government of one country or another, upon its consent or request, or upon the decision of the United Nations Security Council. In this particular case, we act based on the request from the Syrian government to provide military and technical assistance, which we deliver under entirely legal international contracts. (World Freedom Foundation, 2015: 94)

As Russia began to be more active in Syria, Putin did not want to be alone in this conflict in the eyes of world public opinion and found a middle way with Iran, which is a regional power in its own right and a strong player in the Middle East, to defend Assad regime as well. They formed a bloc against the United States and included Turkey. “Russia is culturing bilateral relations with all the major Middle East players, so as to create a system in which it becomes an inevitable broker in

both the national equilibria and the larger regional game” (Valori, 2017). In that case, Turkey also wanted to be a part of this trilateral coalition because the United States left its NATO ally alone in Syrian Crisis. Put it differently, the United States did not pay heed to Turkey’s vital concerns in Syrian crisis. Just because of U.S. unfavorable attitude and behavior towards Turkey in respect to Syria, Turkey is forced to become closer to these key countries (Russia and Iran) and there occurred a remarkable mistrust between Turkey and the United States. Besides, the United States has consistently backed the PYD/YPG forces and has tried to form these terrorists like a regional power and a proxy for itself. It is a known fact that the YPG literally represents the United States. “Support for the SDF has allowed the US to maintain a diplomatic and military presence on the ground, whilst Kurdish groups also remain active on the same battlefronts” (Hasan, 2018). As a matter of fact, the United States is not willing to exist in Syria with all of its being, instead they use the YPG as a proxy and a tool to continuously monitor the current dynamics of the region. The United States also wants to break the influence of Russia and Iran in the long run. “The YPG also mirrors the US’ interest in mitigating Iranian influence. Trump has expressed its concern at the establishment of an “Iranian crescent”, with sympathetic governments in Iraq, Syria and Lebanon, creating a corridor from Iran to the Mediterranean Sea” (Hasan, 2018).

Donald Trump’s mistrustful and unbalanced policy, Pentagon’s menacing moves and strategic partnership with Russia in many critical areas have completely changed the atmosphere in Turkish foreign policy. Turkey has begun to move away from the Western bloc and has turned its face to the Eastern bloc to balance. “Russia has also created a climate of cooperation between Turkey and Iran, another geopolitical novelty that means only one thing: NATO has been fragmented and defused throughout the current Middle East” (Valori, 2017). This is the most significant impact of Syrian crisis on Turkish foreign policy. Turkey is, of course, still willing to develop its diplomatic relations with the United States, yet Trump Administration and Pentagon must absolutely take reassuring steps towards Turkey’s national security concerns and act like a real NATO ally and a strategic partner. In the meantime, Turkey has changed its attitude towards current Syrian regime by

accommodating its foreign policy according to the alliance with Russia and Iran. This change is clearly explained as follows:

The Turkish government has been defending a solution to the Syrian Civil War that leaves Assad out of the equation, and it has also pushed for a possible military option that would see the creation of a safe zone or no-fly zone. However, after his visit to Moscow to attend the opening ceremony of the Moscow Cathedral Mosque on 23 September 2015, President Erdogan signaled the possibility of a transition process in Syria that included Assad. This marked a “U-turn” in Turkish foreign policy. (Özertem, 2015: 9)

Figure 9: Putin hosts Erdogan and Rouhani in Sochi



Source: Israel Defense

Turkey has made strategic agreements with Russia to establish Akkuyu nuclear power plant, the Turk Stream project, S-400 missile system, economic and commercial relations and so on. These vital projects and significant bilateral relations will absolutely make this strategic partnership convenient and will strengthen Turkey's position in the Eastern bloc. In the current climate, it is possible to render at this point that the United States is losing its pivotal state, Turkey, because of collaborating with terrorist organizations and neglecting its strategic NATO ally. At this juncture, Russia has seized this valuable opportunity and pulled Turkey up to its side. Changing Turkish foreign policy will absolutely trigger further

critical developments in the region. When this is the case, Turkey wanted to solve its survivability question on its southern border and attempted to eradicate the threat of the PYD/YPG which is continuously backed by its so-called strategic partner, the United States. Growing Turkish-Russian relations and retrogressive Turkish-American relations will further explain the motive of Turkey to launch an operation to Afrin in Syria. As Turkey and Russia have come closer in many areas and together with the positive atmosphere of trilateral coalition between Russia, Iran and Turkey, Turkey made a decision to launch *Operation Olive Branch* to Syria to clean its border from the PYD/YPG. The meaning of the operation is explained as follows:

Turkey's defensive military offensive, Operation Olive Branch, started officially with heavy shelling of PKK/YPG positions in Afrin by 72 Turkish jets symbolizing the 72 soldiers killed in action during the country's last operation inside Syrian territory, Operation Euphrates Shield. For Turkey, the operation in Afrin is the first step towards ending the territorial dominance of the terrorist Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) and its affiliated People's Protection Units (YPG) in Northern Syria. Ankara's strategy is to eliminate terror threats on its borders and protect the routes between Turkey and the Middle East. (Kesvelioglu, 2018)

Turkey's intervention in Syria is not to conquer the territories of another country, rather it is a strong and urgent need to bring peace and stability to its southern border and a broader region. "Turkey undoubtedly cannot remain silent about the plans to tear Syria apart. It was clear that the U.S. would not leave Iraq and Syria. Continuous War is at the base of the Pentagon's military strategy" (Muradoğlu, 2018). It goes without saying that it was impossible for the United States to end the civil war in Syria during these seven years. Actually, it was not U.S. intention to bring peace and stability to the region. The United States wants to exist in Syria and the Middle East to curb Russia and Iran and maintain Israel's long-term security. However, Russia got on the stage as a global power in Syria in the course of U.S. failure and asserted its influence together with its allies. Furthermore, the United States did not want Turkey to launch an operation in Syria. Yet, Turkey was decisive to terminate the existence of the PYD/PKK and a terror corridor to the Mediterranean. Syria's territorial integrity is also of prime importance to Turkey. "Russia needs Turkey to orchestrate a grand settlement to end the Syrian crisis. Hence, it was easier for Ankara to convince Moscow rather than Washington about the need for such an offensive as Operation Olive Branch" (Kesvelioglu, 2018).

In the beginning of Turkey's intervention in Syria, Afrin was under control of Russia and the northern Syrian city of Manbij was under control of the United States. Both countries were backing up the PYD/YPG forces in Syria. However, Russia's relations with the PYD/YPG was a temporary one. "Russia's relationship with the Kurds has never been based on long-term, strategic cooperation. On the contrary, throughout its history, Moscow has used "the Kurdish card" only when it needed to reach a compromise with the countries in the Middle East, especially with Turkey" (Issaev, 2018). On the other hand, U.S. relations with the PYD/YPG is, as is known, a strategic one and this terrorist organization is a land force of the United States. At this point, Turkey was and is still sharing its southern border not with Syria but with Russia and the United States. Therefore, it was impossible for Turkey to launch an operation to Afrin without Russia's permission. Besides, just because Syria is a battlefield for Russia and the United States, Russia helped Turkey to the detriment of the United States and "Moscow gave consent to the partial use of Syria's airspace by the Turkish air forces, paving the way for Turkey's offensive on Afrin" (Issaev, 2018). In that case, "Washington was unable to help its YPG allies, and this gave Moscow an additional opportunity to once again demonstrate the illusory nature of US security guarantees" (Issaev, 2018). Turkey was backed by Russia and thereupon launched an air and ground operation to Afrin. Over and above this, in return of the permission and help in Afrin, Turkey has also an ace in the hole against Moscow.

Turkey has another, important bargaining chip against Russia: the Turkish Stream gas pipeline. Moscow has pinned high hopes on the project and it does not want anything to hinder its construction. Moscow's consent to a Turkish operation in Afrin coincided with a statement from Gazprom CEO Aleksei Miller, confirming a long-awaited agreement on the construction of a second gas line passing through the territorial waters of Turkey. If the construction continues without hindrance, the Turkish Stream can be completed in 2019 as planned. (Issaev, 2018)

There are vital mutual interests between Russia and Turkey and accordingly, Turkey's deviation from the orbit of the United States, which is completely indifferent to Turkey's national security concerns, is inevitable at this point. In a nutshell, Operation Olive Branch was literally a kind of clash of arms between Turkey and the United States. However, these two countries did not come face to face in the battlefield, rather the United States used its land force the YPG to fight against its NATO ally and strategic partner Turkey. Surprisingly, Operation Olive

Branch in Afrin arrived at the conclusion sooner than anticipated with flying colors. The PYD/YPG terrorists escaped from Afrin city center to Manbij, which is still under control of the United States, without showing fierce opposition to Turkish army. Russia took one step back in Afrin at first and paved the way for Turkish army. As described above, Syria is a chessboard between Russia and the United States, and Russia made its move by leaving the PYD/YPG forces alone in Afrin in exchange for the mutual agreements with Turkey. Because of the fact that the PYD/YPG terrorists are the land forces or soldiers of fortune of the United States, Russia dealt death blow to the United States by facilitating Turkey's operation. The PYD/YPG couldn't get the help of Russia and the United States did not want to endanger its existence in the north of Syria or did not want to take a risk of losing its land force for which it trained and equipped and spent billions of dollars, so the YPG terrorists withdrew to Manbij and east of the Euphrates, and accordingly Turkey achieved its objective of clearing a part of its border from the terrorists. It should not be forgotten that although the PYD/YPG terrorists withdrew to east of the Euphrates, they will be used against Turkey by the United States in the future and east of the Euphrates is as significant as the west of it. One thing is certain that Manbij and east of the Euphrates must also be cleaned from the terrorists in order to fully complete the operation. There is no doubt that Afrin was important; however, the real trouble lies in Manbij and east of the Euphrates. "The remaining 600-kilometer-long Syrian border with Turkey is under the control of the PYD, which aspires to establish an independent Kurdish state" (Kanlı, 2018). It is also vital to pay attention to significant information given by Naim Babüroğlu, scientific advisor of the National Security and Foreign Policy Research Center:

The United States has handed over east of the Euphrates to the PYD/YPG. 30 percent of the Syrian territories and 50 percent of its energy resources have been seized by the PYD/YPG. The militia has 60,000 fighters now, yet the aim is to organize 100,000 fighters and a regular army. West of the Euphrates, Manbij, is also under control of the YPG and the United States. U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) Commander Gen. Joseph Votel announced last month that they would establish border forces in Syria, which he said would help prevent the resurgence of Daesh. The meaning of this statement is that there will be a PKK state in the east of the Euphrates. This is unacceptable and Turkey cannot remain silent at this point. (Babüroğlu, 2018)

In conclusion, Operation Olive Branch is actually a very decisive step not only against the United States but also against the whole world. Turkey has decisively showed that this region is not unprotected and Turkey is here with all its being as a strong arbiter and equilibrant. Things have changed completely. Operation Olive Branch has changed the long-term favorable atmosphere between Turkey and the United States, and it is possible to render that relations between these two countries will not be the same as before if the current policy of the United States continues in this manner. Trump Administration has the responsibility to restore bilateral relations with Turkey by supporting its NATO ally in all spheres and must not sacrifice Turkey for the sake of the PYD/YPG terrorists. “Turkey hopes that the US will understand its willingness to dismantle the PYD/YPG in North Syria. Operation Olive Branch and future operations against the PYD/YPG have the status of pre-emptive strikes” (Kesvelioglu, 2018). The take-home message of this military operation is that Turkey will always do its best to curb the existence of a terror corridor along its southern border under any circumstances.

4.3. QUESTIONING THE PIVOTAL STATUS OF TURKEY UNDER CURRENT CONDITIONS

“A pivotal state is a hot spot that could not only determine the fate of its region but also affect international stability” (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 33). Turkey is, beyond any doubt, a pivotal and a key state not only for the West but also for the East. Its geopolitical, economic and political/cultural significance have always been appreciated by the countries which look after interests in this region. In the Middle East, Turkey has always remained a milestone for great powers of the world and without Turkey’s role and alliance, things have never been smooth and facile. The major issue of this master’s thesis has been built upon general Turkish-American relations and Turkey’s significance (pivotal status) in the eyes of the United States. For this reason, Turkey’s current position in U.S. foreign policy and U.S. (Trump Administration) approach to Turkey will be scrutinized in this last section.

For American interests, Turkey's unique character among the Muslim countries made it a valuable asset in bringing the cultural gap between Europe and the Middle East. Its geographic position and military bases facilitated information gathering and intelligence about potential terrorist activities as well as operations against such groups. Similarly, the US was important for Turkish interests, for its place in the global balance of power, as a security provider, and as a key supporter in Ankara's bid for membership in the European Union. (Müftüler, 2006: 61-62)

Notwithstanding the fact that these two allies share strategic interests, difference of opinion can be seen from time to time and bilateral relations in the last seventy years have been up-and-down. Undoubtedly, relations with the United States occupy an important place in Turkish foreign policy. New American Administration has always meant a new phase for the Turkish Government. In that case, new American policies towards Turkey and the attitudes of American presidents and American top executives have become more of an issue. Turkey has been one of the most indispensable countries in U.S. foreign policy for the last seventy years notwithstanding highs and lows, and Turkish governments pay utmost attention to how American officials evaluate Turkey's strategic position. Turkish governments make allowances for the comments, perceptions and long-term plans of U.S. officials in the course of generating foreign policy and security strategies in a new period. "The United States considers Turkey as an active pivotal state because of having strategic position, regional power, crowded population, economic potential, and the capacity to affect regional and international stability" (Ayata and Ercan, 2007: 24). When this is the case, it is possible to render that they must have close relations in all spheres including diplomatic, military, economic and so on. Yet, this is unfortunately not the case. Before Trump, previous U.S. Administrations generally tried to maintain moderate bilateral relations with Turkey for a length of time. For instance, Bush and Obama Administrations gave partial importance to Turkey in their Middle East policy and did not explicitly intend to displease the Turkish Governments. Although relations with previous Administrations witnessed alienation, mistrust and clash of interests in the course of time, Trump Administration has brought up this level to the issues of national security and survivability question. Another way to assert that the United States under Donald Trump Administration is acting like an enemy of Turkey. It will be scrutinized further on.

First of all, Trump's approach to Turkey can best be explained with the word *indifference*. Trump has not given Turkey a major role in his Middle East policy and has underestimated Turkey's features in international relations. For instance, in his speech to Muslim states in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, Donald Trump decidedly underlined some significant issues as follows: "He gives warm-hearted messages to Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Yemen. A new order will be established in the Middle East under Trump Administration and major actors will be some authoritarian regimes such as Saudi Arabia and Egypt. Trump has also pointed Iran as a serious threat risk in the region" (Yazıcıoğlu, 2017). "There are three basic components: fighting terrorism, containing Iran, and supporting Israel" (Cook, 2018). "From Lebanon to Iraq to Yemen, Iran funds, arms and trains terrorists, militias and other extremist groups that spread destruction and chaos across the region" (Beaumont and Dehghan, 2017). These statements tell many things about what will happen in this geography in the future. Trump declares Iran as an explicit threat and enemy of the West and the Gulf, supports Israel in every respect and protects it as its ally and does its best to consolidate its relations with the Middle East. Trump's polarizing statements rather than constructive ones will certainly cause quite a stir among the countries in the region. In the meantime, U.S. motive to consolidate relations with the Middle East is, of course, to sell armaments and strengthen the notion of pro-American Middle East. It wouldn't be wrong to assert that Gulf States are big and important customers of the United States. "A lot of people are at work because of Saudi Arabia's business, Mr. Trump said while welcoming Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman, adding that the kingdom has finalized \$12.5bn in purchases of planes, missiles and frigates from US companies" (Wilts, 2018). He uses his businessman features to make money from the affluent states of the Arabian Peninsula. "The official said the arms package could end up surpassing more than \$300bn over a decade to help Saudi Arabia boost its defensive capabilities while still maintaining US ally Israel's qualitative military edge over its neighbors" (Holland, 2017). What is weird in this situation is that the United States sells all kinds of arms and equipment to tens of countries in the world; however, it does not permit Turkey to buy armaments. "A U.S. Senate committee last week passed its version of a \$716 billion defense policy bill, including a measure to prevent Turkey from buying the

Lockheed jets, citing Brunson and the Russian missile deal” (Cyprus Mail, 2018). The United States has even allocated money and armaments to the terrorist organization, the PYD/YPG, for the upcoming year. “The 2018 National Defense Authorization Act allocates \$500 million to the fight against IS in Syria until next September, equipping an additional 5,000 rebel troops with AK-47s, heavy machine guns, sniper rifles and more than \$21 million in stipends” (Detsch, 2017). “The United States gives weapons to the Syrian Kurdish Democratic Union Party (PYD) for free but does not want to sell weapons to Turkey for a price” (Hürriyet Daily News, 2017). Is it still possible to mention about strategic partnership? Is it still possible to mention about the fact that the United States gives importance to its pivotal state and cares about the national security of its ally in such a critical region? What is Turkey supposed to do in the face of such a situation? Turkey will, of course, turn its face to Russia to buy required equipment. “Now Turkey could become the first buyer of Russia's Su-57 "stealth" jet killer” (Lockie, 2018). As it can be seen in every incident that “In international relations, there are no permanent friends or permanent enemies, only permanent interests” (Panganiban, 2017).

What is the role of Turkey in the Middle East policy of the United States? Is Turkey’s only role to harbor Syrian refugees? Has Turkey been neglected because of not being a big purchaser? Contrary to expectations, Trump did not give special place to Turkey and its significance in U.S. foreign policy. This has been a big disappointment on the side of Turkey. This attitude and approach will not be welcomed by the Turkish Government and will absolutely change Turkey’s stand against the United States in the long run. As described previously, Turkey has begun to move away from Western bloc and has turned its face to Eastern bloc to balance.

Figure 10: Donald Trump, King Salman and Abdel Fattah el Sisi are Opening the World Center for Countering Extremist Thought in Riyadh



Source: The National

There are some very critical matters that have made Turkey alienated to the United States recently. Trump's indifference to Turkey's strategic importance, U.S. decision to move its embassy to Jerusalem, U.S. backed Israel's brutality against Palestinian civilians in Gaza and U.S. support to the PYD/YPG have long occupied the agenda of Turkish-American relations in the recent times. Trump literally disregards Turkey's strategic partnership and pivotal status without any logical and down-to-earth policy and he attaches importance to other secondary countries of the Middle East rather than its NATO ally. Even though Turkey considers itself keeping the leading position of the Muslim world, Trump Administration does not share the same idea. Then, U.S. decision to move its embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem has been severely condemned by the Turkish Government. Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu made a statement that "We condemn the irresponsible statement of the U.S. Administration declaring that it recognizes Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and it will be moving the U.S. Embassy in Israel to Jerusalem. This decision is against international law and relevant UN Resolutions" (Mehmet and Alam, 2017). Later on, Israeli soldiers killed tens of Palestinian civilians on the border of Gaza and this brutality has had considerable repercussions on Turkish public opinion. President

Recep Tayyip Erdogan said in a speech that “I condemn this humanitarian drama, the genocide, from whichever side it comes, Israel or America” (Shugerman, 2018). Turkey recalled its ambassador from Israel and sent Israel’s ambassador to its country. Last but not least, the PYD/YPG question is the major problem that has triggered a long-term conflict and high tension between them.

Turkey and the U.S. are so-called allies in NATO. But the U.S. is arming the Syrian branch of the terrorist organization that has fought for years against Turkey and wants to build a corridor that reaches the Mediterranean Sea. How is that part of an alliance? The U.S. constitutes the so-called ‘Border Security Force’ from the Syrian elements of the PKK. The U.S. is doing it without even feeling the need to consult with its NATO ally Turkey. (Muradoğlu, 2018)

It is not possible for Turkey to remain silent under these circumstances. Turkey has participated to the alliance of Russia and Iran to balance and this is another momentous point that has changed the phase of Turkish-American relations. By collaborating with terrorists, the United States is acting like an enemy for Turkey. One thing is certain that Turkey’s pivotal status has not changed, Turkey is still a regional power and an arbiter in the region, but U.S. attention to Turkey has changed completely. The United States under Trump Administration treats Turkey like Russia and Iran or Iraq and Syria. Statements on vital issues made by the United States to soothe Turkey are very superficial and is not in accordance with strategic partnership. Russia is its eternal opponent and Iran is a rogue state in U.S. foreign policy. However, Turkey is a pivotal state, a regional actor and has a strong voice in its own sphere of influence. Turkey and the United States are allies in NATO and have a long standing strategic and multifaceted bilateral relations. This favorable atmosphere is not expected to exist in the current climate. The United States is literally losing its pivotal state, regional partner and NATO ally. There is no mutual environment of confidence between the governments. This distressed atmosphere is expected to continue between them as long as Trump is at work, and if the current Middle East policy of the United States does not change, there will be more crisis in the forthcoming years.

CONCLUSION

When the Cold War ended in 1991, the whole world witnessed the sudden collapse of the Eastern bloc, and the West (NATO) declared its unquestionable victory. Bipolar world came to an end ultimately and a new world order was commenced by the West and its natural leader, the United States. The United States declared itself as the one and only global leader (superpower) of the free and democratic world. “Not only the twentieth century but even the twenty-first century then seemed destined to be the American century” (Brzezinski, 2012: 6). After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the world began to feel U.S. hegemony at every turn due to its remarkable economic, social and military power. It wouldn’t be wrong to put forward that the United States has cemented its hegemony by using its soft power as well as its hard power for the last seventy years. Its hard power is as clear as crystal; atomic bomb and nuclear power. This is an intimidating one. Yet, soft power is not to engage in violence, rather it is used to affect people by using their consents. “The ability to establish preferences tends to be associated with intangible assets such as an attractive personality, culture, political values and institutions, and policies that are seen as legitimate or having moral authority” (Nye, 2004: 6). In this way, the United States could find an elbow room to redesign the world the way it wanted.

“America ensures its hegemonic capacity through its own structural power enabled by security, production, finance, and knowledge capacity in international economy-politics exceeding regional dimensions” (Strange, 1987: 565). There are many points that make America great in this unipolar world and these significant features have been scrutinized profoundly in this study; however, one thing is certain which constitutes the backbone of this master’s thesis is that since the Second World War, the United States has used up its economic, political, military power, its valuable resources and unlimited amount of money so as to retain the feature of the world’s superpower and this situation has clearly made it worn out throughout the years. The 20th century was the American Century in many ways. However, “With the end of the Cold War and the consequent early end of the twentieth century (and even, according to some, the end of history) a new geopolitical framework, a new

strategic construct, is needed” (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 379). In other words, the 21st century also needs a more collaborative and strong order urgently when the current developments are taken into account. If the United States tries to continue exercising its power to every corner of the globe, this will rapidly consume its internal and external resources. This system of omnipotent responsibility is unsustainable. Therefore, the U.S. needs to make a strategic plan to maintain its hegemony by determining specific countries in specific regions. These specific countries will be the protectors and the supporters of the current order and American national interests. By this means, the concept of pivotal states has emerged in U.S. foreign policy. The fundamental point is that order and stability of the rest of the world will be regulated via pivotal states. “The United States need not respond to every instance of chaos and instability in Latin America, Africa, and Asia. Limited resources prohibit it from doing so in any case. Instead, the United States should focus on pivotal states in the developing world” (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 381).

The pivotal states have been chosen in the context of a broader foreign policy perspective and their possible success or failure will absolutely influence the future of their regions. They contain strategic assets within themselves. A pivotal state is a key player in its region. They are like a bridge that helps establish stability and create cooperation between the great powers and the third world. In other words, the great powers do not have to deal with and show special interest to tiny, destabilized and underdeveloped countries. They have their own pivotal states to penetrate these countries and help them improve their external and internal dynamics. At this juncture, pivotal states are indispensable partners of the great powers to widen their influence and exercise their politics upon the third world. There are nine pivotal states in the world that have been chosen particularly in U.S. foreign policy. They constitute one-third of the world population. The significant point is that when these countries tilt to a direction, most of the countries in the developing world will also tilt to that direction in the future. For this reason, their position and stability are highly important.

On the basis of the criteria listed above, we identified the following states as pivotal: Mexico, Brazil, Algeria, Egypt, South Africa, Turkey, India, Pakistan

and Indonesia. Given their size, population, geostrategic position, economic potential, capacity to affect global or regional issues, and the related criteria, they demand focused American attention.(Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 8)

In this study, *Turkey as a pivotal state* has been examined in many respects. Turkey's geopolitical, economic, political and cultural features make it a true pivotal state for the United States and also make Turkey a prominent country among the countries in the region. Turkey is situated in one of the most critical regions and an ally Turkey is extremely significant to the United States and the continuation of American influence in this region. "The United States considers Turkey as an active pivotal state because of having strategic position, regional power, crowded population, economic potential, and the capacity to affect regional and international stability" (Ayata and Ercan, 2007: 24). Besides, Turkey plays an instrumental role in bringing long-term peace and stability in the Middle East. Turkey and the United States are allies in NATO and this long-term alliance is permanent in the West. "Whoever rules in Ankara, Turkey's geostrategic importance will remain intact" (Chase and Hill and Kennedy, 1999: 119). When this is the case, new Trump Administration has completely changed U.S. favorable approach to Turkey and has created a negative atmosphere despite Turkey's position in U.S. foreign policy. The policy that Trump Administration has adopted towards Turkey can best be explained with *indifference*. Trump explicitly underestimates Turkey's significance in international relations and disregards Turkey's strategic partnership and pivotal status. The United States under Trump Administration does not pay attention to Turkey's concerns in regional issues. Major crisis that have emerged recently can be counted as: Trump's indifference to Turkey's strategic importance and national security concerns in its region, U.S. decision to move its embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, U.S. backed Israel's brutality against Palestinian civilians in Gaza, preventing Turkey from buying U.S. armaments and U.S. support to the PYD/YPG terrorist organization. The last topic has also a special place in the recent period between these two NATO allies because the United States is continuously arming the terrorist organization which it says the PYD/YPG is its land force in Syria. Yet, Turkey sees the PYD/YPG as a serious threat to its national security and does its best to eradicate it from its southern border. At this point, by collaborating

with the terrorists and excluding its NATO ally, the United States is acting like an enemy of Turkey. Despite all the efforts of Turkey, Trump Administration is doing the opposite. By taking irreversible steps, the United States is losing its pivotal state in the proper meaning of the word.

The recent moves of Trump Administration have forced Turkey to move away from the United States and the West, and Turkey has turned its face to the East which is Russia and Iran. Turkey feels the need of being a part of a strong and regional alliance and has formed an alliance with Russia and Iran that again makes the United States develop exclusionist attitude towards Turkey. U.S. negative attitude has made Turkey become closer to Russia. Thus, Turkey and Russia have developed positive bilateral relations and made strategic agreements that can affect the regional dynamics profoundly. It is as clear as crystal that strategic partnership, alliance, pivotal status, geostrategic significance, historical bilateral relations, economic and commercial cooperation or other vital points that Turkey and the United States have for the last seventy years do not make any sense to Trump. He is completely inconsistent with his actions. All in all, there is only one thing to infer from the recent U.S. steps; Turkey is no longer seen as a pivotal state for the United States and current U.S. Administration fulfils its need by using second class and authoritarian states and even terrorist organizations in the Middle East. In that case, Turkey must pull itself up by its own bootstraps to secure its national security, maintain necessary armaments by making a deal with Russia and other regional and global suppliers, take advantage of its strategic position in international relations, use its regional and global potential as a trump card, establish new regional alliances with neighboring countries and strengthen the current ones to cement its position in its own region.

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