



SOCIAL SCIENCES UNIVERSITY OF ANKARA
INSTITUTE FOR GRADUATE STUDIES IN SOCIAL SCIENCES
MASTER OF ARTS IN QUDS STUDIES

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**TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS AL-QUDS DURING
THE AK PARTY PERIOD: 2002-2019**

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ABSTRACT

TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS AL-QUDS: 2002-2019

ŞEYMA DOĞAN

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There were up and downs in Turkish foreign policy towards al-Quds especially within the scope of its relations with both parties; Israel and Palestine. Turkey's behavior towards the Arab-Israeli conflict affected its relations with both Israel and the Arab states. There were times when Turkey supported the Arab side. However, its recognition of the state of Israel in 1948 was criticized by the Arabs. Some scholars and diplomats argue that the recognition was used as a tool to help the Palestinians. For instance, in case if Turkey did not recognize Israel, it would not be able to use diplomacy and NGOs as a tool of its influence in the region and its influence would be limited in various dimensions. On the other hand, another point which is worth mentioning is the change and the developments in Turkish foreign policy and the reflections of this changes to the case of al-Quds. Especially within the last decades there were structural and practical changes in Turkey's foreign policy towards al-Quds. This can be explained with the characteristics and ideologies of the individuals, foreign policy makers and the decreasing influence of the West towards Turkey's foreign policy. Until 2002, Turkey has been implementing the Western model. However, currently there are visible changes that Turkey abandoned this kind of policy. At this point, the research will investigate the main structure of Turkish foreign policy towards al-Quds from 2002 to 2019. Eventually, the outcomes of these current policies are also one of the significant subjects of the research.

Keywords: Al-Quds, Turkey, Foreign Policy, Turkish Foreign Policy



ÖZET

TÜRKİYE’NİN KUDÜS’E YÖNELİK DIŞ POLİTİKASI: 2002-2019

ŞEYMA DOĞAN

Kudüs Çalışmaları Tezli Yüksek Lisans Programı (İngilizce)

Danışman: Prof. Dr. Abd al Fattah El-Awaisi

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Türkiye’nin Kudüs’e yönelik politikası incelendiğinde, özellikle iki taraf ile ilişkileri temel alındığında inişler ve çıkışlar tespit edilmektedir. Türkiye’nin Arap-İsrail çatışması karşısında izlediği tutum İsrail ve Filistin olmak üzere her iki taraf ile olan ilişkilerini doğrudan etkilemektedir. Türkiye’nin Arapları desteklediği zamanlar olmuştur ancak 1948 yılında İsrail devletinin tanınması Arap kesimi tarafından eleştirilmiştir. Bazı kesimler Türkiye’nin İsrail devletini tanımasını, Filistinlilere yardım etmek için bir araç olarak kullandığı görüşündedirler. Örneğin, Türkiye İsrail devletini tanımamış olsaydı burada etki aracı olarak sivil toplum kuruluşlarını bulundurması ve diplomatik ilişkiler kurması mümkün olmayabilirdi ve bu durum Türkiye’nin bölge üzerindeki etkisinin birçok açıdan sınırlandırılmasına neden olabilirdi. Öte yandan, kayda değer bir diğer konu ise; son zamanlarda Türk dış politikasında meydana gelen değişimler, gelişmeler ve bu gelişmelerin Kudüs meselesi üzerindeki etkileridir. Özellikle son yıllarda Türkiye’nin Kudüs’e yönelik politikalarında yapı ve uygulama açısından farklılıklar mevcuttur. Bu durum, dış politikada bireylerin ve karar alıcı mercilerin ideolojik görüşleri, karakteristik özellikleri ve Batı’nın Türk dış politikası üzerindeki etkisinin azalmasıyla açıklanabilir. Türkiye, 2002 yılına kadar Batı modeli çerçevesinde bir dış politika izlemeyi tercih etmiştir. Ancak, Türkiye’nin son zamanlarda izlediği dış politika bu modeli terk ettiği yönünde izlenim vermektedir. Bu noktada, araştırma Türkiye’nin 2002 yılından 2019 yılına kadar Kudüs’e yönelik dış politikasının temel yapısını incelemeyi hedeflemektedir. Son olarak, bu politikaların

doğurduğu sonuçlar da araştırmada incelenecek olan önemli konular arasında yer almaktadır.

Keywords: Kudüs, Türkiye, Dış Politika, Türk Dış Politikası



ABBREVIATIONS

AFAD: Ministry of Interior Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (T.C. İçişleri Bakanlığı Afet ve Acil Durum Yönetimi Başkanlığı)

AK Party: Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi)

AP: Justice Party (Adalet Partisi)

ASALA: Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia

CHP: Republican People's Party (Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi)

DİB: Directorate of Religious Affairs (Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı)

DP: Democrat Party (Demokrat Parti)

EEC: European Economic Community

EU: European Union

FTA: Free Trade Agreement

GDP: Gross Domestic Product

Hamas: Islamic Resistance Movement (Harakat Al-Muqawama Al-Islamiya)

INTERPOL: The International Criminal Police Organization

ISIS: Islamic State of Iraq and Syria

İHH: Humanitarian Relief Foundation (İnsan Hak ve Hürriyetleri İnsani Yardım Vakfı)

JDP: Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi)

KRG: Kurdistan Regional Government

MGK: National Security Council (Milli Güvenlik Konseyi)

MİT: National Intelligence Organization (Milli İstihbarat Teşkilatı)

NATO: North Atlantic Treaty Organization

NGO: Non-Governmental Organization

OIC: Organization of Islamic Cooperation

PA: Palestinian Authority

PKK: Kurdistan Workers' Party

PLO: Palestine Liberation Organization

ROC: Republic of Cyprus

TIPH: Temporary International Presence in Hebron

TİKA: Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (Türk İşbirliği ve Koordinasyon Ajansı Başkanlığı)

TPC: Turkish Petroleum Corporation

TÜİK: Turkish Statistical Institute (Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu)

UAE: United Arab Emirates

UAV: Unmanned Aerial Vehicle

UK: United Kingdom

UN: United Nations

UNCCP: United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine

UNGA: United Nations General Assembly

UNIFIL: United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon

UNRWA: The United Nations Relief and Works Agency

UNSC: United Nations Security Council

USA: United States of America

USSR: Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

WHO: World Health Organization

WMD: Weapons of Mass Destruction

YEE: Yunus Emre Institute (Yunus Emre Enstitüsü)

YTB: Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities (Yurtdışı Türkler ve Akraba Topluluklar Başkanlığı)

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INTRODUCTION

One of the very first characteristics of al-Quds is its holiness for the three monotheistic religions; Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Considering its holy characteristics, cultural and historical heritage, al-Quds grasps the attention of researchers from various disciplines. Theological investigations from three religious aspects are made for addressing the sanctity of the land. Additionally, there are political science investigations and researches which are dealing with the ongoing conflict over the land. On the other hand, it is also at the center of international law studies regarding its unique legal status. Considering the structure of the land it also grasps the attention of sociological studies which investigate the socio-cultural outcomes of the developments targeting the structural characteristics of al-Quds. As it is mentioned above, al-Quds is a unique land from various aspects and this differentiates it from any other land and gives it a unique character. This is also emphasized in United Nations (UN) Resolutions as it was highlighted that this unique land requires unique legal status in international law.

Considering its historical heritage and sacred dimension, it is possible to say that the origins of the land require multiculturalism and diversity. For a better understanding of the characteristics of the land, while making analysis within the scope of al-Quds, there are several disciplines which cannot be ignored. These disciplines could be addressed as; theology, history, international law, international politics, geopolitics and sociology. None of the mentioned disciplines will be enough to analyze the land alone within their own. The theological aspect will help to address the question of why al-Quds has a holy character for the three great religions. Subsequently, the historical aspect will shed a light on whether if the land had always been a land of conflict or if there was peace in the land where a multicultural society lived. It will also provide predictions for the future of al-Quds. Additionally, the aspect of international law will help to provide an understanding of the current legal status of the land. On the other hand, the international politics and the geopolitical aspects will help to analyze and interpret the policies implemented by the other international actors towards Al-Quds. In addition, it will also help to evaluate the influence of these policies on the relations

between these actors. Lastly, the sociological aspect will help to understand the human dimension considering the circumstances and the environment of the populations located in the land.

As a multi-disciplinary field; from the aspect of international relations, the researcher argues that this unique land also requires unique policies and strategies to be implemented by the international actors. In this regard, it is crucial to analyze the foreign policies of the other international actors implemented towards the land who have influence in the region. Considering these actors, Turkey is one of the most significant actors especially because of its strategic location and power.

It is possible to say that al-Quds has a special place for Turkey. This is visible considering its policies towards the land especially within the last decades. This can be explained by the precisions, ideological features and the conservative vision of the current government of the Republic of Turkey. Considering the historical dimension, although depending on its recent history and current situation al-Quds is commonly mentioned as a land of conflict, it is worth mentioning that during the Ottoman period there was a multicultural society which consisted people from diverse faiths living together in peace in this holy land. This explains the significance of al-Quds for Turkish tradition since the Ottoman period until present.

After the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, there has been a Western influence in Middle East and it influenced Turkish foreign policy for decades. However, within the recent years there is a remarkable change in Turkish foreign policy. It is possible to say that Turkey is now following a non-Western concept for its foreign policy and its actions towards the case of al-Quds is one of the significant examples of this. As a part of this new policy, Turkey located efficient Turkish non-governmental organizations (NGO) in al-Quds and in its region of Bayt al-Maqdis which will be mentioned and investigated at the latter stages of the study. These current developments in Turkish foreign policy towards al-Quds are the focal point of this research.

Although the above-mentioned subjects are crucial, they are not enough for the analysis. It is also needed to consider the external facts and the regional environment which may have an influence in the foreign policy-making process. Such as; the

conflicting interests over the land, influences of the other international actors, the triangle relations and alliances in the region.

1. Problem Statement

Al-Quds is accepted as a sacred and holy land for the Turks since the Ottoman period. During the Ottoman period, the central authority has implemented some unique policies for al-Quds which distinguished it from the other lands. Especially the policies implemented by Suleiman the Magnificent and Abdulhamid the Second are crucial examples for the proof of significance of al-Quds for the Ottomans. During this period the land was under the Ottoman rule for almost 400 years, which means that the policies which have been implemented were not a part of the foreign policy but domestic policy. By the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the establishment of the Republic of Turkey, the significance of al-Quds was no more a priority for the new state. There were several reasons for this. Briefly, the Western influence was one of the most prominent factors which shaped Turkey's foreign policy towards Middle East in general and al-Quds in particular. The policies implemented by different governments during different periods were highly incompatible from each other. By taking a closer look to the Justice and Development Party (AK Party) government since 2002, it is possible to say that also during this period there were ups and downs in Turkish foreign policy towards al-Quds. These differences caused some misunderstandings and misinterpretations in the status of al-Quds for Turkey. For instance, in some periods there were diplomatic crisis between Israel and Turkey, while in some periods there were several military and economic agreements between the two states. These steps of Turkey created some questions in minds such as; "If Turkey is willing to protect al-Quds and it supports the rights of Palestinians against Israel, then why is Turkey signing military and economic agreements with Israel?" At this point, it is crucial to analyze these steps of Turkey in the context of international relations by considering the historical background since the history has an impact on policy-making process.

2. Research Questions

- What makes the current Turkish foreign policy towards al-Quds different from the foreign policies applied by the previous governments between 1923 and 2002?
- What are the main characteristics of the current Turkish foreign policy towards al-Quds?
- Why Turkey was the first Muslim populated country to recognize the state of Israel and signed following agreements with it?
- What are the outcomes of the current Turkish foreign policy towards al-Quds?

3. Research Aims

- To determine the main characteristics of the foreign policies implemented by the previous governments between 1923 and 2002 by giving historical background,
- To provide analysis of the developments and characteristics of the current Turkish foreign policy of al-Quds,
- To provide an explanation for the reason why Turkey was the first Muslim populated country to recognize Israel as a state,
- To investigate the outcomes of the current Turkish foreign policy implemented towards al-Quds.

4. The Significance and Purpose of the Research

One of the most important facts that make the study significant is its focal point which is al-Quds. In most of the studies, Turkey's policies towards the regions are analyzed. Although, the researches about the Middle East region include Turkey's foreign policy towards al-Quds, the researcher argues that the features of the land require special attention focused on in al-Quds.

In this regard, this study aims to analyze Turkish foreign policy towards al-Quds. There are two main reasons for the researcher to focus specifically on al-Quds; firstly, al-Quds is a unique land in terms of international law and international politics. In this regard, the international actors might need to implement different policies towards al-Quds separately from their regional and state-focused policies. Namely, it is possible to

say that the first reason is related to the characteristics and the structure of the Al-Quds. Secondly, the research is significant as it focuses on two specific periods of the Turkish foreign policy towards al-Quds which are the pre-AK Party era and the AK Party era. Furthermore, the research will focus on the factors which influence and shape Turkey's foreign policy towards al-Quds. In addition, the current developments which took place in the region during the ruling governments of AK Party and Turkey's reaction to them, both from diplomatic and political aspects will be investigated in the research. It is possible to say that, Turkey's foreign policy towards al-Quds affects not only Israel and Palestine, but also the other international actors which are willing to remain their influence in the Middle East region. Therefore, Turkey's foreign policy has significant outcomes which are worth for investigation and analysis. Mainly, the research is significant since it covers past and present and in this regard, it can shed a light to the future based on the findings of past and present. Another point which makes it significant is the fact that the foreign policy analytical tools of international relations will be used during the analysis process of the policies.

Regarding the purpose of the research, the researcher would like to mention that she studied international relations during her bachelor's degree in Kirikkale University. In 2018 she started her master's degree in Social Sciences University of Ankara, in Master of Arts in Quds Studies Program. The program contributed to her understanding, interpretation and evaluation skills towards the ongoing conflict in the land. Based on her bachelor's degree she is interested in the sub-fields of international relations which are foreign policy analysis, current issues in international relations and in addition conflict resolution. In this regard, the researcher would like to develop her analytical skills within the scope of Turkish foreign policy towards the unique land: al-Quds. The research will be based on the researcher's interest in the above mentioned fields.

5. Conceptual Framework

The research will be based on international relations, international politics and foreign policy analysis. Mainly, foreign policy analysis helps to understand the foreign policy decision-making process of the actors as well as their behaviors and relations with other international actors. However, it is a complex discipline which considers various domestic and international facts, the units and the structure which have an

impact in the process. The analytical models are beneficial for investigating and explaining how states structure their foreign policy, international relations and how they use the foreign policy tools. (Norwich University Online, 2017. Retrieved July 06, 2020)

Fulya Ereker in her article explains the traditional, modern and critical approaches for foreign policy analysis. She emphasizes the *agent-structure debate* which is about the ontological priority of these units. She argues that the distinction between the approaches can be made as; holist approach, individualist approach and synthesis approach/constructors. She firstly explains the individualist approaches; idealism, realism and foreign policy analysis. She emphasizes that, idealism and realism accept state as the agent. Idealists considered the structure as an environment which consists of collection of states or communities and they ignored the possibility of its impact on the agent. Similarly, the realist approach accepts the state as the rational and it puts humanitarian features on the state and argues that states consider their interests like human in international arena. On the other hand, foreign policy analysis approach considers the individuals as the decision-making agents. It focuses on the decision-making approach. In the decision-making approaches states are not accepted as the agent but human is accepted as the source of international relations and the decision maker. In this regard, although the analysis level is “state”; the “analysis units” are the individuals, groups consists of individuals or the bureaucratic process which these groups take place in. She argues that, the decision-making approach ignore the social context and the structure while they focus very much on the psychological characteristics of the individuals. According to Ereker, they focus more on the foreign policy-making process rather than foreign policy itself. On the other hand, she emphasizes that the Bureaucratic Politics Model considers the structure within the scope of bureaucratic institutions. However, she argues that this approach is limited with the “domestic social structure”. And ignoring the structure of the international system will prevent to understand the correlation between foreign policy and the world. In short, considering the individualist approaches it is possible to say that idealism and realism recognize state as the agent with several differences and the foreign policy analysis approach consists of various approaches which consider state and individual as the agent which are all called individualists. (Ereker, 2013)

On the other hand, she explains the holist approaches: firstly, in neo-realist approach the agent is not considered. According to this approach, the states are accepted as the actors which determine the foreign policy outputs; however, they cannot change the structure. Basically, this approach focuses on the “abilities”. In this approach the unit is a holist actor which has no significance against the structure. Secondly, for the world system analysis approach Ereker explains Immanuel Wallerstein’s analysis of social phenomena within the social system. She emphasizes that his approach investigates how units are inter-related in the world system. (Ereker, 2013)

Eventually, there are various approaches for the foreign policy analysis methods and tools. However, there is a consensus among the scholars that, neither the traditional approaches nor the modern approaches are enough to analyze foreign policy on their own. (e.g. Ereker; 2013, Sönmezoğlu; 2012) This is also valid for the levels of analysis in foreign policy analysis.

On the other hand, the researcher argues that, for making foreign policy analysis firstly it is needed to establish an understanding of what international politics is and to address the actors taking part in it. Additionally, before starting foreign policy analysis, it is important to understand the foreign policy environment which are the main facts and sources that influence foreign policy. Faruk Sönmezoğlu, an international relations professor, classifies these facts within three categories in the table below;

Table 1.1 (Sönmezoğlu, 2012)

General Environment	Domestic Environment	External Environment
A) Physical Environment Topography Seas Location and Geopolitics Natural Sources B) Human Environment Population Ethnic and religious diversities	A) Socio-political Structure Political regime Public opinion B) Decision-making Process Decision-making ground Decision-makers	International System Balance of Power International Law International Organizations/Institutions

There are three main elements for foreign policy analysis; power as a concept, the decision-making process, and the relationship between domestic and foreign policy. In this regard, the researcher will provide determination of these main elements from an international relations perspective. At the latter stage, she will focus on their influence in shaping foreign policy. Sönmezoğlu also mentions about the fact that there are different approaches regarding the definition of *power* in *international relations*. Sönmezoğlu quotes Joseph S. Nye's definition of power which is; "Power is also like love, easier to experience than to define or measure, but no less real for that." Additionally, it is worth mentioning that there are two types of power which are; *soft power* and *hard power*. Power has three dimensions; the domain of power, the range of power and the scope of power. The domain of power is explained by three main elements; the people, the territory and the wealth. The range of power is explained as the comparison between the highest award and highest penalty. Lastly the scope of power is closely related with the concept of dependency. Analysis of power is made by detecting three main facts; capability of the power which can be implemented, the dependency relationship between the power implementer and the target, the outcome of the power implementation; influence. The decision-making approach in foreign policy analysis considers the decision-making process, the facts which influence the process and the circumstances of the subject to be decided on. The last stage of foreign policy analysis is the relationship between the domestic and foreign policy. (Sönmezoğlu, 2012)

In addition to the points mentioned above, it is significant to determine the foreign policy outputs of the states. It is held in three main points which are; the foreign policy purposes of the states, the foreign policy strategies of the states and the foreign policy tools of the states. Firstly, the foreign policy purposes of the states will be held. Some scholars argue that national interest is one of the main purposes, while some argue that it is not. Faruk Sönmezoğlu argues that national interest is not suitable for foreign policy analysis. In this regard, he counts four main purposes which are; to preserve existence, security and prestige, long-term ideological and geopolitical purposes and the imperialist/expansionist purposes. Secondly, the foreign policy strategies of states are; *neutrality*, *isolation*, *non-allegiance* and *alliance*. Lastly, the foreign policy tools of the states are investigated in four groups. Tools of political

influence are considered as diplomacy and propaganda. Tools of economic influence are considered as; foreign trade preventions; *boycott*, *embargo* and *blockade*. There are also other financial preventions. On the other hand, tools of military influence are related with arms and wars. Lastly, *intervention* is accepted as a mixed tool. Additionally, Sönmezoğlu argues that, although these are the steps of foreign policy analysis they are not enough. He considers the last step of foreign policy analysis as; making comparison by considering the causal relationship between behaviors. (Sönmezoğlu, 2012)

Additional to the above mentioned sources Ertan Efegil, an international relations professor, points out the main factors which influence foreign policy. The table given below is drawn considering his interpretation.

Table 1.2 (Efegil, 2018)

Main Factors which influence Foreign Policy			
Government Agencies	Non-state actors and sociological factors	International Factors	Leadership and Psychological Factors
Constitutional Structure The Parliament Foreign Policy Bureaucracy Intelligence and Consultants Bureaucratic institutions Democratic and authoritarian regimes Coalition Governments Structure of the political parties Elections Regime strategies Decision-maker's framing for the problem The impacts: crises and routine periods	- Non-state actors - National features - Public opinion - Media - Domestic Opposition - Social groups - Economy - Sociological factors - Political Culture - Culture - Modernism, Nationalism, Religion - Identity - Moral Principles	Structure of the international system Interdependence: political and economic Transnational actors International organizations International Law International Moral Principles Human Rights	- Leadership - Personal characteristics - Operational codes - Leadership style - Cognitive maps - Psychological life analysis - Charismatic leader - Narcissist leader - Other studies - Psychological Factors - Cognition - Perception - Faith - Image - Analogical - Logicality - Stress - Prejudice - Emotions

			Other psychological facts
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After providing a general understanding of foreign policy analysis, the researcher finds it beneficial to provide a specific theoretical framework within the scope of Turkish foreign policy. In this regard, the researcher will provide Baskin Oran's interpretation as a table, who is an international relations professor. The data mentioned in the table are taken from his book:

Table 1.3 (Oran, 2019)

The Main Facts Which Influence Turkish Foreign Policy			
Cultural Dimension	Historical Dimension	Strategic Dimension	Domestic Dimension
Asia Middle East Islam The West	Historical Background: The Ottoman Empire	- Turkey's Geography Geostrategic Location Neighbourhood The straits - Turkey's regional security circle and its dilemmas European perspective Balkan perspective Mediterranean perspective Middle East perspective Caucasian perspective - World migration axis passing through Turkey	General – Historical Aspect Special – Current Aspect Ideological Aspect

Table 1.4 (Oran, 2019)

Military, Political and Economic Background of Turkish Foreign Policy			
Turkey as a middle power state	The fact of security in Foreign policy	Political Economy in Foreign Policy	The issue of Economy, Security and Foreign Policy Relations in an undeveloped middle power state
Items of a middle power state: economic and strategic dimensions	The national structure of Turkish Foreign Policy • Military ring • Economic ring • Political/Sociological ring The Regional and International System around Turkish Foreign Policy	Import Substitution Industrialization (ISI) Integration with the international economy The issue of transition from ISI to the Integration Model	

Table 1.5 (Oran, 2019)

The Main Principles of Turkish Foreign Policy	
Status quo	Westernization
• Maintaining the existing borders • Maintaining the existing balances	Intelligentsia, the West and Foreign Policy

The above-mentioned facts are for providing an analytical understanding of foreign policy in general, Turkish foreign policy in particular. Additional to these, the researcher would like to provide a theory which has been founded by Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi, an international relations professor. His theory focuses on a model which will be beneficial for discussion of the evaluation of possibility of peace in the region.

In addition, regarding the establishment of a peaceful and multicultural society El-Awaisi founded the *Aman Theory* which he considers as a non-western contribution to international relations theory. *Aman* is an Arabic term which is translated into English as “peaceful co-existence and mutual respect” by El-Awaisi. He was inspired by the second Muslim caliph Umar’s assurance. He argues that *Aman* was established in

al-Quds during the rule of Umar, Salah ad-Din and the Ottoman era. The theory is significant because it brings history and international relations together. El-Awaisi argues that it is possible to test theory by analyzing the historical events. At this point, he refers to some specific periods in al-Quds. Firstly, the period of Umar, secondly, the rule of Salah al-Din and lastly during the Ottoman rule *Aman* was established in al-Quds. The main example for the first time *Aman* was established in the region is, Umar's Assurance of *Aman*. El-Awaisi developed a definition for what *Aman* is. He defines *Aman* as peaceful co-existence and mutual respect. He argues that, establishing peace is not the same with establishing *Aman*. According to the theory, there are four components to reach *Aman* as an outcome. These are; concept of *Adil* (justice), methodology of *Tadafu*, inclusion which is the principle of non-exclusion and constructive argument. Each component and the *Aman* as a terminology itself should be analyzed. (El-Awaisi A., 2020)

The theory has four main components which are the inputs of the theory. It consists of two methodologies; *Tadafu*, Constructive argument, the concept *Adil* and the principle of inclusion. However, completing these stages and having them functioning does not lead directly to *Aman*. There is one more requirement to reach *Aman*, which is preserving human dignity. It is possible to reach peaceful co-existence without preserving human dignity, but not mutual respect. Human dignity provides respecting a person as a human without discrimination of race, color or religion. Additional to human dignity, it is important to note that *Aman* cannot be established under occupation. It is possible to have peace with an occupier but not possible to have mutual-respect. The methodology of *Tadafu* (counter-action) is one of the inputs of the theory. Muslims have established a framework to deal with non-Muslims. According to Qur'an and *Hadith*; all human beings are from one family and they are all children of Adam. The structure of universe is designed with diversity. The reason why God created human with diversity and plurality is not for them to fight or conflict but for them to get to know each other. According to Muslim tradition plurality and diversity is a must. The principle of non-exclusion is another input of the theory which the Muslim sources reject the philosophy of conflict. However, in three circumstances Muslims find the right of counter-action; in case if they fight because of your religion; in case of deriving you from your home; and in case of helping the ones who are deriving you

from your home. In the case of al-Quds, the reason why Muslims fought against Israelis is because they derived Muslims from their home. Constructive argumentation methodology is the other input of the theory. The core Muslim sources encourage Muslims to argue in the politest way possible. Thus, it requires constructive dialogues and positive negotiations. Finally, the concept of *Adil* (justice); provides freedom and an alternative to choose. (El-Awaisi A., 2020)

6. Research Scope

- Location of the research is limited with al-Quds. However, the states determine their foreign policies as regional policies. At this point the researcher will include the developments in the region which had impacts on al-Quds.
- The analysis will be based on the implementations and policies of the state of Turkey.
- The subject will be the Turkish foreign policy.
- The focal timeframe will be the period between 2002 and 2019. However, for providing analysis, the researcher will include historical background in the research.

7. Terminologies

Bayt al-Maqdis

Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi argues that the terminology refers to a wider region not only al-Quds but including it. As for the difference between al-Quds and Bayt al-Maqdis, El-Awaisi argues that al-Quds is the name of a city, while Bayt al-Maqdis is used both for the city of al-Quds and a region. At first, Bayt al-Maqdis might seem as a brand-new terminology. However, in the Islamic belief it is an old Prophetic name. (El-Awaisi A., 2018)

As for the English version of Bayt al-Maqdis, a new term; Islamicjerusalem (one word) was introduced by Abd al Fattah El-Awaisi. It is explained by him as:

“A new terminology for a new concept, which may be translated into the Arabic language as Bayt al-Maqdis. It can be fairly and eventually characterized and defined as a unique region laden with a rich historical background, religious significances, cultural attachments, competing political and religious claims, international interests and various aspects that affect the rest of the world in both historical and contemporary contexts. It has a central

frame of reference and a vital nature with three principal intertwined elements: its geographical location (land and boundaries), its people (population), and its unique and creative inclusive vision, to administer that land and its people, as a model for multiculturalism, cultural engagement and Aman (peaceful co-existence and mutual respect)". (El-Awaisi A., 2018, p. 4)

El-Awaisi argues that Islamicjerusalem/Bayt al-Maqdis as a terminology is more relevant to the local culture and characteristics of the land. He also points out the misunderstanding about the terminology of Islamicjerusalem. He argues that, by calling the region as Islamicjerusalem it is not meant for "a land only for Muslims". The name was given because Muslims were the "peace keepers" in the region. This argument is supported by the historical incidents. As a brief overview to the historical background; it is possible to say that the visions adopted by different religious groups and rulers were different. When the Byzantine Christians ruled the region, they expelled the Jews. When the Crusaders occupied the land, they expelled the Muslims and the Jews. When Jews ruled the region, they believed that the land was only promised to the Jews. Therefore, they attempted to expel Christians and Muslims. On the other hand, when Muslims ruled the region, they were tolerant for the other ethnic and religious groups and they did not expel any of them. They applied a policy to ensure peace among different cultures and religions. This could be explained by the reason that, Muslims believe that this is a holy land which is a gift from the creator (*barakah*) and everyone in the universe has a right to feel and benefit from it. (El-Awaisi A., 2018)

Considering the above mentioned vision of the land, El-Awaisi explains the nature of Islamicjerusalem with the words: "Islamicjerusalem is not exclusive, but inclusive and it should be opened-up for everyone in the universe." (El-Awaisi A., 2008) This means, multiculturalism is one of the main characteristics of Islamicjerusalem. It hosted several civilizations, religions and cultures. This affected the identity and nature of the region. During the period of Muslim caliph Umar's authority, and at the latter stage by ruling of the Ottoman Empire, multiculturalism and cultural engagement was one of the main characteristics of the region. According to his argument, there are no limitations for the land such as "a land only for Muslims" or "a promised land only for Jews". Instead of such limitation, there should be mutual understanding and tolerance among different ethnic and religious groups located in this unique land.

Regarding the boundaries of Bayt al-Maqdis, Khalid El-Awaisi, an expert in early Muslim history and geography, emphasizes that these are religious borders and he shows them with the map given below:

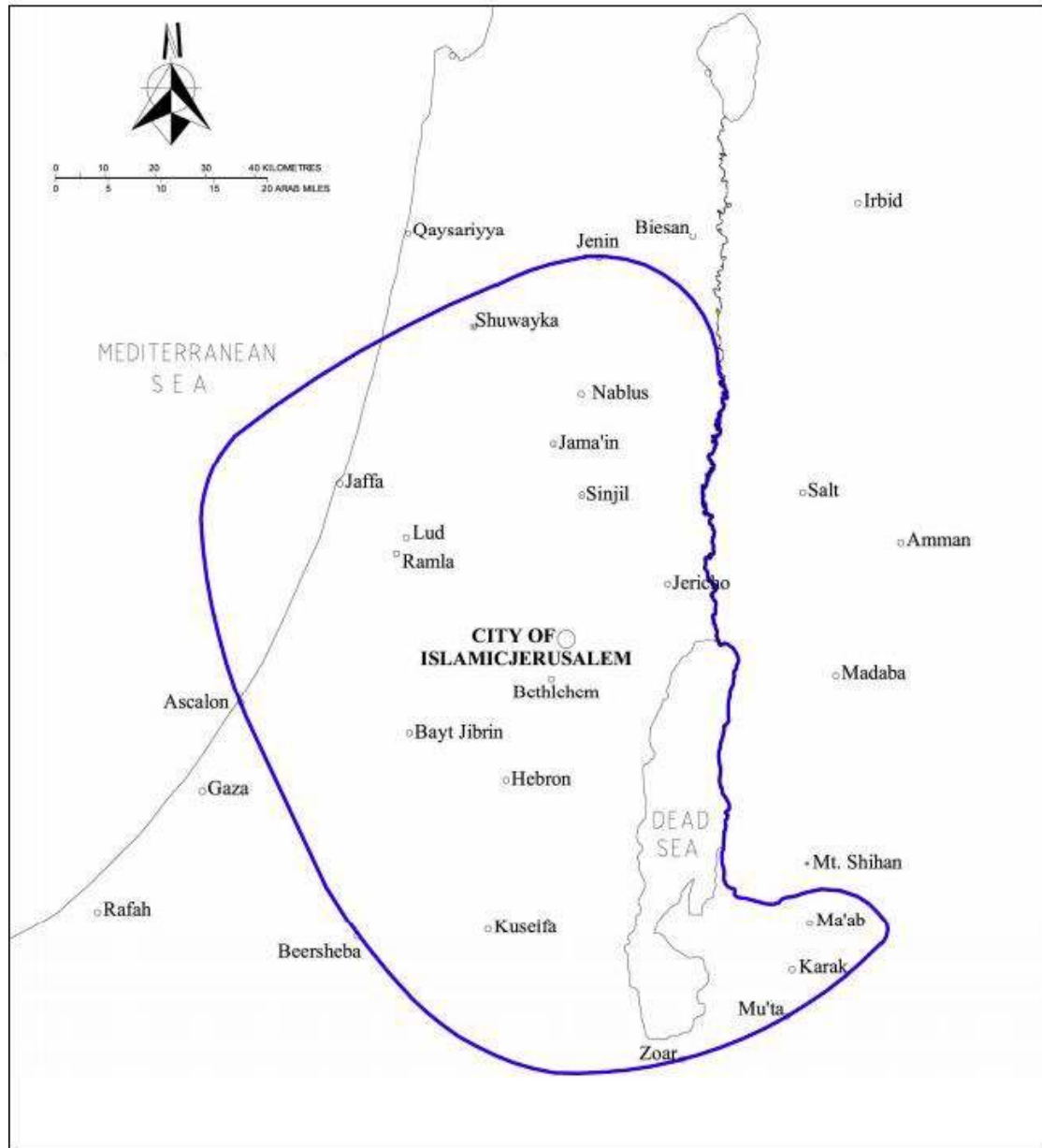


Figure 1.1 (El-Awaisi K. , 2017)

Al-Quds

It is one of the names given to the land. The name was revised during the Ottoman period as al-Quds al Sharif. Currently, Quds is the name which is commonly used in Turkish foreign policy.

Al-Nakba

Nakba in Arabic means catastrophe. Al-Nakba is used for the consequences of the establishment of the state of Israel and the following consequences which caused thousands of Palestinians to leave their home country, Palestine within an obligation (www.encyclopedia.com. Retrieved June 21, 2020) “Al-nakba” is a word used for explanation of this event. The word “nakba” means catastrophe. Nakba has a political and military aspect.

8. Research Methodology

The researcher adopted international relations for her research which is a multi-disciplinary field and she used tools of foreign policy analysis through the research. In this regard, among the two major research methodologies, the researcher adopted the qualitative methodology in her thesis. The reason for adopting qualitative method was connected with the main focus of the study. Furthermore, there are several tools and methods within the field which are used for this kind of analysis such as; analysis of the concept power, the decision-making process, the relationship between domestic and foreign policy. Another fact considered for the analysis is the level of analysis; the individual level, the state level and the system level. There are various approaches in this regard which were explained in more details in the theoretical framework. The researcher considered the most popular approaches in foreign policy analysis and she mainly focused on the methods of analysis which were implemented by the international relations scholars; Prof. Dr. Baskin Oran, Prof. Dr. Ertan Efeğil and Prof. Dr. Faruk Sönmezoğlu. Additionally, to answer the research questions the researcher systematically described the main characteristics of Turkish foreign policy towards al-Quds. This led the researcher to an empirical analysis and interpretation regarding Turkey’s behavior against the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, its bilateral relations with both parties claiming over the land and lastly, its policies towards al-Quds.

Eventually, qualitative interpretations and analysis were made in this research. However, a point to be noted is the fact that some existing quantitative data was used in some parts of the research such as statistics about the bilateral economic and trade relations and the statistics about the amount of foreign aid were used for both evaluation

and supporting the arguments. In addition, some statistics taken from the database of several organizations were also used for showing the efficiency of Turkish NGOs in al-Quds and in its region of Bayt al-Maqdis for analyzing Turkey's ability of using the NGOs as an efficient tool of its foreign policy towards al-Quds.

During the data collection process of the thesis, the researcher used web and library sources such as; books, articles from academic journals, proceedings from academic conferences, newspapers, political statements, governmental/official databases and annual reports from the NGOs. Some of the sources were used for interpretation of the existing data about the historical incidents, developments and analysis which were already made by the scholars. On the other hand, some of the sources were used as a guideline especially for foreign policy analysis process of the thesis.

9. Structure of the Thesis

The research consists of an introduction, five chapters and a conclusion. The first chapter is the literature review. In this chapter the researcher collected data from the existing literature which she uses in the following chapters. The second chapter of the research covers the Geopolitical and Geostrategic aspects. In this regard, firstly Turkey's role and strategic position in the Middle East and the general framework of its foreign policy towards al-Quds will be discussed. Secondly, the geopolitical significance of al-Quds will be discussed. The researcher argues that it is significant to highlight this dimension additional to its religious holiness. Subsequently, the Israel Occupation in Eastern part of al-Quds will be investigated considering the strategic and geopolitical dimensions. Lastly, the legal status of al-Quds in International Law will be discussed in the first chapter.

The third chapter covers the historical background of Turkish foreign policy towards al-Quds. It additionally, covers the religious significance of al-Quds for the three Monotheistic religions and its identity during the Ottoman rule. This will help to determine the cultural and the spiritual significance of al-Quds for Turkey since the Ottoman period until present. The researcher argues that there is a link between foreign policy and history. In this regard, to provide analysis of the current foreign policy it is crucial to establish a historical analysis. The main focus of the first headline will be the

sacred identity of al-Quds in history. Subsequently, the next subtitle will focus on the significance of the land during the Ottoman period and analysis of the unique policies over Al-Quds which were implemented by the central government. The third subtitle will provide brief information considering loss of the land by the Ottoman Empire in 1917 and the new status of al-Quds by the Balfour Declaration until the establishment of the Republic of Turkey. The fourth subtitle will provide analysis of the policies implemented towards al-Quds since the establishment of the Republic until the 1948. The next subtitle of the chapter will focus on the Six Days War in 1967 and Turkey's approach to the Arab-Israeli Conflict until 1972. And the last subtitle will focus on Turkey's approach to the 1973 Arab-Israeli War and the following developments until the AK Party era.

After providing the historical background, the main focus of the fourth chapter will be the current developments in Turkish Foreign policy towards al-Quds since the beginning of the AK Party rule in 2002. In this regard the chapter will focus on three main subtitles; The Relations between Turkey and Israel (2002-2019), The Relations between Turkey and Palestine (2002-2019) and Turkish NGOs located in al-Quds as a tool of Foreign Policy. These subjects will help to investigate the bilateral relations between Turkey and the two parties. Additionally, Turkish NGOs and their functions in al-Quds will be discussed.

The fifth chapter will be the chapter of analysis. It has four subtitles which are; The Main Structure and Characteristics of Turkish Foreign Policy towards al-Quds (2002-2019), The Differences between the Current Turkish Foreign Policy and the Previous Foreign Policies towards al-Quds, Analysis of the Current Turkish Foreign Policy towards al-Quds and Interpretation of the Current Turkish Foreign Policy towards al-Quds: The External Facts, Limitations and the Outcomes.

Eventually, the research will have a conclusion at the end where the collected data, interpretations, analysis and evaluation of a possibility of peace in the Middle East in general and peace in Al-Quds in particular will be discussed.

CHAPTER ONE

LITERATURE REVIEW

As for establishment of a better understanding of the general developments in Turkey's al-Quds policy and the situation of the ongoing conflict in the land, the researcher believes that it would be beneficial to classify the literature by the chronological order of the periods investigated by the below mentioned authors.

The first article; *Turkish Foreign Policy toward the Arab-Israeli Conflict: Duality and the Development (1950 – 1991)* focuses on 1950-1991 era. M. Hakan Yavuz and Mujeeb R. Khan emphasize the concept of duality in Turkish foreign policy. They explain Turkey's duality by the following reasons; Turkey was willing to take part in both sides; Western systems such as North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), EEC and European Council. And at the same time it took active role in Middle Eastern politics. This duality has affected the bilateral relations with Turkey and Israel. They argue that, the tension between Turkey and Israel was an outcome of Turkey's duality and contradictory orientations in its foreign policy which were an outcome of the fact that they were a mixture of Islamic and Western characteristics. Although Turkey's significance was notable and there were many written articles about its NATO membership and its relations with the West, Turkey's policy towards Arab-Israeli conflict was not evaluated or mentioned at all. (Yavuz & Khan, 1992)

Yavuz and Khan point out to Turkey's modifications in its Middle Eastern policies. They mention two key factors for evaluation of Turkish Foreign Policy; political, cultural and geographic duality of Turkey and the changing block. Additionally, they argue that, there are two external factors which tend Turkey to duality; oil and the Cyprus issue. However, this duality causes heavy consequences. One of the most important outcomes is the fact that it put two of its objectives in tension which were; to maintain the diplomatic relations with Israel and to support the Palestinian issue which would also help building ties with some of the Arab states. There are several factors which strengthened the relations between Turkey and the

Arabs; Turkey's situation in Cyprus, Arab oil sources, Public opinion; criticism of Israel. They support the idea that the reason why Turkey was cooling relations with Israel may seem as an attempt to gain the Arab support in Cyprus issue and for the oil supplies. However, Turkey's relation was not determined by involving of the Arabs. The basis of the duality depends on Turkey's dependence of ties with western and the Muslim world. They explain some of the significant developments of the Turkish-Arab relations like; before 1979; Turkey's support for Palestinian self-determination was only verbal. The first development in this regard was Ecevit's decision to permit Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) to establish an office in Ankara in 1979 which was actually a diplomatic mission. This decision depends on two main factors; Turkey needed the Arab support in Cyprus, Turkey needed the inexpensive Arab oil. Turkey's relations with the Arab world passed four phases; The Cold War and the western dominated foreign policy (1947 – 1964), The Cypriot Angle (1964 – 1973), the petrodollar oriented policy (1974 – 1989), The Gulf crisis; "strategic ties" with USA. (Yavuz & Khan, 1992)

As a conclusion, Yavuz and Khan analyze the modifications in Turkish foreign policy towards the Arab-Israeli conflict by considering two main points; duality and the changing block during the post-cold war era. They claim that, duality was the main source of tension in Turkey's bilateral relations with Israel and the Arabs. However, Turkey is a state which is aware of its geo-strategic importance. In this regard, instead of having sharp lines and cutting off its ties with one of the parties of the conflict, it adopts the concept of balancing the relations with both parties. (Yavuz & Khan, 1992)

The second article; *Continuity of change in Turkish Foreign Policy under the JDP Government* mainly focuses on the post-cold war era. Kanat argues that, the end of the Cold War era has brought more uncertainty rather than security and opened political opportunity for Turkey. The domestic/internal fears, lack of resources and economic problems overshadowed possible opportunities which emerged following the fall of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). During the post-Cold War years Turkey started to look for new alliances. Two countries became important for Turkey in this regard; Syria and Israel. One seemed as a new threat for Turkey's territorial integrity and the other one as an ally and gateway to the Western world. Syria has been

supporting the Armenian terrorist groups and at a later stage Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). Turkey was going through a difficult process. At this period, The Turkish-Israeli rapprochements started. Although Turkey was one of the first countries to recognize the state of Israel, the improvement of the bilateral relations was never a priority for it. After the secret alliance between the two countries in 1950's Turkey followed cautious policies. The Turkish government did not alienate the Arab countries for the two main reasons. One; they were the major source of oil. Second; they could be important actors in international arena if they move together. When the Arab countries and Israel came together in Madrid Peace Conference, Turkey raised its diplomatic relations with Israel to the ambassadorial level in 1992. And this decision was a continuation of its earlier approach to the Arab-Israeli conflict. On the same day Turkey increased the diplomatic relations with Palestine to the ambassadorial level as well. Following this move, the relations between Turkey and Israel gained a strategic importance and it was developed. There was a conflict between Israel and Syria about the Golan Heights. The alliance between Turkey and Israel would put a pressure on Syria. And it would also cause a threat for Iran and Iraq. And this would create a new balance of power in the Middle East. (Kanat, 2012)

In 1980's Turkey was witnessing terrorist attacks by Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia (ASALA); an Armenian terrorist group. At this point Turkey thought that a pact with Israel would be effective and Israel would provide resources (intelligence and military) for anti-terrorism. Israel had weapons and high-tech military industry. U.S and Europe were not willing to sell weapons to Turkey. In this regard, Turkey needed a country to provide weaponry for itself. Due to lack of its capabilities, Turkey launched a military modernization program. Another advantage was the fact that Turkey would gain the support from the Israeli lobby in Washington, which would be more effective against the Armenian and the Greek lobby (which is the reason why Turkey could not get military aid from US). This would help Turkey to end its isolation and regain its reputation in Europe. Kanat orders the significant developments chronologically; 1995 Memorandum of Understanding; Israeli Air Force would train Turkish Pilots, 1996 Military Cooperation Agreement; Exchange of military personnel and joint trainings, 1996 Military Industrial Cooperation Agreement; cooperation in military modernization and arms trade, also in 1996 political dialogue; common foreign

and security policy, other agreements to cooperate in counter-terrorism and intelligence-gathering. The content of these pacts were secretly hidden and protected through security and secrecy (1994) Agreement. Turkey and Israel are the two pro-Western, secular, democratic countries in Middle East. Both countries had the strongest militaries and powerful enemies. After European Union (EU) announcement of Turkey as a grand candidate, Turkey was shocked and it harshly froze the relations with EU (1995). Although Turkey had Israel as the main ally, it was aware of the fact that the Arab world was not happy with this alliance and soon Turkey might have been isolated (Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and League of Arab States criticized the alliance). As an outcome of this process, Turkey started to change its policy by the late 1990's. And Turkey decided to follow a "multi-dimensional foreign policy." (Kanat, 2012)

Turkey started to look for alternative alignments and decided to improve its relations with Syria. Instead of threatening to use force, Turkey focused more on using diplomacy. Another turning point was the fact that EU with US' support, agreed to grant the candidacy status to Turkey. During that time Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit and Foreign Minister İsmail Cem followed "regionally based foreign policy" which predicted Turkey to develop its relations with all the regions. Turkey stopped seeing Syria as a threat and this was one of the most constructive facts for the relations between Turkey and Israel. But there were some challenging moments; failure of the Camp David process, the beginning of the 2nd intifada in 2000 (Turkey criticized Israel's military force against the Palestinians). The disagreements between Israel and Turkey became more obvious when Ecevit disagreed with Sharon's speech of saying that Yaser Arafat supports terrorism. Ecevit called the Israeli actions as; "genocide-like". However, the earthquake in 1999 cut Turkey's purchase of arms and weaponry from Israel because the incident affected Turkey's economy badly. In 2001 Turkey experienced a tough economic crisis. This caused another budget cut for Turkey's defense expenses. Turkey's changing relations with its other neighbours influenced its relations with Israel. (Kanat, 2012)

Eventually, Kanat emphasizes the importance of Syria during the 90's. Syria played an important role in determination of Turkish foreign policy and the relations between Turkey and Israel. There were times Turkey and Israel had closer relations. He

explains this with the fact that Syria seemed as a threat for Turkey and Turkey wanted to keep Israel by its side in any possible conflict with Syria. However, when the relations between Syria and Turkey were improved, Turkey lost interest in Israel. (Kanat, 2012)

The third article; *The Limits of An Alliance: Turkish-Israeli Relations Revisited* focuses on the limits of the Turkish-Israeli alliance within the 1990's and 2000's. Bacik argues that there is no alliance which is totally free from any limits and these limits determine the identity of the alliance. He claims that the alliance which was built in 1998 has failed and this failure created some limits for the alliance. Bacik argues that the Turkish-Israeli alliance was against common threats for both states, which were threats as Iran, Russia, and Syria. And there were ongoing tensions with Iraq, Syria and Iran. However, Turkey and Israel were not productive enough against these threats. Bacik represents Walt's argument; "The more alike the two states are, the more likely they are to ally." and comes with an explanation; the similarity between Turkey and Israel was the fact that they both adopt secularism. He actually rephrases it as "exaggeration of secularism" in both states. Especially during the 28th February Process; the prior threats were re-defined by the government in Turkey. The MGK (National Security Council) replaced the Kurdish threat with the "so-called" Islamist threat. This is the main reason why the Turkish generals and bureaucrats chose Israel as an ally. Basically, the cooperation was a policy to protect the secular system in Turkey. However, there was a division amongst the bureaucracy and civil government. In this regard, he argues that the state system was manipulated and the first actor was the Jewish lobby in Turkey. Then Bacik emphasizes the limits of the alliance. He argues that the first limitation of the alliance was the shadow of the military on the alliance. Considering the period between 1997 and 1999 it would be more appropriate to name this alliance as the Turkish Army-Israeli Alliance rather than the Turkish-Israeli Alliance. And he adds; "The role of the army in bilateral relations has damaged the social legitimacy of the nature of bilateral relations." (Bacik, 2001)

On the other hand, as for another limitation he argues that both sides had different expectations. For the Turkish side, Israel was an alternative for the gains for Turkey. For them the alliance was both totalistic and idealistic. It was a new

international alternative. However, for Israel, Turkey was not seen as an “opportunity” or a “gain”. The Turkish elite claimed and believed that Israel would support Turkey in international arena. However, the case of Armenian massacre was raised in the US and the Turkish society started questioning whether if Israel was on the Armenian side or Turkish side. (Bacik, 2001)

Another limitation was the case of Iraq. In this case, a significant difference between Turkish foreign policy and Israeli foreign policy was ignored. The case of Northern Iraq was highly important for Turkey. But the two states did not share the same perception for the future of Iraq. Unlike Israel; Turkey, Iran and Syria would not welcome an independent Iraq, as Kurdish state. Another point mentioned by Bacik is regional configuration. In 1997, the Arab League and the Organization of the Islamic Conference criticized Turkey for the alliance with Israel. Despite these negative impacts, the two powers decided to establish a new regional balance of power. However, there were two main limitations for Turkey in this regard. Firstly, this process would not put Turkey as the main actor of regional power in any condition. Secondly, Turkey has been complaining about the fact that Iran and Syria has been supporting PKK terrorism. Why would Turkey choose to solve the problems by including Israel instead of resolving the questions bilaterally with Iran and Syria? And he adds; “In traditional Turkish Foreign policy, the domestic sensitivities shape the policies in general.” Bacik also points out some may argue that there is a European dimension of the alliance. There is a claim which supports the idea that, the rejection of EU is one of the reasons behind this alliance. Turkey cooperated with Israel to show that EU was not the only option. However, he does not agree with this approach. On the other hand, as another limitation for the alliance he addresses the Israeli policies applied against the Palestinians. In Turkey there is sympathy for the Palestinians depending on the historical roots during the Ottoman Era. In this regard, the close ties between Turkey and Israel may cause negative impacts from the Turkish community. (Bacik, 2001)

As a conclusion, the article claims that in the recent Turkish-Israeli relations the societal perceptions have been considered as unimportant. Since many societal values are transnational, the ignorance of them may cause regional anxieties. A new alliance creates new sets of signs and symbols. In the shed of these signs the other nations

evaluate the intensions of the allies for the others. The limits determine the identity of an alliance. They even determine the conduct of diplomacy. (Bacik, 2001)

The fourth source is a thesis; *İsrail-Türkiye Ekonomik İlişkileri (Israel - Turkey Economic Relations)* focuses on Turkish-Israeli relations within the scope of “economic relations during the 2000’s. There is a connection between peace and the economic relations. It is same for Turkey and Israel. There is a difference in both countries’ trade volume depending on their relations with each other. In this regard, if the policymakers decide to cool down the relations with the “other” country, the trade volume may decrease and this may also affect the nations of the country economically. Israel for Turkey is an important partner in the Middle East since the 90’s. However, policies implemented by the policy-makers during the 2000’s affected the relations between the two countries in a negative way, in politics. Despite the political tensions, both countries achieved economic growth during this era, and this brought the two countries in a situation that they have become “commercial partners”. (Urhan, 2017)

As a conclusion, Urhan emphasizes the fact that although there are up and downs in political relations between Israel and Turkey, the economic relations are not badly affected by this situation and it maintains its current status. In this regard, it is possible to say that both countries are following realist policies and they are considering the national interests; although they sometimes face one another within political issues, both countries are aware of the fact that they are facing common issues in the Middle East region such as being an isolated state in the Middle East and they both need an ally. This could be attributed with “Interdependence Theory” in International relations. (Urhan, 2017)

On the other hand, the fifth article is a conference proceeding named *Turkish-Israeli Relations: New Perspectives* mainly about the Turkish-Israeli relations within the political scope in 2000’s. During the cold war the Palestine problem was the main barrier for the alignment between the two countries. During the post-cold war era, new problems appeared. The problem of Northern Iraq is one of them. Tansı presents a claim of another author; “Israel has been working on Kurdistan and running operations in Kurdish areas of Iran and Syria” and then he argues that this plan of Israel was targeting Iran, not Turkey. However, there were several incidents which harmed the bilateral

relations between two countries. He also mentions that in 2009 the Turkish Prime Minister criticized Israel in DAVOS. Another crisis occurred by the launch of a TV series called “Ayrılık”. The series showed the Israeli soldiers as child and baby killers. Following the launch of the series; the Israeli Foreign Ministry called the Turkish ambassador and sent a diplomatic note in this regard. Besides the crisis, there were also co-operations between Israel and Turkey. However, while talking about an alliance between these countries, it is worth mentioning that there is a third party which makes it a “triangle’s alliance”; the US. (Tansı, 2009)

As a summary of the main issues for Turkish-Israeli relations, Tansı has given several examples. The US withdrawal process from Iraq (which will affect the whole region), Iran’s activities in Middle East, Syria’s rapprochement to the West, Palestine problem, Lebanon’s situation, Israel-Azerbaijan relations, Al-Qaeda’s rising power in the Middle East and in the world, NATO’s Af-Pak (Afghanistan-Pakistan) failure are the main issues mentioned by him. On the other hand, Tansı argues that Israel and Turkey are on the parallel economic bases. Turkey is in EU accession process and in this regard it has a customs union with EU. Israel has also signed Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with USA, and also Agricultural Agreement. (Tansı, 2009)

The sixth article; *Erdogan’s Turkey and the Palestinian Issue* analysis the AK Party government and the Palestinian issue. During the period when Davutoğlu was the Foreign Minister of Turkey; he aimed “Zero Problems with neighbors”. Secondly, he aimed Turkey to have a reputation as “Protector of the Muslims”. “However, rather than being neo-Ottoman in a “secular” sense; they focused on Arab Islamists and Muslim Middle East. AK Party sees the world as composed of religious blocks.” The Ely Kamron and Michael Barak cited Mustafa Akyol’s argument saying that AK Party is not Islamist since it does not aim to bring Sharia rule in Turkey, but it is Muslimist which is also wrong according to him. Another citation made by them is from Kadri Gürsel in which he argues that AK Party’s foreign policy is infected by viruses of Islamist ideology, populism and emotionalism. Therefore, it cannot lead a Realpolitik policy. Kamron and Barak argue that Turkey has developed a multidimensional foreign policy which helped it to get support from both Shiites and Sunnis. However, Turkey’s defense for Hamas (Islamic Resistance Movement), Syria and Iran was criticized by the

Western media. The ultimate goal of this multidimensional policy is the quest of “strategic autonomy”. However, by the Arab uprisings in 2011, the status quo has changed. (Kamron & Barak, 2018)

Mainly, Kamron and Barak criticize Erdoğan’s speeches about Palestine. They claim that his speeches are mixed with emotions and identification. And as a result of his speeches, the perception of “good Hamas versus evil Israel” was established among young Turks. And they whitewashed Hamas’ violent actions. As a proof of the Turkish support for Hamas, the AK Party government called international community including the Western countries to recognize Hamas as the legitimate government of the Palestinian people. They quoted Eyup Fatsa’s words (one of the founding members of AK Party); “Hamas and Israel should recognize each other; this process cannot continue with armed struggle”. According to Kamron and Barak, AK Party’s support for the “violent” Hamas had become obvious in 2008 by the Israeli Cast Lead Operation in the Gaza Strip, following the massive launching rockets against Israel. After Israel’s operation Erdoğan “expressed his anger” towards the Israeli government. He argued that he was not informed about the operation. However, they argue that he did know about it. Erdoğan’s “aggressive” and “undiplomatic” verbal attack to President Shimon Peres in 2009 Davos meeting raised the tension between the two countries. The Mavi Marmara incident is another significant incident considering the bilateral relations. They are criticizing Turkey for its cooperation with Humanitarian Relief Foundation (IHH), and they claim that IHH is a Saudi-based Turkish Islamist NGO. They also claim that IHH was associated with radical Islamist groups and it has been financing and supporting the jihadist terrorist activities. The reason why it entered Gaza is not for the humanitarian reasons but for jihad. (Kamron & Barak, 2018)

Another criticism made by Kamron and Barak is that, Turkey contributes to Hamas’ military strengthening by SADAT International Defense Consultancy Inc. Company and it funds war materials for the Palestine Army. They claim that Hamas and AK Party have “common values” and vision, therefore, their relation is deepened. On the other hand, under Erdoğan’s rule, Palestinian Authority (PA) and Turkey are not very close and PA is not happy with the tied relationship between Turkey and Hamas. However, in 2014 and 2015 the relations between PA and Turkey became better.

Finally, in 2017 they strengthened their ties. Considering the situation in the Middle East, they emphasize that Iran supports Hamas and they both want destruction of Israel. In this regard, there is a competition between Turkey and Iran both as regional powers. Since 2012 there are up and downs for the relations between Hamas and Iran. But then, by 2017 they started trying to improve their relations. On the other hand, the relations between Iran and Turkey were improved depending on their alliance with Russia in Syria. Recently, instead of a competition there is an emulation of the Iranian strategy (the strategy of supporting the Islamists and jihadists). (Kamron & Barak, 2018)

As a conclusion, in the article, Kamron and Barak mainly claim that President Erdoğan is willing to build an Islamic army to fight for the liberation of al-Quds. They analyze several policies followed by the AK Party government and they make citations from several Turkish journalists. As a result, they are criticizing AK Party's ruling and they claim that Erdoğan and his government imposes a perception amongst the young population in Turkey which describes Israel as evil and Hamas as good. They criticize the relations between Turkey and Hamas and they also blame Turkey for supporting the "militant and terrorist" activities done by Hamas. As for the Mavi Marmara incident, they blame the entrance of the Turkish boat to Gaza for jihadist reasons. However, there are significant differences between the Gaza resistance and the jihadist groups. It is important to determine according to which norms they are describing the Gaza resistance as a terrorist action. And it is also important to emphasize the meaning of jihad in Islam and explain the differences between the orientalist description and the Islamic description of it. The last point to mention is the fact that they claim that Erdoğan dislikes Israel very much and he is the one who is responsible for damaging the bilateral relations. (Kamron & Barak, 2018)

The seventh article; *Breakdown and Possible Restart: Turkish Israeli Relations under the AK Party* also focuses on the AK Party government and Turkey's relations with Israel. Matthew S. Cohen and Charles D. Freilich argue that before the rising of AK Party in 2002 in Turkey, the relationship between Turkey and Israel was in a level of strategic alliance. Depending on AK Party's intention, the relations underwent. Before the AK Party government, the ties with the Arab countries were not so close. Therefore, the AK Party government was willing to improve its relations with the Arabs. This was

an outcome of the Muslim version of AK Party. After the Mavi Marmara incident (2010), Israeli state offered apologies to the families of the victims in 2013. This was a proof of the fact that Israel was willing to repair the relations. However, Turkey's interest in repairing the relations was less than Israel's. (Cohen & Freilich, 2014)

They summarize the most important developments between Turkey and Israel; in 1949 Turkey became the first Muslim country to recognize Israel, in 1992 full diplomatic relations with Israel were established, and paved away of the strategic partnership during the 1990's and early 2000's. Turkey kept the relations with Israel in low-level until Arabs started negotiations with Israel. There were three main reasons for improving the bilateral relations; a common strategic outlook, Turkish military's intent of improving relations, and economics. During the post-Cold War era both countries feared Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), terrorism, Islamic radicalism, the rise of Iran, and Iraq. And they both had an identity of a pro-western, secular, democratic and "isolated" state in Middle East. Turkey offered Israel geo-strategic depth by allowing Israel to train in its air space, while Israel's territory was not large enough for it. Another point offered by Turkey was the fact that Israel gained diplomatic support from a Muslim nation. On the other hand, the Israeli lobby in the US for supporting Turkey's rights in the US. However, the AK Party government wanted to downgrade the ties with Israel depending on the following reasons; changing views of the international and regional environment, AK Party's Islamist identity, the shifting balance of power between the military and civilian organs in Turkey, the public opinion, the failure of the peace process. (Cohen & Freilich, 2014)

Matthew S. Cohen and Charles D. Freilich explain why Israel resisted apologizing after the Mavi Marmara incident until 2013 with three reasons; Turkey's turn to Middle East, little Turkish interest in rapprochement, Israel's internal politics. (Cohen & Freilich, 2014)

Different from the previous literature, the eighth article; *Israel-Cyprus-Greece: A Comfortable Quasi-Alliance, Mediterranean Politics* analysis the Turkish-Israeli relations indirectly. Tziarras emphasizes the outcomes of an alliance in the region which affects the bilateral relations between Israel and Turkey. Although there is no formal military treaty between the three states, he argues that there is a visible cooperation

between Israel, Cyprus (RoC) and Greece since 2011 for the discovery of hydrocarbons in Exclusive Economic Zone. The common motivations for all three countries were; Turkey and the energy factor. They all have been seeing Turkey as a security threat, the other reason related to energy is not as strong as the first reason. Since the cooperation is flexible/comfortable and informal; any development between any of these countries and Turkey; it will not affect this quasi-alliance much. He explains; a quasi-alliance, just like a formal alliance aims either on winning or deterring a common enemy, or a common threat. According to Tziarras the reason why there is no military alliance is listed as; 1) They do not wish to upset Turkey, 2) They do not wish to reduce any possibility for an rapprochement between any of the states and Turkey, 3) The “geopolitical triangle” depends on pre-existence of outstanding bilateral issues with Turkey, 4) Turkish military existence in Northern Cyprus since 1974 is not only an external threat for Republic of Cyprus (RoC) but it is also a domestic one, 5) Turkey and Greece share the Aegean Maritime zones, airspace, 6) The positive relations between Turkey and Israel (2002-2010). (Tziarras, 2016)

However, in May 2010 Turkey downgraded the diplomatic relations with Israel and even after the Israeli apology there was not a constructive diplomacy between Turkey and Israel. He explains it as mutual distrust between the two states. The period between 2011 and 2015; the efforts to discover hydrocarbon caused an angry reaction of Turkey. He argues that in contrast, there were “illegal” agreements between TPC, Turkey, Turkish/Cypriot administration. After loss of Turkey’s alliance Israel started to look for new partners in the region. “An alliance would help Israel to counter-balance the regional power and threat both Turkey and the Arabs. Motivation of Israel like Cyprus and Greece was; power/profit and threat-related. As a result, developments in the energy sector caused energy-related insecurities. The cooperation between Israel, Cyprus and Greece provides defense capability in this regard. (Tziarras, 2016)

The ninth article; *Who Needs Whom? Turkey and Israel Agree on Normalization Deal* analysis the relations between Turkey and Israel from a different perception. Firstly, Alsaftawi explains Turkey’s position in the Palestinian issue. Turkey, under the AK Party rule has become a key player in the Middle East by implementation of concept of strategic depth in its foreign policy. By following this concept, Turkey’s soft power increased since it united the concept of Western democracy with the concept of

Eastern Islamic concept. This soft power was in favor of Turkey especially for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; Turkey has been trying to become the third party in the conflict. The reason why the Palestinian issue became one of the priorities of Turkish foreign policy is closely related with the ideologically Islamic background of the AK Party members, the same historical heritage with the Palestinians which is based on the Ottoman era and the same religious roots; Islam. Additional to all these reasons, Turkey is aware of the fact that human rights are violated in Palestine which is a very sensitive cause for Turkey to support the rights of the Palestinians. (Alsaftawi M. , 2016)

Alsaftawi also supports the claim that, another reason for Turkey to make the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as a priority for its foreign policy is because Turkey wanted to become a regional power. He cited Altunışık's explanation of "regional strategic competition" for the situation, which claims that, any country wants to become a regional power in the Middle East should lead the Palestinian issue. He also mentions about the limits of Turkey in this issue. The most notable limitation is the fact that Turkey is a NATO member. However, Turkey was prepared and it was aware of its limits in this regard. Therefore, it shaped its foreign policy and its support for Palestine in a careful way. Although it supported the Palestinians' rights, on the other hand it did not cut off the bilateral relations with Israel, and this behavior was seen as Turkey's encouragements/attempts for two-state solution. However, there were several incidents which damaged the relations between Turkey and Israel. The main ones were; the beginning of the Gaza War in 2008, the lower chair incident, the Mavi Marmara incident. Following these crises, neither Turkey nor Israel paid much attention or made any attempts for resolving these issues immediately. Instead of solving the problem Israel started to look for new allies in the region and established ties with Cyprus and Greece. On the other hand, Turkey lost interest in Israel and focused on becoming a regional power by leading the Arab countries and gaining their support. At this point the most interesting fact is that this policy of Turkey was in contrast with the previous one which predicted the concept of "zero problems with neighbours" policy. Another significant point to be noted was the fact that, although there was tension between the two states politically, the economic relations between them were not affected at all. (Alsaftawi M. , 2016)

Alsaftawi mentions a significant turning point in Turkish foreign policy which is the fact that there was a change in Turkish policy makers. Until the time of Erdoğan, the policy makers were; the Parliament, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Presidency. However, by the empowerment of Erdoğan, two of the policy-making organs disappeared. This caused repositioning in Turkish Foreign Policy. Eventually, the failures in their policies and the appearance of new threats in the region such as Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), brought Israel and Turkey together again. At this point, he continues by asking the question of “who wins, who loses?” and evaluates the situation from three perspectives. From the Turkish point of view; there has been a chaos in the region and Israel was one of the very few states which were stable. While on the other hand, Turkey was struggling from several issues. Therefore, both countries wanted to repair the relations. He cited Altunışık’s words; “Turkish-Israeli relations have always based on interests. Turkey had an objective of becoming a regional power. However, the problems it was facing were preventing Turkey to reach its top objective. In this regard, Turkey urgently needed to establish cooperation with Israel.” From the Israeli perspective; Turkey and Israel had common enemies and this would lay the ground for cooperation. Additionally, one of Israel’s top objectives was to establish full diplomatic relations with a Muslim country, Turkey would fit this definition. From the Palestinian perspective; the Turkish-Israeli cooperation was a disappointment both for Hamas and PA. However, the AK Party government tried to maintain the relations with Palestine. (Alsaftawi M. , 2016)

As a conclusion, the Turkish government in 2016 reshaped the bilateral relations both with Palestine and Israel. It established close links with Israel, while on the other hand it reshaped the structure of its relations with Palestine and Hamas. (Alsaftawi M. , 2016, pp. 17-19)

The tenth article; *Türkiye’nin İsrail, Filistin ve Ürdün Politikası* analyzes Turkish foreign policy towards Israel, Jordan and Palestine. Oruç takes a closer look to Israeli-Turkish relations and to Palestinian-Turkish relations. As for the relations between Israel and Turkey; he points out that, six years after the Mavi Marmara incident, in 2016, there were attempts from both sides for normalization of the relations. However, in 2017 it was obviously seen that there wasn't much of any improvements.

The goals mentioned in the normalization agreement were not achieved yet. Both sides have lost interest in each other and this, shaped 2017 as one of the most distressed years so far. US' support for Israel and Turkey's criticism of what Israel has been doing was the summary of the year. However, in February 2017 there were negotiations between the two states regarding the natural gas pipeline. Both states had different perceptions for the conflict between Israel and Palestine. Oruç argues that this fact led the two states get away from each other. As an example for another separation between Israel and Turkey, he addresses Israeli support for the blockade against Qatar. This behavior of Israel damaged the relations since Turkey and Qatar had strong ties. Israel stated that Qatar used to support Hamas (which is identified as terrorists by Israel) and that was the main reason for Israel to support the blockade. However, at the latter stage they presented Qatar several conditions for any kind of reconciliation, and one of the conditions was very interesting; they required the Turkish military forces to withdraw from Qatar. He points out that, this was not relevant with Israel's claims regarding terrorism for sure. (Oruç, 2017)

On the other hand, there was another incident which created tension between the two states. Israel's policies towards al-Aqsa Mosque caused protests all around the world and there was a short-term Twitter conflict between the Turkish and Israeli foreign ministries in this regard. However, at the end Israel had to remove the x-rays from the entrance of Al-Aqsa Mosque and all the other restrictions. Another crisis between the two states occurred when Iraq announced its "illegal" referendum decisions. Israel supported the referendum while Turkey stood against it. On December 2017, the US decision of re-locating the US Embassy of Tel Aviv to al-Quds was another fact which increased the tension between Turkey and Israel. Turkey stood against the decision and left US alone with the decision. However, although the political relations were full of crisis between Turkey and Israel in 2017, their economic relations were not affected by that, and the trade relations continued. (Oruç, 2017)

As for the relations between Turkey and Palestine; he emphasized that, Turkey's policy toward Palestine in 2017 was more effective. He argues that Turkey and Qatar were the two countries who supported Palestine. However, the actions against Qatar caused concerns for the future of Palestine. Qatar was blamed for supporting terrorism

and this attitude has threatened the other states which were willing to support Palestine. As a result, the other states started to stay away from the Palestinian issue. Despite all the threats Turkey continued its support for all parties from Palestine, not only Hamas. Turkey's support for the Palestinian nation continued also during the Aqsa crisis. Erdoğan's efforts were efficient for Israel's removal of restrictions. It is worth mentioning that, Turkey supported Palestine not only within bilateral relations but also within the international arena and the international organizations. Turkey played an important role in the meeting which was for Palestine's membership of The International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL). This was an important step which proved that Palestine was accepted as a state in an international organization. Another significant point proving Turkey's support for Palestine was when it stood against the US decision of recognizing al-Quds as the capital of Israel. Turkey pointed out the fact that Israel is preventing Palestine to be recognized by the other countries as a state, and this lays the ground for legitimizing its actions. Additional to the facts mentioned above, there are also corporations between the two states in the context of education and economy. Moreover, Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TİKA) and Kızılay continue their existence in Gaza and in the West Bank for humane aids and some other educational and health projects. (Oruç, 2017)

As a conclusion, Oruç emphasizes the fact that, although Turkey announces its support for Palestine in international arena, it does not cut off the relations with the state of Israel. This behavior of Turkey gives hints about the characteristics of its foreign policy. (Oruç, 2017)

The eleventh article; *Kudüs Tasarısı Oylaması ve Türkiye'nin Ortadoğu'daki İmajı* is about US decision of al-Quds and Turkey's actions in return. Turkey took place on the Arab side in Six Days War (1967) and in October War (1973). Pınar argues that this attitude of Turkey caused appreciation in the Middle East and it contributed to Turkey's image in the region. On the other hand, as the outcome of almost all of the wars it had with the Arabs, Israel was the party that gained more. In 1980, Israel annexed East al-Quds and relocated its capital from Tel-Aviv to al-Quds. Following this step of Israel, Turkey closed its embassy in al-Quds and demoted diplomatic relations

from Charge d'affaires level to Second Secretary level. This was the proof of Turkey's support for Palestine and it has also contributed to its image in the region. (Pinar, 2018)

Pinar points out the development in 1988, when the head of the Palestine National Council Yaser Arafat announced the establishment of the state of Palestine. Turkey recognized the state of Palestine before most of the Arab countries located in the region. This was another point which contributed to Turkey's image in the Middle East. However, in 1990's by the beginning of the negotiations between Palestine and Israel, Turkey had insecurities and wanted to establish an image of a neutral state. In this regard, it changed its pro-Palestinian attitude and started to establish ties with Israel. These attempts of Turkey damaged its image in the region. By the beginning of the Second Intifada in 2000, Turkey started to implement "shuttle diplomacy". This was an attempt to provide itself an image of a neutral state. However, the fact that it did not cool down the relations with Israel got reaction from the Arabs side and it was another cause of damaging its image in the region. (Pinar, 2018)

In 2009, the "one minute" incident occurred in DAVOS World Economic Forum. Erdoğan reacted to Israeli President Simon Perez's discourses against the Palestinians. His behavior was appreciated by the Arab world and it contributed to Turkey's image. Another significant fact which contributed to Turkey's reputation was the Mavi Marmara incident. The incident established a perception of Turkish support and struggle for the Palestinians. Following Palestine's application to UN for gaining the status of an independent state, Turkey has made intensive diplomatic efforts for providing support from the other UN member states. This also had a positive impact on Turkey's image in the region. (Pinar, 2018)

In December 2017, US President Donald Trump announced that he recognizes al-Quds as the capital of Israel and soon the US Embassy in Tel-Aviv would be relocated to al-Quds. Turkey criticized the US decision and started negotiations with the Arab states for preventing the application of this decision. Following the negotiations, in the leadership of Turkey a draft resolution including criticism of the decision and consideration of the situation of the Palestinians was submitted to UN General Assembly. Despite the threats from the US side and denials from the Israeli side, the draft was accepted by 128 positive, 9 negative and 35 noncommittal votes. This made a

great contribution to Turkey's image in the Middle East. By these attempts of Turkey, the perception of pro-Western Turkey was replaced with the perception of connectable Turkey for the regional states and it also established in minds perception of a mediator Turkey and a potential leader in the region. (Pinar, 2018)

The last article; *Borders, Boundaries and Frontiers: Notes on Jerusalem's Present Geopolitics* is used for providing general information about the geopolitical position of al-Quds. Haim Yacobi, a professor of development planning at University College London argues that there is a common belief among the Israelis which supports that there is a "united al-Quds" which is a product of Israeli sovereignty and ethno-national aspirations. They accept it as a fixed urban state which is shaped by the features mentioned above. However, al-Quds is "manufactured" by geopolitical practices including; military occupation, planning policy, demographic engineering and the production of imagined geographies. (Yacobi, 2012)

He points out that, this was an outcome of planning. From the 18th century, "planning" became the new disciple for political aspect which shapes norms by domination; exclusion and inclusion mechanisms. The 1948 War has changed al-Quds's geography, demography and politics. But it also changed urban development; the Jewish al-Quds was shaped through two processes; the city went back to its "safe" quarters and expanded into its western hinterland. In this period the "tool-box" of the state included: planning, architecture, control and discipline implemented upon the population. The Western part of the city consisted of the *orientalist* Jews and some institutions such as Knesset and a university campus was established. This seemed as Modernism. However, on the other hand, for the Palestinians this was a demolition. The turning point for Israel's geopolitical conditions took place in 1967 when Israel occupied East al-Quds. Israel's "unified city" planning policies was actually a paradigm of a colonial city. Yacobi discusses the way that Israel uses its economic and military power in favor of its policies in the region. He points out two strategies implemented by Israel such as; "construction of an outer ring around the Jewish neighborhood", "containment of all Palestinian development", "land use policy", "ghost neighborhood", "Rabbis Letter", "construction of the wall." Details regarding these strategies will be discussed in the following chapters. (Yacobi, 2012)

As a conclusion, Yacobi investigates the geopolitical and geostrategic dimension of the Israeli constructions in and around the city. He provides an analytical research in this regard. It is possible to say that Yacobi defines the Israeli policies as an example of “modern colonialism.” He explains this with the Israeli control over the Palestinian population, prevention towards their ownerships and the constructions and settlements over West and East al-Quds; which is annexed by Israel. Yacobi emphasizes that, these settlements are not legal according to International Law. (Yacobi, 2012)

Considering the above mentioned literature review, the researcher would like to emphasize the fact that Turkey’s policy is commonly investigated within the scope of the Middle East, Palestine or Israel. Additionally, the provided literatures are in different languages. At this point, the researcher would like to provide a research which includes both English and Turkish (translated by the researcher into English) sources collected. Although, there are sources which can be called as the main sources for Turkish foreign policy such as the one named *Türk Dış Politikası Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne: Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar* (Turkish Foreign Policy – Facts and Analyses with Documents) the three volumes of the source are focused from the establishment of the republic until 2012, and a fourth volume which focuses on the later period is not released. Additionally, the sources focus on Turkey’s foreign policy in general. Therefore, they do not have al-Quds at the center of the source. Therefore, the researcher aims for providing data about Turkey’s foreign policy towards al-Quds.

CHAPTER TWO

GEOPOLITICS AND GEOSTRATEGY

The main target of this chapter is to provide a general framework of geopolitical and geostrategic facts related to the subject of this research. These facts will complement to the policies implemented by various governments. On the other hand, it will help to identify the position and the status of these actors in the region. The researcher would also like to emphasize the significance of geopolitics and geo-strategy in policy-making process. It is known that these facts are crucial for policy analysis. The geographical location of a state shapes its security concerns and interests. Sait Yılmaz argues that, a state which disregards the significance of geopolitical facts might fail implementing successful policies. He also emphasizes that, the geography of a state offers advantages and disadvantages to the state and it is the main reason behind most of the wars and conflicts. (Yılmaz, 2012) The researcher argues that, the conflict between Israel and Palestine also has geostrategic and geopolitical dimension. To shed a light on this, the geopolitical significance of al-Quds and its status in International Law from a geostrategic aspect will be discussed in this chapter. Additionally, as the focal point of the study is Turkish foreign policy, Turkey's strategic position in the region and its interests based on its strategic location will be discussed as well. Furthermore, the interaction between Israel's annexation, its policies and the geographical characteristics of al-Quds will be investigated.

2.1 Turkey's Role and Strategic Position in the Middle East and the General Framework of Turkish Foreign Policy

To provide analysis of Turkish foreign policy towards al-Quds, it is important to determine the strategic position of both Turkey and al-Quds in the region. Considering the current structure of the land, it is also important to determine the parties of the conflict, the behavior of the international community and the resolution attempts. This chapter aims to address these facts. As the main actor to be analyzed is Turkey and its foreign policy, the researcher believes that Turkey's strategic position and its reputation should be investigated primarily. From a wider perspective, the regional policies of states shape their policies towards countries. In this regard, general information about

Turkish foreign policy towards Middle East would establish an understanding of Turkish foreign policy in the region. The researcher will follow a path which starts from a wider point which narrows and reaches to the focal point.

As a point of reference, Bıyıklı in his book argues that, there are two factors which shapes and influences Turkish foreign policy towards the Middle East; the regional facts and the external facts. He explains the regional facts as; Turkey's geostrategic and geopolitical position and its importance and secondly Middle East's geopolitical and geostrategic position and its importance. As for the external facts he points out the great powers' Middle East and Mediterranean policies. Considering this classification, the researcher will follow a similar concept. Firstly, she will explain Turkey's geostrategic and geopolitical position. Secondly she will investigate al-Quds's geopolitical and geostrategic position and lastly, she will address the external facts which influence Turkish foreign policy towards al-Quds. Turkey is a state which the Ottomans reached its final borders and drawn life and safety. Its location is on where three continents intersect and it has four seas next to it. Therefore, Turkey can be called a maritime state. It is an international strategic country as a whole. Throughout history, many diplomatic and economic conflicts occurred for its strategic location. Turkey's geopolitical and geostrategic location, which makes it attractive, creates regional problems and conflicts of interest. It stands as effective and competent in Middle East which has the world's most important oil reserves, Mediterranean basin which has important sea transportation routes and trade junctions, Black Sea basin and Turkish gulleets which has all-round importance in history, Balkans which has had many structural changes in time. (Bıyıklı, 2019, pp. 47-58)

The other features that reinforce the strategic importance of Turkey are as follows: Implementing Western systems as a country with a democratic, social and contemporary state of law and acknowledging the market economy, adopting the integration with all the institutions of the West, having a cultural unity with the Balkans, Middle East, Caucasus and Central Asian countries that have witnessed major changes, including one of the most important routes for transporting the Caucasus and Central Asia oil and natural gas to the West. Additionally, Turkey had been participating in The United Nations and NATO's involvement in peacekeeping, regional security and

stability initiatives, and having a predominant role in some, with weightiness on European Security Architecture. As for the general structure of Turkish foreign policy, Oran determines the facts which influence Turkish foreign policy within several points. Firstly, he mentions about the cultural dimension. In this regard, he emphasizes the Asian influence; he points out the interaction between the domestic and foreign policy. Depending on the Asian dimension, instead of establishing reconciliation from a common point, the Asian understanding offers to eliminate the enemy in domestic policy. The nation mostly seems to be passive against the authority. On the other hand, these people might response to disagreements by un-proportional strong reactions, the reflection of this dimension mostly reflects to foreign policy as withdrawal from the negotiating table. As another fact, he points out the Middle East/Islamic dimension. 98 per cent of Turkey's population is Muslims. This causes sympathy among the public opinion for any Muslim community which is under pressure. On the other hand, the structure of the state is secular and it is far from the Islamic principles. Although Turkey is mostly accepted as a state located in the Middle East, unlike the majority, it is not an Arab state and for this reason, there are times that it is not considered as a Middle Eastern country. (Oran, 2019, p. 20)

Secondly Oran emphasizes historical dimension; Turkey's status quo and balance policy is a reflection of its historical background. This was one of the secrets of success both for the Ottoman and Byzantine empires. Oran argues that Turkish foreign policy is a natural extension of Ottoman foreign policy. Thirdly, there is a strategic dimension. Turkey's geographical features are significant facts influencing its foreign policy. In this regard, its geostrategic position, neighborhoods and the Turkish straits are the main points to determine Turkey's geography. Another point for the strategic dimension is Turkey's security cordon and its dilemmas. In this regard, he points out the European perspective, the Balkan perspective, the Mediterranean perspective, Middle Eastern perspective, the Caucuses perspective and finally the world power axis which pass through Turkey. Fourthly, there is an internal structural dimension. He determines this in general-historical, private-actual and ideological points. (Oran, 2019, pp. 21-29)

On the other hand, as a characteristic of Turkish foreign policy from 1950's to 1990's M. Hakan Yavuz and Mujeeb R. Khan in their article, emphasize duality in

Turkish foreign policy. They explain Turkey's duality with the following reasons; Turkey was willing to take part in both sides; Western systems such as NATO, European Economic Community (EEC) and European Council. And at the same time it took active role in Middle Eastern politics. This duality has affected the bilateral relations with Turkey and Israel. Yavuz and Khan argue that, the tension between Turkey and Israel was an outcome of Turkey's duality and contradictory orientations in its foreign policy which were an outcome of the fact that they were a mixture of Islamic and Western characteristics. Although Turkey's significance was notable and there were many written articles about its NATO membership and its relations with the West, Turkey's policy towards Arab-Israeli conflict was not evaluated or mentioned at all. Yavuz and Khan point out to Turkey's modifications in its Middle Eastern policies. They mention two key factors for evaluation of Turkish foreign policy; political, cultural and geographic duality of Turkey and the changing block. Additionally, they argue that, there are two external factors which tend Turkey to duality; oil and the Cyprus issue. However, this duality causes heavy consequences. One of the most important outcomes is the fact that it put two of its objectives in tension which were; to maintain the diplomatic relations with Israel and to support the Palestinian issue which would also help building ties with some of the Arab states. There are several factors which strengthened the relations between Turkey and the Arabs; Turkey's situation in Cyprus, Arab oil sources, public opinion; criticism of Israel. They support the idea that the reason why Turkey was cooling relations with Israel may seem as an attempt to gain the Arab support in Cyprus issue and for the oil supplies. However, Turkey's relation was not determined by involving of the Arabs. The basis of the duality depends on Turkey's dependence of ties with Western and the Muslim world. (Yavuz & Khan, 1992)

As a conclusion, they analyze the modifications in Turkish foreign policy towards the Arab-Israeli conflict by considering two main points; duality and the changing block during the post-cold war era. They claim that, duality was the main source of tension in Turkey's bilateral relations with Israel and the Arabs. However, Turkey is a state which is aware of its geo-strategic importance. In this regard, instead of having sharp lines and cutting off its ties with one of the parties of the conflict, it adopts the concept of balancing the relations with both parties. (Yavuz & Khan, 1992)

Alsaftawi also supports the claim that, another reason for Turkey to make the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as a priority for its foreign policy is because Turkey wanted to become a regional power. He cited Altunışık's explanation of "regional strategic competition" for the situation, which claims that, any country wants to become a regional power in the Middle East should lead the Palestinian issue. He also mentions about the limits of Turkey in this issue. The most notable limitation is the fact that Turkey is a NATO member. However, Turkey was prepared and it was aware of its limits in this regard. Therefore, it shaped its foreign policy and its support for Palestine in a careful way. Although it supported the Palestinians' rights, on the other hand it did not cut off the bilateral relations with Israel. (Alsaftawi, 2016)

2.2 The Geopolitical Significance of Al-Quds

Besides its spiritual significance and holiness, al-Quds has geopolitical significance as a city itself. There are several strategic facts which make al-Quds significant. As a result of its current situation it is not easy to analyze the geopolitics of al-Quds. However, Hugh Macdonald, an adjunct professor of political science at Boston University analyzes the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the regional actors within the scope of geopolitics. In this case; he mentions about various important points. Some of them are listed as; economy, natural sources, technologic ability, and the structure of political regime. He also points out the significance of globalism in terms of its influence. The researcher believes this may construct a path for reaching to the geopolitical significance of al-Quds. (Macdonald, 2002)

The new geopolitical conditions for al-Quds appeared after the Israeli annexation of al-Quds and the other cities in 1967. Following this, the government of Israel started to apply the Israeli law to all over the city. This was not recognized in the international arena. Although Israel presented it as a united city, Yacobi and Pullan argue that al-Quds seems to be more of a colonial city. They determine it as Judaisation; the expansion of Jewish political, territorial, demographic and economic control all over the city. They argue that Israel used its economic power and military might for re-locating the borders, to shift populations and to deny rights and sources. They emphasize that there were two main strategies implemented by Israel; they started massive construction for the Jewish "immigration" to the city and to avoid Palestinian

immigration to the city. Eventually they improve Jewish expansion and prevent Palestinian growth. Before 1948, the Jewish population in al-Quds was 30 percent while in 2014, it was 90 percent. The Palestinians are isolated from each other and from the Israelis. Yacobi and Pullan also emphasize the importance of French Hill. (Yacobi & Pullan, 2014) Considering the French Hill neighborhood, there is ethno-national and cultural social class order. In this regard, the hegemonic group is the Jewish community. Depending on their hegemonic demography, they own the cultural hegemony and the control. However, in 2000's new actors raised against them, which are the religious Jewish groups. The Israeli-Palestinian residents almost share the similar privileges with the Jewish majority. On the other hand, the al-Qudsite Palestinians are "non-citizens" and they have a poor background. (Shtern, 2018)

2.3 Strategic and Geopolitical Dimension of the Israel Occupation in East Al-Quds

Sharkansky claims that the city was strategically and spiritually important during the Israelite Kingdom and also for the modern state of Israel. However, during the other periods it was a sleepy town. Sharkansky argues that the city became spiritually significant when David made it his capital. The city was recorded as "the land flowing milk and honey". The city is determined by Sharkansky as the Judaic heartland. It was located in the mountains, lacking abundance of water and rich soils. It did not achieve agricultural wealth, and did not associate with its neighbours' rivers. The heartland of David was similar to the heartland of modern Israel. (Sharkansky, 1996)

Al-Quds is widely recognized as a "divided city" in the literature. It is the poorest and at the same time, the largest city in Israel. Rokem and Boano point out three important facts in this regard. Firstly, al-Quds is a holy land for the three monotheistic religions. Secondly, there are two nations claiming of it as their capital city. Thirdly, it is not recognized as Israel's capital according to the UN Resolutions. The reason why Israel has tight control over al-Quds is because there still is an ongoing conflict between Palestine and Israel over the city. By the end of the 1948 war, the city was divided into two; East al-Quds belonged to the Palestinians and West al-Quds belonged to the Israelis. However, by the end of 1967 war, Israel's geopolitical condition was changed. It was a geopolitically turning point when Israel annexed the Golan Heights, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank including East al-Quds. This had an important impact on the

inhabitants of East al-Quds. At the end, they were not accepted as citizens of the state of Israel and they did not receive proper residency rights. In this regard, they explain several facts about the planning policy of Israel. Mainly, the policy focused on weakening the Palestinians and improving the Israeli control over East al-Quds. As for the implementation of the plan new constructions of the Palestinian neighborhood was banned by the government of Israel. The Israelis aimed to establish a unified al-Quds with a dominant Jewish majority. On the other hand, the policy makers develop plans for the demographic change within the city. In 2000, they aimed for 60 per cent of Israeli citizens versus 40 per cent of Palestinians and they submitted a new plan in this regard with the name of *al-Quds Master Plan 2000's*. However, the plan was rejected by the government. This kind of a strategic move would help Israelis to keep the city under control in an easier way. (Rokem & Boano, 2017)

Considering the perception of adopting al-Quds as the “eternal capital of the Jewish people”, Haim Yacobi analyzes the structure of the city and argues that Israel uses *planning* as a tool for establishment of a colonial structure over some parts of the city. As a turning point he emphasizes the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948. He argues that, this changed the city within three dimensions; geography, demography and politics. According to Yacobi, this “changed the urban developments in two processes” which are; “shrinking back into its safe quarters and expanding into its western hinterland.” And he adds: “The development of the mass housing districts for Jewish migrants such as Kiryat Yovel and Kiryat Menachem on the site of expropriated Palestinian villages are good examples.” Within the scope of Geopolitics, Yacobi argues that besides “*planning and architecture*” the *control* implemented towards the population was crucial as well. Subsequently, Israel started to construct the Western part of the city with the *orientalist* Jews and some institutions such as the Knesset and a university campus. They put it under the name of “Modernization” while on the other hand it was a demolition for the Palestinians. (Yacobi, 2012) See appendix 1.1.

Yacobi addresses 1967 as another turning point for the geopolitical conditions of the state of Israel since it annexed West al-Quds.

“Following this, the Israeli government initiated legislation acts in order to apply Israeli law on East al-Quds, despite international objections. As a result, Israel annexed Palestinian land and declared the city of al-Quds as its capital. Yet, beyond the Israeli rhetoric

representing al-Quds as a unified city its planning policies have been the paradigm of a colonial city. Both state and city pursue this policy, which has persistently promoted a project of Judaization: that is, the expansion of Jewish political, territorial, demographic, and economic control.” (Yacobi, 2012)

He emphasizes the fact that Israel uses its economic and military power to relocate borders, boundaries, grant and deny rights and resources, shift populations, and to reshape the occupied territories for the purpose of ensuring Jewish control. He points out two strategies implemented by Israel in the example of al-Quds; the construction of an outer ring around the Jewish neighborhood, and containment of all Palestinian development, implemented through housing demolition and the prevention of immigration to the city. And he adds, “land use policy” in al-Quds encourages Jewish expansion. Before 1948 Jews owned %30 of the city, while nowadays they own %90 of the city. This situation caused physical barriers between East and West of al-Quds additional to the spatial barriers. Another point to be noted is the fact that Israelis own all the infrastructural systems in the city. They control water and sewerage systems, and they have the control over the roads. All these facts lead Palestinians to be isolated from each other. Another significant point is that; they preferred moving back to the Old City. A “*ghost neighborhood*” was established in the Old city which is a zone full of “expensive” inhabitants. Obviously there is an unequal distribution of transportation services, roads and other systems. The conventional division of East al-Quds and West al-Quds does not exist in reality. Eventually, planning is an effective tool for achieving geopolitical objectives. (Yacobi, 2012)

Yacobi argues that the right to the city is further than the individual rights, it is a part of common rights for those Palestinians who “fight for” their individual rights. Over the last decade there is a new phenomenon; immigration of the Palestinians into the Jewish settlements in East al-Quds. The Jewish population is privileged and the Palestinians are excluded. The location of the French Hill is significant both geographically and symbolically. Geographically; it is surrounded by a part of the Separation Wall; its landscape is important. Jews are not happy with the existence of Palestinians in the French Hill because most of the suicide bombings and attacks took place in here. The reason why Palestinians moved there is because they are looking for a better place to live. He mentions about a declination called “Rabbis Letter” calling for Jews not to rent their Apartments to the Palestinians. Anyone doing this is doing harm

in the eyes of God and other men. Israel started to build barriers within the city (al-Quds) and the Palestinians started to turn back to East al-Quds. However, there was a %50 increase in the housing prices, and this created pressure in the housing market. The Arabs with an Israeli ID with economic power, started to move into the Jewish neighborhoods. In the French Hill; there is security and sovereignty and it is close to some Palestinian commercial and social nodes. (Yacobi, 2012) See appendix 1.2.

As a conclusion, Yacobi discusses about a “*planned ethnicization of internal frontiers*.” In this regard, he argues that: “the state manipulates the local ethnic geography to further the interests of a dominant ethnic group. Furthermore, this process reflects the social construction of the Jewish immigrants as “state agents,” i.e. a group which is determined “to perform a function on behalf of the state.” This is done through the state’s provision of resources and incentives.” Eventually, Yacobi focuses on the Israeli way of reconstruction of the city. Additionally, he emphasizes the inequalities between the Palestinian and the Israeli inhabitants in al-Quds. Yacobi argues that, the structure of the city was reconstructed by the concept of planning of the state of Israel. And Israel established the perception of a united al-Quds amongst the Israelis. However, this is unacceptable when there is inequality amongst the inhabitants of al-Quds; in the regard of human rights, the Israelis own their rights while on the other hand, Palestinians do not own any rights given by the state of Israel. (Yacobi, 2012)

From a different aspect, a new geopolitical theory named as the *Barakah Circle Theory* was founded by Prof. Dr. Abd al Fattah El-Awaisi. In this theory, he links the sanctity of al-Quds with its geopolitical significance. Briefly, *barakah* is an Arabic term which is translated into English by El-Awaisi as “gift from the creator.” (El-Awaisi A., 2016)

The main argument of the theory is that, there is a relation between *barakah* and geopolitics and it is possible to analyze the geopolitical importance of the regions and international actors by considering the amount of *barakah* in different locations. In this term, it is possible to say that *barakah* is used as a tool of geopolitical analysis. According to the theory, there are three circles. The first circle includes *Bayt al-Maqdis* as a region. The second circle includes Egypt, Cyprus, Syria, Lebanon, Palestine and Jordan. The third circle includes Turkey, Hijaz (Mecca and Medina), Iraq, Egypt and

several towns in the region. According to the theory, al-Aqsa Mosque is defined as “center of the center” which means that it is the place where the origin of *barakah* is central. Starting from the center, *barakah* reaches all parts of the world, however, not on the same scale. The amount of *barakah* decreases due to further circles and it increases due to closer circles. For instance, he points out that Egypt is mentioned in both second and third circles, this means Egypt has a specific geopolitical importance for the region as it combines the two circles. This feature gives Egypt a crucial role in any strategic cooperation in the region. Another point to be noted is the fact that, *Bayt al-Maqdis* as it is mentioned in the theory refers to a region that is neither the whole of Palestine nor only the capital. It is a region which consists of several villages and towns, including al-Quds. El-Awaisi explains the significance of the region of *Bayt al-Maqdis* by the following words, “Who rules *Bayt al-Maqdis* commands the second circle which is; Egypt and Biladush-Sham, who rules the second circle commands the third circle which is; the Eastern Muslim countries, who rules the third circle commands the whole world.” (El-Awaisi A., 2016) In that case, there is an interaction and order between the circles. The maps for the circles are given below:

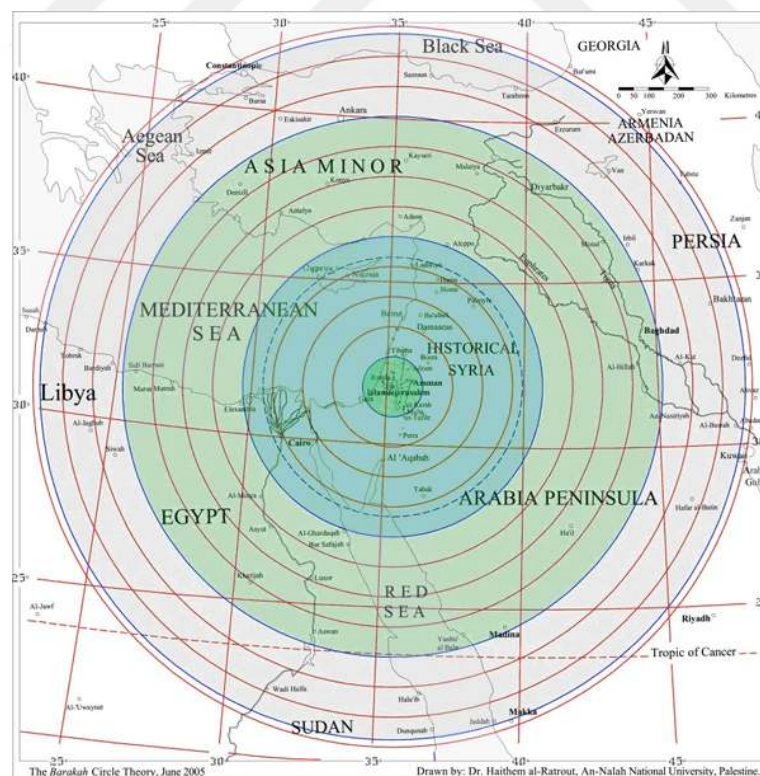


Figure 2.1 (El-Awaisi A., 2007, p. 33)

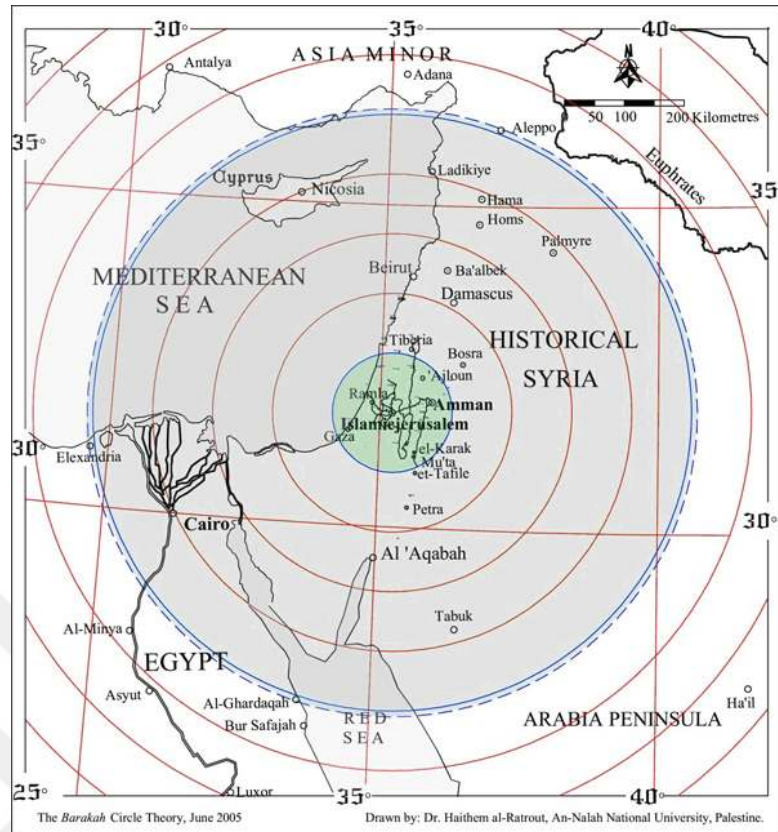


Figure 2.2 (El-Awaisi A., 2007)

The theory provides a new aspect and a new perspective for analysis of geopolitics. As El-Awaisi argues; “Theory is needed for the interpretation, which will lead through realization, which will help to make the future history and the future history means strategic plan. Eventually, theory will help to draw the strategic planning.” (El-Awaisi A., 2016) As an outcome of the strategic thinking, it is possible to see that there is a close relation and interaction between the actors in this specific region. It is worth mentioning that, if any of these regional countries become powerful, they would be able to help Palestine against Israel and this would cause problems for the Israeli side. He argues that, in this case the only way for keeping Israel’s occupation is to weaken these countries and keep them under control. The current situation in the region supports this argument of El-Awaisi. He emphasizes that there is a very close relationship between Egypt and Syria and these two countries are in interaction and whatever happens in each one of them affects the other one as they are in the same circle according to the theory. Currently, it is possible to say that Egypt and Iraq can be considered as under external influence. Syria can be considered as “destroyed” after the civil war. And Turkey is the only country in the region which has a potential for

becoming a regional power among these countries. (El-Awaisi A., 2016) However, this is an unacceptable fact for the other international actors who are concerned about losing their influence in the region.

As a conclusion, El-Awaisi argues that the Western theories might function for analysis based on Western geopolitics; however, they might not be enough for analysis based on the Eastern geopolitics. He argues that this theory was founded within the Eastern perception which is more appropriate for the analysis on this region. Therefore, the theory is applicable for the analysis based on Middle Eastern geopolitics especially for the case of al-Quds.

2.4 Al-Quds' Position in International Law

Al-Quds's position in International Law could be considered as one of the facts which influence the policies implemented by the other actors towards the land. It may also influence the bilateral relations with the actors having claims over the land. As a primary source for al-Quds's position in international law, the UN Resolutions will be investigated in this part of the research. As a brief historical background, the main developments will be chronologically ordered. (Biblical Productions, Retrieved June 2020) To begin from the Ottoman era, Palestine was conquered by Yavuz Sultan Selim and it became a part of the Ottoman Empire 1517. After almost 400 years of Ottoman rule, the British took control over al-Quds in 1917. In 1947, by the Partition Plan al-Quds was announced as an international territory. Subsequently, in 1948; the Arab-Israeli War began. Following the war, the British withdrew from the land and the state of Israel announced its sovereignty within the same day. Within the same year Israel annexed West al-Quds announced al-Quds as its capital and moved the Knesset from Tel-Aviv to al-Quds. In 1967 the Six Days War took place and as a result, Israel annexed East al-Quds and took control over the whole city.

Berdal Aral, an international relations professor who specialized in international law emphasizes that al-Quds was not known as a land of conflict during the Ottoman era from 1517 to 1917. However, in 1917 following the Ottoman defeat in World War I British mandatory began in the land and the British announced the Balfour Declaration within the same year which "promised a Jewish land" for the Jews. He argues that the

90 per cent of the inhabitants in the land were Arabs. Aral emphasizes that between 1917 and 1922 the British control over al-Quds continued as a military occupation, while between 1922 and 1947 it continued as a mandatory administration with the League of Nations' sponsorship. By considering this, he points out an important fact that during the thirty years of its control over al-Quds, the British did not establish sovereignty over the land. According to him, the mandatory in Palestine was the same as the other mandatories in the Middle East. The mandatory regimes and their goals were held in League of Nations' Article 22 as; the communities which are developed enough to separate from the Turkish Empire should be assisted by a mandatory regime they become able to continue their existence alone. Aral argues that this meant that these mandated territories "would be granted independence, based on the principle of self-determination." He emphasizes that, the Arab majorities were granted independence such as Syria and Iraq, however, Palestine was not granted independence although the majority of the inhabitants were Arabs. Aral argues that, according to international law, they had the right to claim over the land in this case. (Aral, 2019)

İrfan Kaya Ülger argues that, as a person of International Law and Law of Nations Israel and as its UN membership it promised to comply with the law, and acknowledged that it might face sanctions if it acts violent against law. Therefore, he argues that UN obligations are also valid for the state of Israel. According to Ülger, Israel's actions included "serious violation" against the law of nations since 1948. He emphasizes that in 1947, UN General Assembly resolution 181 decided of an international administration under the United Nations Trusteeship Council Administration for al-Quds. Ülger points out that UN shaped a framework for the city within the scope of an international regime. He also points out that UN did not welcome Israel's invasion of West al-Quds in 1948 and East al-Quds after the 1967 war and was described Israel as an invader and condemned such actions of it. Ülger argues that the problem also needs to be analyzed within the dimension of sovereignty. According to Ülger, it is not possible to consider the status of al-Quds separately from Palestine in terms of right to sovereignty. Until the mandate rule, the sovereignty of al-Quds belonged to the Ottoman Empire, however, during the mandatory, it was not passed to the British or the League of Nations but it was suspended. It was suspended in other mandatories in the Palestinian regions. However, in those regions, sovereignty was granted to the

Palestinians while, the Israeli annexation of al-Quds is not legally recognized in international law. And he also emphasizes that its annexation of West-al-Quds is “criticized by the international community.” Ülger also argues that, in terms of International Law, “Israel is annexing the whole of al-Quds.” He emphasizes the fact that the UN resolutions require Israeli withdrawal from East al-Quds which Israel annexed in 1967. And he adds; he international community has not accepted Israel's claims of sovereignty neither over East al-Quds nor over West al-Quds. At this point, Ülger points out to Trump's decision and argues that the decision is not valid within the scope of International Law. (Ülger, 2020. Retrieved June 22, 2020)

On the other hand, Henry Cattán, the Palestinian writer and jurist analyzes the status of al-Quds in international law by considering the sovereignty of the inhabitants. He states that after it was detached from the Ottomans, Article 22 of League of Nations recognized the inhabitants of al-Quds as “an independent nation” under international law. The aim was to establish a state under the law of nations which granted sovereignty over the country. The fact that it was under mandatory would not change the right of sovereignty. In the article, the mandatory was mentioned as a temporary arrangement. At this point, Cattán argues that the mandatory did not take away their sovereignty neither from the Palestinian state nor from the nation. He supports the argument that they were granted by sovereignty both during the Ottoman rule and after it. He also adds that the Palestinians did not lose their sovereignty after 1948 war. In 1947, General Assembly of the United Nations introduced Resolution 181 which offers al-Quds to be ruled as a *corpus seperatum* (separated body) under a special international regime which would be administered by the Trusteeship Council. The working process on the structure of the resolution continued until 1950. However, Israel and Jordan opposed this internationalization of al-Quds. He argues that similar with the mandatory, the resolution did not take away their sovereignty from the inhabitants. Lastly, he analyzes the Israeli annexations in 1948 and 1967. He argues that the annexations opposed and violated the UN resolutions and it violated the sovereignty of the Palestinian inhabitants. (Cattán, 1981)

In 1947, UN General Assembly introduced a Partition Plan. According to the plan, around 56 percent of the Mandatory Palestinian would be granted to the Jews and

the 43 percent would be granted to the Arabs while al-Quds would become an international city *corpus seperatum*. The Palestinian Arabs opposed the plan and argued that they were not bound by Resolution 181. In this regard, Aral emphasizes the fact that UN General Assembly can only make decisions of recommendations to the members of the UN, not binding ones. Additionally, he argues that Resolution 181 was an outcome of U.S. and the Jewish lobby's pressures. As a result, this resolution was even tainted because of these "threats." Aral argues that the Resolution 181 "announced" by United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) was "against the principle of self-determination" since the self-determination principle is based on majority rule in international law, however, as the resolution granted the Jewish minority more territory than the Arab majority which was the two thirds of the inhabitants. (Aral, 2019)

Aral points out the fact that following the announcement of the state of Israel the Arabs attacked the state and as a result of the first Arab-Israeli War Israel expanded its borders beyond what was planned in the Partition Plan and took control over 78 per cent of the Palestinian territory. Israel provided claims over the city and moved some of the buildings. Aral determines this as a "*de facto* annexation." (West al-Quds) On the other hand, Jordan took control over East al-Quds. Another significant point highlighted by Aral is the fact that Israel explained its annexation of West al-Quds as an action of self-defense. However, Aral argues that, according to International Law, this case cannot be explained as self-defense since the territory did not belong to Israel itself. He argues that "The right of self-defense is not a legal ground for obtaining additional territory. Under the UN Charter system, wars of whatever origins and nature are not considered as a legal, and thus, an acceptable instrument of sovereignty. This is the case even if the territory did not have a proper sovereign previously." At this point, Aral's argument is that Jordan's annexation of East al-Quds does not provide Israel right of sovereignty in the land. Aral also emphasizes, the fact that the states recognized the state of Israel in 1948 does not mean they recognized its sovereignty over al-Quds. He criticizes Israel for provoking UN's silence as if the international community accepted the Israeli sovereignty over West al-Quds. (Aral, 2019)

As a result of the Six Days War, Israel annexed the whole city of al-Quds. Following the annexation, "Israel issued series of legislations." UN condemned this

action since in International Law it is prohibited to replace the previous law of an occupied territory with the occupant's law. Aras argues Resolution 242 by the UN Security Council supports this argument. Another development was Israel's statement which claimed that al-Quds was a united city and it is the capital of Israel. This was condemned by UN and it is not valid according to International Law. On the other hand, in 1988, Palestine declared its independence and claimed al-Quds as its capital. It was received by the UN General Assembly and as a result; "...with overwhelming majority, reaffirmed the Palestinian right of sovereignty in the territories occupied by Israel in 1967." (Aral, 2019)

As for another attempt, Aral analyzes the Oslo Peace Accords and he argues that the process only provided negotiations between the two parties and postponed the Palestinian sovereignty. He emphasizes that Israel violated the process by establishment of the illegal settlements. The process ended in 2000. As a conclusion, according to Aral, it is easy even for an international law student to recognize al-Quds as a Palestinian belonging. He also argues that it is easy for an international student to conclude that al-Quds does not belong to Israel. And Aral also emphasizes that, it is only the Palestinians who can decide whether if al-Quds should be considered as *corpus seperatum* or not, since they are the ones who have "the rightful claim to sovereignty in the whole of al-Quds." (Aral, 2019)

As a conclusion for the above mentioned subjects, the researcher will provide Macdonald's arguments. He analyzes the Israeli Palestinian conflict and the regional actors within the scope of Geopolitics. In this case; he mentions about various important points. Some of them are listed as; economy, natural sources, technologic ability, and the structure of political regime. He also points out the significance of globalism in terms of its influence. According to Macdonald "access to oil reserves" is the most significant "geopolitical determinant of the strategic behavior. In this regard, he argues that the wars which took place in the Middle East affected a wider area, the world politics. The wars had economic and sociological outcomes besides "energy crisis". Additionally, he points out the international effects of the wars with the "UN peacekeeping operations." He analyzes the geopolitical situation in the region and argues that "US protects Israel, patronizes Egypt and relies upon Saudi Arabia." He

explains this, as a reason for US' willingness for regional stability, within its own interest. Eventually, considering the geopolitical aspect in the region, as for the significance of natural source Macdonald highlights that oil and finance are in hands of the Arabs. Therefore, this gives them influence "beyond the region". Another example is he gives for one of the crucial sources in the region is; water. Macdonald argues; the fact that Turkey has control over the headwaters of Tigris and Euphrates influences its economic potential in a negative way. Finance is another fact which influences geopolitics and that is also in the hands of the Arabs. (Macdonald, 2002)

Considering the economic aspect in period in early 2000, Macdonald argues that Turkey had the largest Gross Domestic Product (GDP) considering the Middle East countries such as Egypt, Israel, Lebanon and Jordan. However, he also points out in terms of GDP per capita Israel is beyond the other countries. He analysis the regional countries and some of the Arab states within the geopolitical aspect and argues that some of the undeveloped Arab states are "enjoying their great wealth" such as Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and United Arab Emirates (UAE). On the other hand, he analyzes the other Middle East states as "enjoying their formidable military strength" which are addressed by him as; Turkey, Iran and Egypt. (Macdonald, 2002) See appendix 2.1.

Another significant analysis made by Macdonald is within the economic aspect of geopolitics:

"...This means that Turkish labour and goods are able to circulate freely within the Single European Market. Turkey strongly endorses the Oslo accords, Political-military relations and the stability of Arab regimes, and ignores the formal and informal trade boycotts most Islamic countries maintain against Israel." (Macdonald, 2002)

On the other hand, the other significant point is the case of water. As it was mentioned above, water is geopolitically very significant and Israel uses it as a strategic item for implementing its policies towards the Palestinians. Hacer Sağlam Cansu emphasizes that;

"According to July 2016 data of the World Bank, while the Israel; settler population in the West Bank "consumes" 240 liters of water per person per day. The amount of water consumed by the Palestinian population per person is 78 liters per day. The daily per capita water consumption recommended by World Health Organization (WHO) is 100 liters."

She also points out that, there were only two negotiations for the attempts to resolve the issue of water; Cairo Agreement and Oslo II Agreement. However, the issue

was still not solved. She argues that water is one of the main determinants behind the conflicts in the area; and emphasizes the fact that, there are limitations implemented by Israel regarding the access of the Palestinians to water such as “military decrees”, “restrictions of movement for the Palestinians” and the “Israel: West Bank Barrier”. She also points out a report which states that, Israel finds it as a threat when the Palestinians ask for permission for the water based projects. (Cansu, 2018) She analyzes this fact from the aspect of International Law and argues as the following:

“According to the decision of the UN General Assembly Sharing Plan numbered 181 dated 29 November 1947; “The Arab States, the State of Israel's and the city of Quds' access to water and energy facilities should be provided on a non-discriminatory basis.” As part of the Palestinian-Israeli water problem, we see that international law has been violated since the decisions taken in the UN General Assembly Improvisation Plan, which envisages the establishment of an Arab and a Jewish state.” (Cansu, 2018)

On the other hand, for considering the current situation from the aspect of International Law, Berdal Aral argues that al-Quds belongs to Palestine and it must be returned back to them. (Aral, 2019) As a conclusion, in terms of International Law, UNGA and United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolutions; al-Quds is accepted as an international territory which must be ruled by “the international authority.” There is a consensus that Israel’s claims over al-Quds are not valid. Also the Jewish settlements and legislations targeting al-Quds are considered as illegal.

CHAPTER THREE

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS AL-QUDS (1923-2002)

It is known that al-Quds is a sacred and holy land for the three monotheistic religions and this is one of the facts which shaped the actions and strategies of the previous civilizations which claimed over the city within history. Religious reasons may play efficient role even in for 21st century world politics especially within the policy-making process of the international actors and al-Quds is one of the examples for this. In this case, the researcher will firstly provide general information about the impact of religion for determination of al-Quds's identity in this chapter. Afterwards, she will establish a general framework for the identity of al-Quds during the Ottoman era. This is for emphasizing the role of historical heritage in Turkey's foreign policy towards al-Quds. Although it was not common during the first decades of the new republic, there were periods when Turkish foreign policy was shaped around its historical roots. Another significant point which will be discussed in this chapter is the Balfour Declaration which was a turning point for the destiny of the land. It also played major role in al-Quds's position. Then, the researcher will discuss Turkey's foreign policy towards al-Quds from the establishment of the republic in 1923 until 2002, considering its behavior towards the development which took place in and around the land such as; the Arab-Israeli wars and the conflict and the peace attempts.

3.1 Significance of Al-Quds for the Three Monotheistic Religions

Al-Quds is a city which is accepted as a holy land for the three monotheistic religions; Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Under this headline the basic knowledge of the significance of al-Quds for different nations and religions will be briefly presented in chronological order.

Khalid El-Awaisi explains the religious significance of al-Quds Khalid as; the different names given to al-Quds have different meanings for the three different religions. He explains its significance for the Jews as Moses called the Israelites to enter

the land and they also “trace their origin back to Abraham.” And for the Christians it is the land where Jesus has been to and where he was crucified and it is the “holiest place of worship.” And for the Muslims it is the land where Mohammad’s night journey took place and it is also significant because the earlier prophets had been there. He argues that these reasons still play role in the ongoing conflict. According to K. El-Awaisi, the spiritual link between the people of these three monotheistic religions and the holy land is the key for resolving the conflict over the land. Although the land was given different names its significance remained the same. Meanwhile, both the names which were given to the land and the associations have different meanings to different people. (El-Awaisi K. , 2019)

Additionally, as for shading a light on significance of al-Quds for the three monotheistic religions Khalid El-Awaisi argues that there is an important figure which is a common one for the three; Abraham. At this point, he argues that the different names given to the land in different periods play crucial role for the investigation since Abraham is “accepted as the father of three faiths.” He emphasizes that Christians and Arabs consider him as their ancestor while Jews consider him as “the first Jew.” As for explanation of the fact that Muslims consider Abraham as a Muslim although Islam was not introduced yet. The reason is because in Muslim faith all prophets sent by God belongs to the same faith; Islam. Considering the names of the land, firstly he mentions about the name; *Urshalim*. He argues that this is the “earliest documented name for the land” which has a meaning of “founded by or city of” and “whole or complete.” He also argues that the name is traced back to the Canaanites although Jews claim of it. Another name mentioned by El-Awaisi is *Bayt al-Maqdis* which is the name mentioned by Muslim Prophet Muhammad and he argues that it is one of the ancient names. El-Awaisi translates the name as “the Holy House.” Then he mentions about the name *Aelia* which was a Latin name. Lastly, he mentions about *al-Quds* which “comes from the same Arabic roots”. As a conclusion, Khalid El-Awaisi points out to the similarity between the questions of “whom does the land belong to?” and “whom does Abraham belong to?” (El-Awaisi K. , 2019)

Following the above mentioned framework for the religious aspect, firstly the significance of al-Quds for the Jews will be investigated according to Stolov and Aydın.

Stolov argues that, according to Jewish belief, al-Quds is the most special place in the entire world and it is the main point where there is a connection between God and the rest of the creations; it has not only a spiritual realm but also a physical one. And he adds, according to the Jewish faith, al-Quds is not significant only in this world but also in heaven and Jews also claim that the land is located in the center of the world. He presents that in the Jewish narratives, the significance of al-Quds is mainly explained by “ten miracles”. Jewish sources determine al-Quds as a place which brings people together, and a place where the relations of mutual care between the Israeli nation and the other nations are established. Stolov also mentions about a belief among the Jews that al-Quds is the City of Peace. (Stolov, 2009) Aydın argues that the historical link between al-Quds and the Jews according to Qur’an depends on to the time of Abraham. He argues that the name of Shalem is accepted as al-Quds. During that time, it was named as Shalom and the area belonged to the Canaanites. Although al-Quds was the “promised land” Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Moses did not enter the land and they were buried in a cave which is in El-Khalil area. Later on, it was conquered by David and made it the capital. During the time of Salomon, al-Quds gained religious importance for the Jews. (Aydın, 2018, p. 111) For Macdonald’s explanation regarding the significance of al-Quds for the Jews see appendix 2.2.

As for significance of al-Quds for the Christians, it is important to note that according to Christian belief al-Quds is the place where crucifixion of Jesus took place. The land is accepted as center of the Christian traditions. Additionally, all the Christian festivals originate in al-Quds. Just like the Jews, Christians also believe in the role of al-Quds after the end of this world and the beginning of heaven. Many Christians visit al-Quds for pilgrimage on Easter. Wohlrab emphasizes that al-Quds is not accepted as a holy land only for the Orthodox but also for the Protestants and the Catholics. Mainly, it is important for the whole Christianity. He also emphasizes the fact that this is the land where diversity of Christians is most visible. Most importantly, they live in peace in this land. (Wohlrab, 2009) For Macdonald’s explanation in this subject, see appendix 2.3.

In this regard, from a different perception, Karen Armstrong emphasizes the fact that sanctity might have a different meaning for all the different religions. In this regard, she investigates the historical events and analyzes the perception of sanctity for the

three Monotheistic religions within the scope of the example of al-Quds. Her argument is given below:

“Jews, Christians and Muslims have often celebrated the holiness of al-Quds in similar ways, but there is one striking difference in the Islamic conception of sacred space. In Hebrew, the word for "holy", *kaddosh*, means "separate". Jews celebrate the sanctity of things by separating them one from another: they separate milk from meat, the Sabbath from the rest of the week, and Jews from Gentiles. The sacred is thus singled out and divided absolutely from the profane. In a similar way, the holiness of al-Quds was experienced as a series of graduated segregations. No Jew could enter the Temple area unless he had undergone a number of ritual purifications which separated him from the mortality and contamination of daily existence. Christians also cultivated an exclusive vision of al-Quds's holiness. The Christian Byzantines, who governed al-Quds from the fourth to the early seventh century of the Common Era, would not permit Jews to reside permanently in the holy city ... When the Crusaders conquered al-Quds in 1099, they slaughtered 30,000 Jews and Muslims in two days, clearing them out of the holy city like vermin this, the nadir of al-Quds's history, is a chilling reminder of the atrocity that can occur when the possession of the sacred city is prized more than the equally sacred rights of its inhabitants.” (Armstrong, 1997)

In this case, as for the differences between the Islamic perception of al-Quds from the Christian and Jewish perception, Karen Armstrong points out that, in the Islamic belief there is no difference between the sacred and profane. She argues that, it requires “integration and balance between human and divine.” (Armstrong, 1997)

Armstrong argues that, different from the Christian and Jewish visions the Muslim vision for al-Quds was not exclusive or divisive but “warmly affirmative.” She argues that, before Islam was revealed to the Arabs they were isolated by the Christians and Jews since they were not granted with a prophet yet and “they felt left out of God's plan.” However, their journey to al-Quds was a sign that they were wishing to end this isolation and to join the monotheistic religions family. She argues that when caliph Umar conquered al-Quds in 638, he stayed loyal this inclusive vision. And as part of their inclusive vision, Muslims did not implement exclusion policies towards the other religious groups in the land. And Umar assured the holy places of the Christians and their possessions and he also invited the Jews to the land. Until this time the Jews were expelled from this holy land for over 500 years. Armstrong also emphasizes that Muslims did not make attempts to construct mosques in the Christian zone in the city. She points out that there was a Christian and Jewish majority in city, however, this was not a result of Muslim indifference to al-Quds but a result of the Muslim tolerance. She explains this as: “Instead of excluding their religious predecessors in Jerusalem, Muslims were being taught to venerate them in the third-holiest place of the Islamic

world.” Considering this inclusive vision of the Muslims, she argues that they acknowledged the presence of the others and respected their rights and they “celebrated plurality and coexistence.” (Armstrong, 1997)

El-Awaisi argues that Umar ibn Al-Khattab the Muslim caliph implemented a model which is called *Aman* which is translated into English as “*peaceful co-existence and mutual respect*.” According to El-Awaisi, Umar’s assurance of *Aman* allowed diversity among the inhabitants and provided peaceful co-existence and mutual respect. He argues that Umar’s policy had an inclusive vision rather than an exclusive one. The model is one of the examples for the evidence of the fact that peace is not unachievable. (El-Awaisi A., 2020) Armstrong argues that this inclusive vision is needed in the land for providing a peaceful zone again. She defines the current situation as ironic that instead of being a unified and inclusive city, al-Quds is now “the most bloodily contested and sectarian city in the world.” She also adds: “One of the great tragedies is that Jerusalem, the city of peace, should so often have been a city of war, atrocity and injustice, as it is today.” (Armstrong, 1997)

Referring to significance of al-Quds for the Muslims, El-Awaisi determines the land as one of the oldest lands of humanity and one of the first places where there was monotheism. As for the significance of al-Quds for Islam, the land was linked to the Muslim faith with several reasons. Firstly, there are several verses in Qur’an mentioning about al-Quds and it was also mentioned by Prophet Muhammad. In the Qur’an a “blessed land” is mentioned in six verses and it was the place where Prophet Abraham migrated. It is known that he migrated to al-Quds during the period of the Canaanites. Secondly, it was mentioned in Qur’an as a “holy land”. Another reason for Muslims to adopt al-Quds as a holy land is because of the Islamic holy places located in this area, especially the Al-Aqsa Mosque. Thirdly, according to Islamic faith, al-Quds is the land where the night journey of Prophet Muhammad took place. Fourthly, al-Quds was the first *qiblah* for the Muslims until the *qiblah* was changed as Ka’ba. Fifthly, it is accepted as the land of steadfastness and sacred struggle. Lastly, it is the land of promise. Additional to the reasons mentioned above, al-Quds was also the center for the future Islamic Caliphate. Similar with Christian and Jewish belief, according to the

Islamic faith, al-Quds is adopted as where the dead will be raised and gathered in the judgment day. (El-Awaisi A., 1998)

Similar with El-Awaisi's statement, Harman explains the significance of al-Quds for the Muslims by providing several evidences and classifies them in three main points as; al-Quds in Qur'an, al-Quds in Prophet Muhammad's sayings and al-Quds as the place of Al-Aqsa Mosque. As for al-Quds in Qur'an, he provides five points which are; the verses about al-Quds as a place, the verses pointing out al-Quds as a place of prayer, the verses pointing out al-Quds symbolically, the verses telling stories of all the prophets who lived in the "holy land" which includes al-Quds and lastly, the verses pointing out Al-Aqsa Mosque. (Harman, 2019)

As a conclusion, as it was mentioned above and in other various parts of the research, all of the three great religions adopt al-Quds as a holy land. It is worth mentioning that, religious precisions are one of the most important facts which influence/shape the policies of the states. Additionally, religion is commonly accepted as one of the main reasons behind the Arab-Israeli conflict. Macdonald emphasizes that, "almost continuously" from the Salah ad-Din era until the end of the Ottoman era in al-Quds, the city was under Muslim control for more than 700 years. (Macdonald, 2002) In this regard, besides the historical roots, a crucial point to be noted is the fact that although Turkey is a secular state, the majority of its population is Muslims. This causes sympathy among the Turkish society for the Arab side. This has been one of the dominants for shaping of its policy towards al-Quds. This is one of the examples for significance of history and religious aspect especially for the case of al-Quds.

3.2 The Identity and the Status of Al-Quds During the Ottoman Period (1517-1917)

In 16th century, Selim I conquered Aleppo and Sham. His next target after Sham was to conquer Egypt. However, some important Palestinian lands were still under the Mamelukes control and this would cause security issues. In this regard, Selim I assigned Sinan Pasha for providing security to the Egyptian roads. Following this command, Sinan Pasha conquered al-Quds and four more important Palestinian lands. Although the exact date of the conquest is not known, it is known that Selim I entered al-Quds in December 1517, and it is accepted as the beginning of Ottoman rule in the territory.

Following the conquest, the name of al-Quds was changed as “Kudüs-i Şerif”. Considering the following actions of the Sultan, it is possible to say that he assured the rights of entering the holy places, prayers and faiths for the inhabitants from different religious groups especially for the Christians. As a conclusion, he provided some privileges for non-Muslims. (Yaşar, 2003)

Following the death of Selim I, Suleiman the Magnificent became the new Sultan of the Ottoman and his era was one of the best times of al-Quds. He established water supply systems around the city and solved the problems. This is the general view to the Ottoman al-Quds in 16th century. It is possible to say that the Ottoman Empire grasped the importance of al-Quds from the beginning as they respected and maintained the holy places. They established endowments to meet needs the inhabitants of the city. Aras states that a strong tradition of tolerance was established during the Ottoman rule in al-Quds. Jews and Christians had equal status with the Muslims in trade. However, by the beginning of loss of power in the Ottoman Empire, the European states began to dominate the land. As a result of the capitulations, the French were granted privileged status in 17th and 18th centuries. As an outcome of it, they provoked the Russians and caused tension in the region. (Aras, 2000)

Dr. Yasemin Avcı, a professor of history, emphasizes that al-Quds was a religious city for the Ottoman Empire. As the city was accepted and respected by the previous Islamic governments as it was the first *qiblah* for the Muslims and the place where the night journey took place, it was religiously significant and respected by the Ottoman Empire as well. The Ottomans adopted al-Quds as the third holy land in the world for the Muslims. In this regard they implemented several privileges for the inhabitants of this land. For instance, they were exempted from taxes just like the inhabitants of Mecca and Medina. She argues that by the second half of 19th century, the significance of al-Quds was increased not only relying on its holiness but also relying on some new developments and factors. Avcı explains this as an outcome of continuity and change in al-Quds. (Avcı, 2004)

Satış explains the status of the city as; it was organized under the status of a *sanjak* during the Ottoman rule, which lasted for nearly four centuries, and its center

was changed at various times. He mentions that from 1516 to 1831, al-Quds was connected to the state of Damascus until the Egyptian governor Mehmed Ali Pasha conquered the city in 1831. And the city, under Egyptian rule between 1831 and 1840 was directly connected to the center. (Satış, 2015) Avcı also emphasizes that by 1840, perception of the Ottoman governance for al-Quds was changed. She mentions about two main reasons for this change. The first reason depended on a general change in the Ottoman perspective; as an impact of the reforms made by the government in the cities; the central government aimed to gain more power by the reforms and it focused more on the cities and the cities became their center of control. The second reason relied specifically on al-Quds; which is the developments in and around the city. (Avcı, 2004)

After the Egyptian withdrawal and subjected to a new administrative division in which, al-Quds was divided as to include Gaza and Jaffa, and in early 1842 to include Nablus. Considering these developments, he argues that al-Quds became the administrative center of a large region. After it was reorganized administratively, the Porte appointed Mehmed Tayyar Pasha as the governor of al-Quds in 1841. After that, until the fall of the Ottoman Empire, the governors of al-Quds were directly appointed by the central government. These sub-governors represented a new class of upper bureaucracy and its officials, who had begun to rule over the Ottoman territory during the Ottoman reform (*Tanzimat*) period. (Satış, 2015)

Avcı presents another point of reference for significance of al-Quds for the Ottoman Empire as the development which occurred in 1871, which was the fact that al-Quds was separated from Sham and it was linked directly to Istanbul. Additionally, she argues that the land had various strategic features as:

“Al-Quds was the largest and most populous city in the region, neither on the edge of the desert like Gaza, nor on the shore of the Mediterranean like Jaffa this inner city, was well-suited to be the center of power as a safe place in the period when the Ottoman power was trying to strengthen again. Moreover, Jerusalem and its region gained a strategic importance in terms of being a border to semi-autonomous Egypt.”

And she adds that the fact which foreigners were willing to buy properties in al-Quds was also increasing the significance of the land. Foreigners were investing in the city and there was a competition between the Western countries in this regard. As an outcome of investments, the number of foreign institutions in the city was increasing as well. During 1880's, the significance of al-Quds was increased once again. In 1882,

Egypt went under the British control and it caused security concerns for the Ottoman government. Another significant development was the increasing amounts of Jewish migration waves by the spread of Zionism. (Avcı, 2004)

It is explained in Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities (YTB) website as given below:

“The state was aware of the strategic and religious importance of this region even during periods of weakness. Within this understanding it is important for Sultan II. Abdülhamit to ban the sale of land to Jews. This political approach is the most important cause of why the Ottoman Empire and the Republic of Turkey is loved in that region. It will be inevitable to recall the Palestinian Front (1915-1918) in this period of when the 100th anniversary of the First World War begins. The fall of Jerusalem (1917) and the destruction of Nablus (Megiddo) (1918) were important on this front. During the First World War, for Ottoman Empire, Palestinian front had been the longest running pitched battle with the most casualties.” (Presidency For Turks Abroad And Related Communities:YTB, 2017. Retrieved July 09, 2020)

3.3 The New Status of Al-Quds After the Announcement of Balfour Declaration (1917-1923)

Britain promised the Sharif of Mecca in 1915 that they will support an Arab kingdom in return, if Sharif Hussein supported an Arab revolt against the Ottoman Empire. This is known as the McMahon-Hussein correspondence. On the other hand, a secret agreement was signed between Britain and France in 1916, which is the Sykes-Picot agreement which issued that Palestine, would be under international control. Additional to the above mentioned developments, Britain announced the Balfour Declaration in 1917 which promised for “establishment of a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine.” Considering Britain’s strategy Shlaim argues that, the land was twice promised. He defines Balfour Declaration as a revolutionary move in history of the Middle East. He explains it as: “...it provided a protective umbrella that enabled the Zionists to proceed steadily towards their ultimate goal of establishing an independent Jewish state in Palestine.” (Shlaim, 2005)

The declaration was based on the British statement of the national home for the Jews and it was issued in a letter from Arthur James Balfour, the British foreign secretary to Lionel Walter Rothschild, in November, 1917. In Britannica website, the Balfour Declaration is addressed as a document which was issued as an outcome of the efforts made by Chaim Weizmann and Nahum Sokolow. Although the document did

not meet the expectations of the Zionists who were wishing for a national home for the Jews, it presented hope for them. In the website, it is emphasized that, according to the declaration the religious and civil rights of the non-Jewish communities would be preserved while, the political and national rights of these communities were not even mentioned. In any condition, the document would serve the interests of the Zionists. Besides the Zionists, the declaration served the British interest in two points. It is addressed in the website as;

“The British government hoped that the declaration would rally Jewish opinion, especially in the United States, to the side of the Allied powers against the Central Powers during World War I (1914–18). They hoped also that the settlement in Palestine of a pro-British Jewish population might help to protect the approaches to the Suez Canal in neighbouring Egypt and thus ensure a vital communication route to British colonial possessions in India.” (www.britannica.com. Retrieved July 07, 2020)

Balfour Declaration caused disappointment for the Arab public opinion. As an outcome of the disappointment, Arab nationalist movements began and they stood against the imperial powers. Bıyıklı emphasizes the fact that the Arabs and Jews were not satisfied with the Ottoman governance. However, the British mandatory and the following developments put them in a worse situation. In 1913 Theodor Herzl started to arrange Zionist meetings around Europe. He sent his friend to make a deal with Abdulhamid II. The offer was for them to pay Ottoman's debts to the European states and in return for Abdulhamid to let Palestine go. However, despite the economic crisis, Abdulhamid did not accept the deal and he rejected their offer. Following his rejection, Zionists started to support both morally and financially the Western states who were willing to divide the Ottoman lands among themselves. According to Bıyıklı, some argue that “political Zionism” and their target of turning the Palestinian lands into Jewish lands was the secret reason behind the World War I. Once again the significance of al-Quds was highlighted by Bıyıklı. As for the British did not want Palestine to go under Syrian rule or to French or Italian rule, while on the other hand the French did not wish Palestine to go under British rule. Importantly, the Jewish Zionist nationalists were seeing France as a threat. In this regard, they made an agreement with the British and Italians before the conference for not involving France. At the end, in 1917 the British military occupied al-Quds by the leadership of General Allenby. Following the occupation, there was an agreement between the Zionists and King Faisal. (Bıyıklı, 2019)

3.4 The Establishment of the Republic of Turkey and the Position of Al-Quds in Turkish Foreign Policy (1923-1948)

Following the end of World War I., the parties arranged Paris Peace Conference in January 1919. During the conference, Iraq, Syria and Palestine were under British control, while Cilicia was under French occupation. A point to be noted is the fact that UK, during the war promised Europeans, Arabs and the Jews contradictory promises. All parties were claiming that the lands belonged to them. On the other hand, Zionists were working for Balfour Declaration to be recognized in the conference, and for making Palestine go under British mandate. *Misak-ı Milli* (National Pact) in January 1920 determined “Turkey’s” policy towards the Arabs. Turkey adopted Arab’s right for self-determination as a part of the national policy. However, international politics served another circumstance for the Arabs. Syria went under French mandate, while Palestine and Iraq went under British mandate. Additionally, United Kingdom (UK) added Balfour Declaration to its mandate agreement with Palestine. The Ottoman Empire recognized these developments by Sevres Agreement. (Firat & Kürkçüoğlu, 2019, p. 200)

As for the establishment of the republic; Oran argues that the Republic of Turkey was established in September 29, 1923 and it was the regime what was actually established. On the other hand, he argues that the state of Turkey was established three months before the establishment of the republic when Lausanne was signed. (Oran, 2016. Retrieved June 24, 2020) Treaty of Lausanne has three significances for Turkey; according to Oran Lausanne is “a *certificate of equality*” since different than the prior agreements; Lausanne was associated without negotiations. He argues it is because the other treaties included The Covenant of the League of Nations but Lausanne was an exception in this regard. Secondly, Oran argues that Lausanne is a “*document of economic independence* and is the nationalization of the economy”. In this regard he addresses the “abolition of capitulations and establishment of a payment plan for the Ottoman Public Debt Administration (Duyun-u Umumiye) depths.” The third significance is addressed by Oran as the fact that Lausanne is a “*document of a political independence* since it is the founding document of the state of Turkey.” (Oran, 2019, p. 222) However, there are different approaches for the Treaty of Lausanne and there is an ongoing debate in Turkey.

Uzgel and Kürkçüoğlu emphasize that, in 1930's the Jewish migration to Palestine increased and it caused inconvenience for the region. Arab nationalism rose against the migration. During this time, Turkey improved its relations with UK. (Uzgel & Kürkçüoğlu, 2019, p. 271) Erhan argues that Turkey's military and economic dependency shaped its foreign policy preferences. Turkey's foreign policy was influenced by the US preferences especially after the Trumann Doctrine. Turkey used to work for resolution in the Palestinian issue and supported the Arabs for years. However, as an outcome of its dependency, it changed this policy and it became the first Muslim country to recognize the state of Israel. This policy reflected to its relations with the Arabs in a negative way. (Erhan, 2019, p. 537) Fırat and Kürkçüoğlu define the period between 1945 and 1949 as "the period of rapprochement with the Arab states." (Fırat & Kürkçüoğlu, 2019, p. 616) In 1947, when the Palestinian Issue was taken to the UN General Assembly, Turkey supported the Arabs, and it voted against partition of Palestine. Following the end of World War II, UK took the Palestinian issue to the UN General Assembly to "escape" from the responsibility of the situation. (Erhan & Kürkçüoğlu, 2019, p. 637)

3.5 The Arab-Israeli War and Turkey (1948-1967)

Mertek points out there several developments which occurred in 1947 and "damaged" the relations between Turkey and the Arab world. The first one was the fact that turkey adopted the Truman Doctrine and improved relations with the West. This damaged Turkey's relations with the Arabs. The reason was because during that time the Arabs were standing against the imperial powers such as Britain and France and fighting for "freedom/independence". The relations between Turkey and the Arab states came to a breaking point because of Turkey's policy against the Arab-Israeli war in 1948/1947. In 1948, Turkey, France and Great Britain were chosen for the UN Conciliation Commission for Palestine (UNCCP). However, the Arab states were not satisfied with the establishment of this commission. After becoming a member of the commission, Turkey has changed its "neutral" foreign policy and started to move together with France and USA. Additional to these, the main reason which damaged relations was the fact that Turkey recognized the state of Israel. Mertek argues that, at the beginning Turkey was seeing Israel as a "state" which is closer to USSR. However,

at a later stage there was a change in this perception. In February 8th, 1949, Turkish Foreign Minister Necmettin Sadak announced that they will remain the status quo. However, in March 29th, Turkey became the first “Muslim” country to recognize the state of Israel. The President İsmet İnönü, proved the Turkish Governments sympathy for Israel by the following words; “...we believe that this new state is going to provide peace and stability in the region.” This announcement proves that Turkey has changed its policy towards Israel. He argues that the reason for this change was the attitude of USA and UK towards the developments as for they were the super powers in the region. (Mertek, 2017)

As a conclusion, Mertek argues there are two main reasons for breakage of the Turkish-Arab relations were; Turkey’s involvement/membership in a commission which was undesirable for the Arabs, and secondly, Turkey’s recognition of the state of Israel. Depending on the bipolar system; during the Cold War era, there were several developments in the Middle East. As an outcome of the Korean War, the Western Block in the leadership of the United States of America (USA), decided to apply containment policy. They decided to establish a security organization which could serve collective defense in Middle East. The potential members were; Turkey, Syria, Iran, Iraq and Pakistan. The rest of the Arab states “were not” aware of the USSR threat. On February 12th, 1955, the Baghdad Pact was established. Depending on the 5th article a state which is not recognized by any of the member states could not become a candidate member for the pact. Following this article, Israel claimed that the pact was established against Israel. However, Egypt did not obey the pact, and made a weapon agreement with Czechoslovakia. This was a significant development which was USSR’s entrance to the Middle East. On the other hand, Turkey was decisive for improvement of the pact. Another significant incident occurred in 1956. On October 29th, Israel “occupied” Suez Canal with the support of France and UK. However, UN did not support this movement. The United States of America (USA) was not really involved in the process depending on its internal developments. On the other hand, USSR gave a diplomatic note to UK and France in this regard and threatened them with the beginning of World War II. As a result of the international pressure and the UN resolutions, France, UK and Israel withdrew from Egypt. And as a result, the USSR influence in the Middle East has increased, while the Western influence decreased. Turkey maintained its attitude of

standing on the Western side. Turkey stated that, the movement was not an attack against Egypt's right to sovereignty but it was related to the international quality of the canal. However, the Egyptians were surprised for this attitude of Turkey while it had been through problems regarding the straits. On the following days, Turkey claimed that Egypt was unfair in this incident. On the other hand, at a later stage, for improving the relations with the Arab states, Turkey withdrew its Ambassador from Israel. However, the diplomatic relations were not cut off but it was degraded to the *charge d'affaires* level. As a conclusion, Turkey's attitude against the incident made its relations with the Arabs even worse. (Mertek, 2017, pp. 210-214)

As another point of reference, Erhan and Kürkçüoğlu argue that following the end of World War II, UK took the Palestinian issue to the UN General Assembly to escape from the responsibility of the situation. Turkey remained with its previous policy which lasted until the Trumann Doctrine and supported the Arabs in UN, stood against the partition plan. Turkey supported the idea of the establishment of an independent Palestinian state. This was viewed as an example of solidarity and brotherhood between the Muslim states. However, Erhan and Kürkçüoğlu argue that, the main reason behind Turkey's support for the Arabs did not depend on religious reasons but it depended on Turkey's perception which did not want to see the region "divided". Turkey feared from instability in the region. In 1947-1948, there were several opposing terrorist attacks from the Arab side and the Jewish side. Only a few hours before the end of British mandate in 1948, the Jewish National Council announced the establishment of the state of Israel. There were two main reasons for Turkey to be anxious about the establishment of this new state. Firstly, because it would make things difficult since during the cold war period there was a bipolar system and Turkey had concerns about Israel. It was uncertain which block Israel would join. Although Turkey had not recognized Israel yet, right after the establishment of the state of Israel, there was a postal agreement between Turkey and Israel. Turkey was implementing "wait and see policy." In late 1948, there was a co-operation between Turkey and the Jewish Agency which permitted the Turkish Jews to move to Israel. (Erhan & Kürkçüoğlu, 2019)

Karsh and Miller explain the situation as, there was a postal agreement signed between Turkey and Israel on June 30, 1948, although Turkey had not recognized the

state yet. It was related to 10,000 Turkish citizens living in Israel. Subsequently, on September Turkey implemented travel ban for this was zone and announced that all the Turkish citizens could immigrate to any place they would like to. Karsh and Miller points out that 40,000 Turkish Jews moved to the state of Israel in the following years. Karsh and Miller argue that Turkey's reaction towards the conflict was publicly "shown" in 1948. Sadak, the Foreign Minister during that period explains Turkey's stance as an outcome of Turkey's majority Muslim populated structure. (Turkish support for the Arabs). Karsh and Miller also emphasize that the Minister stated that Turkey does not support any partition plan which could cause instability in the region, and would prefer a plan which satisfies both sides. Karsh and Miller point out that, according to Necmettin Sadak the minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey in 1947-1950 period, during the Arab-Israeli war in 1948 Turkey's neutral position brought two outcomes; firstly, it prevented the Turks who wanted show their support for the Arabs by fighting beside them and secondly, it also prevented the Turkish Jews from providing financial support for Israel. It is also noted in the article that, "Turkey voted in favour of UNGA Resolution 194 of 11 December 1948, calling for the establishment of a Palestine conciliation commission which, in the face of Arab opposition, it joined as a member, in the company of the United States and France." (Karsh & Miller, 2013)

Erhan and Kürkçüoğlu explain Turkey's recognition of the state of Israel in three main points; firstly, Turkey's West sided policy required this. At that time, Turkey was willing to become a member of NATO and therefore, it needed to follow similar policies with its allies. Additionally, Turkey was expecting for more support and funding from USA and was aware of Trumann's support/sympathy for Israel. In this regard, the government wanted to grab the attention of him. Secondly, Turkey realized that Israel did not have any secret allies such as USSR and it had close ties for the USA. Therefore, there was no need for Turkey to be anxious about Israel. Thirdly, the statist intellectuals were criticizing governments' "pro-Arab" policies. There was a negative impact towards the Arabs and they believed that the state needed to get rid of this kind of an image. (Erhan & Kürkçüoğlu, 2019, pp. 637-643)

There are several reasons behind improvement of the relations between Turkey and Israel. Mainly, there are 4 main reasons for Republican People's Party (CHP) to

establish and improve relations with Israel and at a later stage for Democrat Party (DP) to continue the relations; firstly, there was a belief that there were similarities between the two states. In the Middle East, most of the states were ruled by religious concept. However, Turkey and Israel were both trying to deactivate or decrease the influence of religion in governance. Turkey saw Israel as a secular state. And similarly both states adopted “westernization”. Secondly, the fact that the USA entered to the Middle East as a big power after UK and they had close ties with Israel had an impact on Turkey. Both states had parallel relations with the USA. And Turkey was aware of the power of the Jewish lobby in the USA which was very efficient in decision-making process. Thirdly, the behavior of the Arab states after the Korean War was bothering Turkey. The decision of sending military support to Korea was supported by the Israelis, while on the other hand, the Arabs opposed to it. Fourthly, Israel also contributed to the development of bilateral relations. The fact that Israel “placed” one of the most qualified diplomats of the city as the Ambassador of Ankara was a proof of the fact that Israel paid attention to its relations with Turkey. Additionally, some of the Israelis believed that Turkey could help for a resolution with the Arabs. Some of the examples for the economic relations are; the 1950 trade agreement, The Israeli Apartments built by Israeli engineers in Turkey. At the beginning of the 1950’s, the relations were close between the two states. However, on following years, the developments damaged the relations. (Erhan & Kürkçüoğlu, 2019, p. 643)

3.6 The Six Days War in 1967 and Turkey’s Approach to the Arab-Israeli Conflict (1967-1973)

During 1960’s and 1980’s Turkey’s relations with its neighbors in the Middle East was not affected by the domestic political issues/pressures. In 1960’s the prominent change in its foreign policy was the attempt for rebuilding the relations between the Arab countries. The main reason behind this policy was to win the Arab states after their support for Makarios and to convince them that Turkey abandoned the futile approaches of the Baghdad Pact. The pact was criticized in Turkey since it alienated the Arab nationalism in Turkey and also on the economic situation, Turkey’s need for oil importation increased. Consequently, its dependence to the Middle Eastern oil-exporting countries also increased. In the first place, this might seem to be irrelevant for the on-going conflict in al-Quds. However, at this point Hale emphasizes an important

point; depending on its national interest, Turkey started to avoid taking side in regional conflicts as a foreign policy principle. Additionally, Turkey tried to establish bilateral relations instead of multilateral ones in the region. As a reflection of this policy, Turkey started to support United States in the Middle East. In the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, Turkey stayed neutral and refused US' demand of using its bases. Although the Demirel government did not support the Arab states in condemning Israel as an "aggressor", it supported the UN Resolution 242 which called Israel to withdraw to its pre-war borders. Also in 1973 October War, Turkey did not permit US for using the İncirlik bases. (Hale, 2013, pp. 123-125)

Oran determines the period between 1965 and 1971 as period of rapprochement between Turkey and the Arabs. After DP, in 1965 Demirel, from Justice Party (AP), decided to implement a "multilateral" policy towards the Middle East, especially with the Arabs. The conservative identity of the AP would suit this policy as well. The difference between the AP government and the previous ones was the fact that the AP government adopted the Middle East policy not only as a derivative of the West policy and they tried to make co-operations with the other "progressive" governments. In 1967 Turkey determined its policy towards the Arabs in a meeting with its Ambassadors all around the Middle East. Eventually the policy focused on three points; Turkey would work for rapprochement of the bilateral relations with all of the Arab states. Secondly, stay neutral against the conflicts among the Arabs. And thirdly, not to attend any pacts which would divide the Arabs. Oran explains the reasons behind Turkey's support for the Arabs in Arab-Israeli War within four main points; firstly, Turkey needed support from the Arabs for the Cyprus issue and the best way to get this support was to support Arabs in the conflict with Israel. Secondly, some of the parties such as AP, wanted to establish links with the Arabs for their own interest. In this regard they would gain the support from the conservatives and religious groups in Turkey. Thirdly, Turkey's economic expectations from the Arab countries had increased. Turkey needed to import oil and to export some products/goods to the Arab states. Therefore, it needed to cool down the relations with the state of Israel. Fourthly, some of the left organizations in Turkey had anti-Israeli vision and influenced the policy. In 1973 by the Arab-Israeli War, the relations between Turkey and Israel were cooled down again. Turkey stayed neutral. However, it supported the Arabs. Although US wanted to use the İncirlik Base

to help Israel, Turkey did not let US use it. Oran explains this in three main points; firstly, Turkey needed the Arab support for Cyprus issue. Secondly, the Arab states announced that they would make “oil blockade” to the states which supported Israel. Thirdly, the Turkish public opinion had sympathy for the Arabs. Turkey started to implement policies which were closer to the Arabs. (Oran, 2019, pp. 788-800)

Since its establishment, Turkey has adopted a Westernization; “contemporary civilization” policy. However, there were breakdowns, ups and downs in this policy. Gürpınar emphasizes one of these breakdowns; Turkey’s reaction to Arab Israeli War. One of the reasons behind this change in Turkish foreign policy is the developments in the international system. Another reason is obviously the internal politics. Gürpınar explains the development in 1960’s and 70’s; there was an alternative thinking called “pluralism” which was questioning the traditional thinking. The most important difference between the traditional thinking and pluralist thinking is the fact that in pluralist thinking; distinction of internal and foreign policy and state centered policy was being questioned. Pluralists determine state as “metho-physical spook” and emphasize the multi-structural and multi-layered structure of the international system. They adopt the idea that power is a relative and there is a cobweb; all the internal and external facts are related. Pluralists do not accept state as a monolithic actor but an actor which is a compound of other actors which are the bureaucracy and other interest groups. They argue that there is an interaction between internal politics and foreign policy. They also argue that the distinction between domestic and international politics is not possible and they are intertwined. He adopts the pluralist view while examining 1967 Arab-Israeli War and Turkey’s reaction to it. He argues that it is not possible to make a distinction. Süleyman Demirel, aimed a policy which predicted close relations with the Middle East, Asia, Africa and the Arabs in Middle East and Maghreb. This was a sign of Turkish support for the Arabs compromise for the conflict between Arabs and Israelis. This was a reflection of Turkish foreign policy towards USA as well. Until this period, Turkey was accepted as America’s hand over the Middle East. However, by the Demirel government, Turkey aimed to get rid of this image. Although the relations between Turkey and the Arab countries were improved, there was still a red line for Turkey; it must have been loyal/stick to the concept of Westernization; contemporary civilization. Turkey was not going to organize with the Arab countries politically but

could cooperate with them in economic level; it was going to stay secular. He argues that; economic requirements might shape co-operations or might change the partners of cooperation. He explains this by an example; Turkey has cooperated with USSR when they could not receive funding from some of the USA companies. (Gürpınar, 2008)

The Arab-Israeli conflict was a hot topic not only for foreign policy in Turkey but also for the international institutions. In May 1967 Turkish government arranged a meeting with its ambassadors around the Middle East and announced them that the government decided to stay neutral regarding the conflict. On June 1967, the war started between the Arabs and Jews. Demirel called the Arab presidents and assured them for Turkey's support to the Arabs in this war. An important point to be noted is the fact that US cut off the diplomatic relations with the Arab states during the war. After the war, it wanted to re-establish relations with the Arabs through Turkey. However, Turkey did not accept it and rejected US' request in this regard. There was a consensus among the Turkish public opinion that Turkey must have stood with the Arabs. There were several reasons for Turkish society to dislike Israel. Most of the politicians from different parties supported Turkey's moral support for the Arabs but added that it must avoid being a party of the war. Both in the Parliament and the UN General Assembly, Turkish leaders mentioned about their support for the Arab side in this war. Gürpınar determines the Arab-Israeli War as Turkey's first practice of its "opening policy" to the Middle East. Besides the moral support, Turkey also provided food for Jordan, Egypt and Syria who combated against Israel. The whole Turkish community was united for the government's policy towards the war. On 22 June 1967 at the UN General Assembly meeting, Çağlayangil explained the behavior of Turkey regarding the results of the war with following words: "UN General Assembly should persuade Israel for withdrawing from the territories which it gained by violence. In return of its support, the Arab governments thanked Turkey. Turkey continued this attitude in UN for the following meetings at the UN General Assembly. Additionally, it submitted a proposal for al-Quds's status to the General Assembly with Pakistan and four more states. The proposal was accepted by 99 positive, 19 abstention votes. Israel did not attend to the ballot and in answer to it, announced that al-Quds could not be divided ever again. (Gürpınar, 2008)

3.7 Arab-Israeli War and the Following Developments (1973-2002)

Hale argues that Turkey's even-handed policy in the Middle East was proved by its policies towards the Arab-Israeli conflict. In 1970's it started to implement a pro-Palestinian policy. In this regard, it recognized PLO and allowed them to open an office in Ankara. However, Turkey was careful to set the limits of its support for PLO. (Hale) In this regard, Aras explains the reasons for allowance of PLO to open an office in Ankara. He argues that the first reason was Turkey's appreciation to PLO for helping to rescue the Egyptian ambassador from the militants. The second reason was the moral necessity following the failure of US-Egyptian peace attempts. The third reason is because it was a way to gain support from the Arab world. Lastly, for the implementation of *new security concept* policy which aimed strengthening relations with all the countries located in the region. (Aras, 2000, p. 47) As for another attempt for establishment of strong relations with the Arab world, Hale points out that Turkey attended Organization of Islamic Cooperation. Apparently, this was criticized by the secularist parties in Turkey. On the other hand, Turkey did not cut off its relations with Israel; although, it criticized the Israeli annexation of East al-Quds in 1980. In late 1980's by the Palestinian intifada, there was sympathy appeared for the Palestinians in Turkey among the liberal and Islamic groups. On the other hand, there were co-operations between Turkey and Israel. After 1986 the Turkish-Israeli relations started to improve. Turkey was aware of its need for the Israeli lobby's support in the United States. Therefore, it sent a senior diplomat to Tel-Aviv. At the same time the peace process for the Arab-Israeli conflict by PLO's recognition of existence of the state of Israel and the "two state solution." (Hale, 2013, p. 125)

Melek Fırat and Ömer Kürkçüoğlu argue that during the 1980's Turkey kept rapprochements with the Arab states and this affected its relations with Israel in a negative way. In July 1980, Israel announced al-Quds as a part of Israel and this announcement was not recognized with Turkey. Contrarily, Turkey responded by minimizing the diplomatic relations, and it supported Egypt's policy towards Israel. (Fırat & Kürkçüoğlu, 2018, pp. 128-129). On the other hand, Israel's annexation of the Golan Heights was condemned in UN General Assembly by Resolution 497. However, then, Turkey abstained in the voting for condemning of Israel in 1982. Oran argues, this

was because Turkey wanted Israel's support against Syria for its own issues with its neighbor. Another significant development was Israel's occupation of Lebanon. At the beginning it had a negative impact in Turkey especially for the public opinion. However, in the following days, Turkey and Israel made a secret cooperation. As a result of the cooperation many ASALA militants were killed. Turkey condemned Israel's violent policies and occupation to Lebanon in 1982. However, despite its behavior towards Israel, it made cooperation with Israel against the ASALA terrorist camps located in Israel. This was revealed in 1990's. In 1998 Palestinian National Council announced the establishment of the independent state of Palestine and Turkey was the fifth state to recognize it. Cooling down the relations between Turkey and Israel continued during the 1990's just like the 1970's. Erhan and Kürkçüoğlu explain this within two main reasons; firstly, Ankara was uncomfortable with Israel's actions in the region. Secondly, Turkish public opinion's sympathy and support for the "intifada" which was started by the Palestinians in 1987. Israel moved its capital from Tel-Aviv to al-Quds and Turkey reacted to this with two significant actions; it closed the Consulate general in al-Quds and minimized the diplomatic relations to Second Secretary level. Erhan and Kürkçüoğlu determine this as an action more related to internal politics in Turkey instead of the international factors. (Erhan & Kürkçüoğlu, 2018, pp. 150-151)

In 1990, for rapprochement of the bilateral relations between Israel and Turkey, Turkey increased its diplomatic mission to the Ambassador level. As an impact of Middle East Peace Process, both the Palestinian and Israeli diplomatic missions were increased to ambassadorial level in 1991. And the Turkish General Consulate of al-Quds was opened in 1992 which was closed in 1980. Fırat and Kürkçüoğlu explain these developments within five main reasons; firstly, Turkey, in case of establishment of a peaceful Middle East, wanted to build close relations with both states. Secondly, Turkey was aware of the Jewish lobby's power in USA and needed their support against the Armenian and the Greek lobbies. Additionally, Turkey also needed their support for improving the relations with Europe. Basically in 1990's, Özal did what Menderes had done in 1950's. Thirdly, both countries were looking for potential allies and they both had problems with Iraq, Iran and Syria. Therefore, Turkey started an improvement process for bilateral relations. Fourthly, there was the influence of public opinion. Fifthly, for the New World Order, USA needed allies in the region, and motivated both

states for establishing good relations and there was a rapprochement process during 1992. Despite all the rapprochement process, Turkey kept its *balanced diplomacy* policy. After the second half of 1990's, the rapprochement process was even "faster". The relations were improved within two dimensions; military cooperation and economic cooperation. There were two agreements signed by the two parties in 1996. One was about military education and technical cooperation and the other one was about free trade. Depending on the military agreement, Turkey and Israel signed 11 more agreements until 2000. The relations cooled down in 2000, when the Israeli Minister of Education announced that the so-called "Armenian genocide" would take place in the school books. The other states reacted differently to the close ties between Turkey and Israel. There were some parties criticizing the relations. Some were criticizing Israel's behavior of selling old fashion military goods to Turkey while, some were criticizing Turkey for changing its balance policy into a "pro-Israeli" policy. On the other hand, Israelis were criticizing Israel as well. They were afraid of being the next target of PKK because of its alliance with Turkey. The biggest reaction came from the Muslim countries within the region. (Fırat & Kürkcüoğlu, 2018, pp. 570-575)

From another perspective, Hale argues that in 1990's Turkey changed its traditional policy of strict neutrality in the Arab-Israeli conflict by developing cooperation with Israel. Hale explains this by the global and regional changes. Firstly, the removal of USSR caused isolation of the Arab states and as an impact; the Turkey's relations with the Arab states would not have an impact on its relations with Russia. This was an important development for the Middle East politics. Depending on this development; Turkey's relations with both PLO and Israel could be improved. Turkey and Israel could now cooperate against Syria. This was a common interest for both states. Another positive impact of this new development was the fact that Turkey would gain support from the Israeli lobby in USA. In 1991, Turkey upgraded its diplomatic relations both with Palestine and Israel to ambassadorial level. He determines the main weakness of the Turkish-Israeli link as the fact that Turkey did not ignore its relations with Arabs and the Palestinians. The "second intifada" caused negative impacts on the Turkish-Israeli relations. In the following years, there was a tension between the two states. (Hale, 2013, pp. 227-229)

As another source of analysis of the period between 1980's and 2000's Kanat argues that, the end of the Cold War era has brought more uncertainty rather than security and opened political opportunity for Turkey. The domestic/internal fears, lack of resources and economic problems overshadowed possible opportunities which emerged following the fail of the USSR. During the post-Cold War years Turkey started to look for new alliances. Two countries became important for Turkey in this regard; Syria and Israel. One seemed as a new threat for Turkey's territorial integrity and the other one as an ally and gateway to the Western world. Syria has been supporting the Armenian terrorist groups and at a later stage PKK. Turkey was going through a difficult process. At this period, The Turkish-Israeli rapprochements started. Although Turkey was one of the first countries to recognize the state of Israel, the improvement of the bilateral relations was never a priority for it. After the secret alliance between the two countries in 1950's Turkey followed cautious policies. The Turkish government did not alienate the Arab countries for the two main reasons. One; they were the major source of oil. Second; they could be important actors in international arena if they move together. When the Arab countries and Israel came together in Madrid Peace Conference, Turkey raised its diplomatic relations with Israel to the ambassadorial level in 1992. And this decision was a continuation of its earlier approach to the Arab-Israeli conflict. On the same day Turkey increased the diplomatic relations with Palestine to the ambassadorial level as well. Following this move, the relations between Turkey and Israel gained a strategic importance and it was developed. There was a conflict between Israel and Syria about the Golan Heights. The alliance between Turkey and Israel would put a pressure on Syria. And it would also cause a threat for Iran and Iraq. And this would create a new balance of power in the Middle East. (Kanat, 2012)

In 1980's Turkey was witnessing terrorist attacks by ASALA; an Armenian terrorist group. At this point Turkey thought that a Pact with Israel would be effective and Israel would provide resources (intelligence and military) for anti-terrorism. Israel had weapons and high-tech military industry. U.S and Europe were not willing to sell weapons to Turkey. In this regard, Turkey needed a country to provide weaponry for itself. Due to lack of its capabilities, Turkey launched a military modernization program. Another advantage was the fact that Turkey would gain the support from the Israeli lobby in Washington, which would be more effective against the Armenian and

the Greek lobby (which is the reason why Turkey could not get military aid from US). This would help Turkey to end its isolation and regain its reputation in Europe. Kanat orders the significant developments chronologically; 1995 Memorandum of Understanding; Israeli Air Force would train Turkish Pilots, 1996 Military Cooperation Agreement; Exchange of military personnel and joint trainings, 1996 Military Industrial Cooperation Agreement; Cooperation in military modernization and arms trade, also in 1996 political dialogue; common foreign and security policy, some more agreements to cooperate in counter-terrorism and intelligence-gathering. The content of these pacts were secretly hidden and protected through security and secrecy (1994) Agreement. Turkey and Israel are the two pro-Western, secular, democratic countries in Middle East. Both countries had the strongest militaries and powerful enemies. After EU's announcement of Turkey as a grand candidate, Turkey was shocked and it harshly froze the relations with EU (1995). Although Turkey had Israel as the main ally, it was aware of the fact that the Arab world was not happy with this alliance and soon Turkey might have been isolated. (OIC and AL criticized the alliance) As an outcome of this process, Turkey started to change its policy by the late 1990's. And Turkey decided to follow a *multi-dimensional foreign policy*. (Kanat, 2012, pp. 230-240)

Turkey started to look for alternative alignments and decided to improve its relations with Syria. Instead of threatening to use force, Turkey focused more on using diplomacy. Another turning point was the fact that EU with US' support, agreed to grant the candidacy status to Turkey. During that time Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit and Foreign Minister İsmail Cem followed "regionally based foreign policy" which predicted Turkey to develop its relations with all the regions. Turkey stopped seeing Syria as a threat and this was one of the most constructive facts for the relations between Turkey and Israel. But there were some challenging moments; failure of the Camp David process, the beginning of the 2nd intifada in 2000. Turkey criticized Israel's military force against the Palestinians. The disagreements between the Israel and Turkey became more obvious when Ecevit disagreed with Sharon's speech of saying that Yaser Arafat supports terrorism. Ecevit called the Israeli actions as; "genocide-like". However, the earthquake in 1999 cut Turkey's purchase of arms and weaponry from Israel because the incident affected Turkey's economy badly. In 2001 Turkey experienced a tough economic crisis. This caused another budget cut for Turkey's

defense expenses. Turkey's changing relations with its other neighbours influenced its relations with Israel. Eventually, Kanat emphasizes the importance of Syria during the 90's. Syria played an important role in determination of Turkish foreign policy and the relations between Turkey and Israel. There were times Turkey and Israel had closer relations. He explains this with the fact that Syria seemed as a threat for Turkey and Turkey wanted to keep Israel by its side in any possible conflict with Syria. However, when the relations between Syria and Turkey were improved, Turkey lost interest in Israel. (Kanat, 2012, pp. 230-240)

From another perspective, Bacik argues that the relations between Turkey and Israel cannot be free from limitations. In his article, he explains the limitations for this relation. Bacik argues that there is no alliance which is totally free from any limits and these limits determine the identity of the alliance. He claims that the alliance which was built in 1998 has failed and this failure created some limits for the alliance. Bacik argues that the Turkish-Israeli alliance was against common threats for both states, which were threats as Iran, Russia, and Syria. And there were ongoing tensions with Iraq, Syria and Iran. However, Turkey and Israel were not productive enough against these threats. Bacik represents Walt's argument; "The more alike the two states are, the more likely they are to ally." and comes with an explanation; the similarity between Turkey and Israel was the fact that they both adopt secularism. He actually rephrases it as "exaggeration of secularism" in both states. Especially during the 28th February Process; the prior threats were re-defined by the government in Turkey. The MGK (National Security Council) replaced the Kurdish threat with the "so-called" Islamist threat. This is the main reason why the Turkish generals and bureaucrats chose Israel as an ally. Basically, the cooperation was a policy to protect the secular system in Turkey. However, there was a division amongst the bureaucracy and civil government. In this regard, he argues that the state system was manipulated and in this regard, the first actor was the Jewish lobby in Turkey. Then Bacik emphasizes the limits of the alliance. He argues that the first limitation of the alliance was the shadow of the military on the alliance. Considering the period between 1997 and 1999 it would be more appropriate to name this alliance as the Turkish Army-Israeli Alliance rather than the Turkish-Israeli Alliance. And he adds; "The role of the army in bilateral relations has damaged the social legitimacy of the nature of bilateral relations." (Bacik, 2001)

On the other hand, as for another limitation he argues that both sides had different expectations. For the Turkish side, Israel was an alternative for the gains for Turkey. For them the alliance was both totalistic and idealistic. It was a new international alternative. However, for Israel, Turkey was not seen as an opportunity or a gain. The Turkish elite claimed and believed that Israel would support Turkey in international arena. However, the case of Armenian massacre was raised in the US and the Turkish society started questioning whether Israel was on the Armenian side or Turkish side or, whether if Israel would support Turkey or not. Another limitation was the case of Iraq. In this case, a significant difference between Turkish foreign policy and Israeli foreign policy was ignored. The case of Northern Iraq was highly important for Turkey. And Turkey and Israel did not share the same perception for the future of Iraq. Unlike Israel; Turkey, Iran and Syria would not welcome an independent Iraq, as Kurdish state. Another point mentioned by him is regional configuration. In 1997, the Arab League and the Organization of the Islamic Conference criticized Turkey for the alliance with Israel. Despite these negative impacts, the two powers decided to establish a new regional balance of power. However, there were two main limitations for Turkey in this regard. Firstly, this process would not put Turkey as the main actor of regional power in any condition. Secondly, Turkey has been complaining about the fact that Iran and Syria has been supporting PKK terrorism. Why would Turkey choose to solve the problems by including Israel instead of resolving the questions bilaterally with Iran and Syria? And he adds; "In traditional Turkish Foreign policy, the domestic sensitivities shape the policies in general." (Bacik, 2001)

Bacik also points out some may argue that there is a European dimension for the Turkish-Israeli alliance. There is a claim which supports the idea that, the rejection of EU is one of the reasons behind this alliance. Turkey cooperated with Israel to show that EU was not the only option. However, he does not agree with this approach. On the other hand, as another limitation for the alliance he addresses the Israeli policies applied against the Palestinians. In Turkey there is sympathy for the Palestinians depending on the historical roots during the Ottoman Era. In this regard, the close ties between Turkey and Israel may cause negative impacts from the Turkish community. As a conclusion, the article claims that in the recent Turkish-Israeli relations the societal perceptions have been considered as unimportant. Since many societal values are transnational, the

ignorance of them may cause regional anxieties. A new alliance creates new sets of signs and symbols. In the shed of these signs the other nations evaluate the intensions of the allies for the others. The limits determine the identity of an alliance. They even determine the conduct of diplomacy. (Bacik, 2001)

For general analysis of the economic relations between Turkey and Israel in 1990's and 2000's Urhan emphasizes the relation between peace and the economic relations He states that it is the same for Turkey and Israel. There is a difference in both countries' trade volume depending on their relations with each other. In this regard, if the policymakers decide to cool down the relations with the "other" country, the trade volume may decrease and this may also affect the nations of the country economically. Israel for Turkey is an important partner in the Middle East since the 90's. However, policies implemented by policymakers during the 2000's affected the relations between the two countries in a negative way, in politics. However, both countries achieved economic growth during this era, and this brought the two countries in a situation that they have become "commercial partners". As a conclusion, Urhan emphasizes the fact that although there are up and downs in political relations between Israel and Turkey, the economic relations are not badly affected by this situation and it maintains its current status. In this regard, it is possible to say that both countries are following realist policies and they are considering the national interests; although they sometimes face one another within political issues, both countries are aware of the fact that they are facing common issues in the Middle East region such as being an isolated state in the Middle East and they both need an ally. This could be attributed with "Interdependence Theory" in International relations. (Urhan, 2017, p. 46)

CHAPTER FOUR

THE CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS OF TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS AL-QUDS (2002-2019)

This chapter will focus on the current Turkish foreign policies towards al-Quds during the AK Party era. In this regard, the current developments in will be discussed by considering the bilateral relations between Turkey-Israel and Turkey-Palestine will be investigated. While investigating the relations, the main characteristics of the relations during this period and the main developments which had an impact on these relations will be determined. Additionally, Turkish NGOs located in the land as a tool of its policy and their functions will be discussed.

4.1 The Relations Between Turkey and Israel (2002-2019)

There were up and downs during the previous governments within the relations of two states. Although there is stability in Turkish government and the AK Party rule continues since 2002, it is possible to say that there was no stability in bilateral relations and the up and downs continued during the AK Party era from 2002 to 2019. In this case, before starting the analysis of the relations between Israel and Turkey, the researcher argues that it is crucial to emphasize the position of both states in the Middle East within the scope of their main targets and characteristic as a regional actor in 21st century. Briefly, there is a consensus that Turkey's main target in 2000s is to become a regional leader especially for the Arab world. On the other hand, Israel's main target is to remain its borders and its focal point is to preserve its national security.

Meanwhile, it is worth mentioning that the relations will be investigated within three dimensions; political, military and economic relations. Consequently, the political and military relations will be discussed in parallel. Later, the economic relations will be discussed. Before discussion of the bilateral relations; the researcher argues it will be beneficial to address the question of why Turkey was the first Muslim country to recognize Israel. As a point of reference, Mensur Akgün argues that Turkey's recognition of the state of Israel was based on world policy balances and the conditions

of the Cold War. The world and the regional states were divided into two; the West and the East. At this point, Turkey was under Russian pressure. As a result, establishment of good relations with Israel could open a gate for improvement of its relations with the US. Therefore, good diplomatic relations were built between the two states and lasted until 1955. Then tensions in relations appeared. Starting from this period, the bilateral relations were affected by the regional developments. However, a new era in the relations began by the beginning of post-cold war period and the new world order. The diplomatic relations were increased from “cost-effectiveness” level to Ambassadorial level in 1991. And the following year, relations reached its highest level and were consolidated by co-operations in different fields. The relations continued in this course until 2008. In 2010, the uprisings in the Arab world started. The movement was named as the *Arab Spring* and it affected not only the Arab states but also the non-Arab states located in the region; including Israel and Turkey. This new environment caused new security concerns especially for Israel. Therefore, Israel was expected to seek for improvements of its relations with Turkey. Akgün argues that, “...the world policy balances and the regional conditions made Israel recognize Turkey’s demands just like the way they made Turkey recognize the state of Israel in 1949.” (Akgün, 2012) This is an explanation of why Turkey was the first Muslim state to recognize Israel and also it is an example for the dynamic identity of the international arena.

From another perception, Efraim Inbar, the president of the Jerusalem Institute for Strategic Studies (JISS) emphasizes that Turkey is an important actor in the region. Strategically, it was a break free for Israel to have good relations with Turkey which has 99 per cent of Muslim population. However, Turkey had distance for Israel. This fact changed by the end of the cold war. Depending on security concerns, Turkey started seeking for allies in the region which could provide help for its security challenges against Iran, Syria and Iraq. In this regard, Israel was a great option since it had similar security concerns, it had a significant lobby in US and it could provide military technology for Turkey. This was crucial for Turkey since the Western countries were not willing to sell Turkey their military technology. Eventually, Turkey increased its diplomatic relations with Israel in 1992 to the ambassadorial level. Besides, there were several military agreements signed between the two states. By the victory of AK Party

government in Turkey, the bilateral relations were maintained between the two states from 2002 to 2009. (Inbar, 2011)

Gencer Özcan emphasizes the fact that founders of AK Party are coming from a background of “National opinion”. The national opinion “contains” anti-Semitic discourse and determines Judaism and Zionism as the source of “evil” in international arena. This was the characteristic of Refah Party and Erbakan’s policy. Erbakan claims that the main goal of UN is not to provide worldwide peace but to serve establishment, protection of the state of Great Israel. On the other hand, the AK Party leaders emphasized that their opinion for Israel is different from Refah Party. Contrasting the “national opinion” they state that they would like to work for rapprochement of the bilateral relations. During the first months of the AK Party Government, Turkey arranged several visits to Israel in ministry level. Özcan also emphasizes the “Inter-Parliamentary Friendship Group” for Israel and Turkey. The AK Party government needed the support of the Jewish lobby for any problem with the US. Therefore, they wanted to establish good relations with Israel. They signed an agreement for co-operation against several crimes. In 2005 they continued the co-operations in education, military and defense area. (Özcan, 2005, pp. 111-114)

Although there were concerns about future of the Turkish-Israeli relations when AK Party came to power, the AK Party government made a clarification that the bilateral relations would not be damaged depending on ideological facts. According to Nuri Yeşilyurt’s interpretation of the Turkish-Israeli relations in the period between 2002 and 2009; Israel was the side which felt more need for the good relations since Turkey on the other hand focused more on its relations with the Arab world while it could easily risk its relations with Israel. However, this was changed by the end of 2009. At this point Yeşilyurt makes four main determinations for Turkish-Israeli relations in 2002-2011; firstly, political relations between the two states were more sensitive in the developments in the Palestinian issue. Secondly, disagreements in their regional perceptions started to occur. Thirdly, Turkey’s relations with Jewish lobby in US worsened. Lastly, the economic and military relations began/started to become affected by the political relations. Eventually, Yeşilyurt argues that these developments

made it more difficult to identify the structure of the relations as a strategic one. (Yeşilyurt, 2017, p. 438)

Yeşilyurt emphasizes that bilateral relations between the two states in between 2002-2009 were stable as it was in the 2000-2002 period. The peace attempts in the region were fully supported by Turkey in 2003. Another development “was the establishment of” Turkey – Israel Inter-Parliamentary Friendship Group. Additionally, Turkey’s mediatory in Israel – Syria relations had a positive impact in Turkish – Israeli relations. (2004) However, the increasing tension between Palestine and Israel in 2004 caused crisis in relations between Israel and Turkey. Turkey condemned Israel for its actions against the Palestinians and voted against Israel in UN General Assembly for the construction of “the wall”. Turkey stayed loyal to its balance policy and as it could not negotiate with the Palestinian side as a result of the Israeli blockade, it decreased the amount of its visits to Israel. As another significant development in the peace process the leader of Al-Fatah and the chairman of the PLO, Yaser Arafat died and there was a “silence process” between Israel and the Palestinian side. This caused cooling down of the relations between Israel and Turkey. Secondly, Israel’s withdrawal from Gaza grabbed Turkey’s sympathy. Thirdly, the US had been negotiating with Turkey to improve its relations with Israel as for Turkey and Israel were the closest allies of US in the region. Following these developments, a committee from the AK Party government arranged visits to Israel. (2004) Yeşilyurt determines the period as a détente period and points out that 2004 was a dynamic year for the relations. In 2005, there were two visits from Turkey to Israel both in Foreign Minister and Prime Minister Levels. And in return, Israel supported Turkey’s non-permanent membership for the UN Security Council. Subsequently, there were attempts to contribute to the economic relations. (Yeşilyurt, 2017, p. 440)

Lastly, Yeşilyurt argues that within the same year, Turkey made an attempt for establishment of diplomatic relations between Pakistan and Israel and there was a meeting held in Istanbul in this case. He argues this was a sign for the fact that the political relations between Turkey and Israel were developing (Yeşilyurt, 2017, p. 441). Burak Akçapar argues that the meeting was arranged since the parties requested for establishment of “a new channel of dialogue between the two countries. The meeting

was held in September 2005, in Istanbul by the participation of Turkey's state minister Mehmet Aydın. Israeli Minister states that Turkey is a "long-standing friend" for Israel. (Akçapar, 2007, p. 98) Manfred Hutter argues that, "the bilateral relations between Israel and Palestine reached its positive climax in 2005." following the meeting. (Hutter, 2012, p. 141)

As for the details of the meeting, Mohsen M. Saleh and Bashir M. Nafi claim that the meeting between the two Foreign Ministers in Istanbul contributed to following developments of the rapprochement process between the two states which was addressed as the visits by non-official Pakistani delegation to Israel. They mention that these developments and the meeting held in Istanbul were sharply criticized and condemned by the Pakistani nation. They address 2005 as a year which Turkey's support for the Palestinian side turned into its support for the Israeli side because Turkey, they claim Turkey's position towards the Arab-Israeli conflict had changed in 2005. They criticize Turkey for seeking for its own interests since its relations with the West depended on its relations with Israel. (Saleh & Nafi, 2007, pp. 133-136)

Despite all the improvements of the Turkish – Israeli relations in 2004 and 2005, the relations entered into a crisis process by Turkey's support for Hamas in its victory of the Palestinian elections in 2006. Following this, Hamas arranged a visit to Turkey and this was sharply criticized by Israel. It claimed Turkey for making a strategic mistake. The Israeli Ambassador to Turkey was called to the Foreign Ministry for explanatory statement in this regard. However, the Ambassador rejected the invitation. Subsequently, Israel's actions towards Lebanon and Turkey's criticism of it raised the tension between the two states. Despite the crisis, the negotiations and visits continued. (Yeşilyurt, 2017, p. 441)

Yeşilyurt addresses 2007 and 2008 as another détente period. A very crucial development mentioned by Yeşilyurt is the fact that Israel allowed a Turkish committee for investigating its constructions in Al-Aqsa Mosque. During this period Turkey remained its mediatory position both for the Palestinian – Israeli and Syrian – Israeli relations. However, by the end of 2008 the tensions were raised again. During the period between 2008 and 2010, there were significant crisis between Turkey and Israel. These are the; "One Minute", Lower Chair and Mavi Marmara crisis. Besides the crises,

there were disagreements between the two states in the “regional policies”. The first example for this is the example of Iraq in 2003. Another disagreement was in their policies towards Iran. Lastly, the close ties between Israel and Cyprus which took place after Mavi Marmara incident. For consideration of the Turkish-Israeli relations, Yeşilyurt also points out to the relations between Turkey and the Jewish lobby in the US as another dimension. In 2005, by the rapprochement of the relations between Turkey and Israel the relations with the Jewish lobby were also improved. However, in 2007, the Jewish lobby made a statement that “Turkey made genocide in 1905 towards the Armenians”. Yeşilyurt analyzes this as an evidence of the fact that good relations between Turkey and Israel is not enough to warranty good relations with the Jewish lobby in US. As an outcome of the disagreement, Erdoğan did not include meetings with the Jewish lobby within its visit to US. He emphasizes the importance of this action by noting that, each Turkish Prime Minister included meetings with the Jewish lobby in the schedule of their US visit since 1980’s until this date. (Yeşilyurt, 2017, p. 442)

In following years, there were several incidents which damaged the relations between Turkey and Israel. (Alsaftawi M. , 2016) Firstly, Efraim Inbar emphasizes that the bilateral relations between Israel and Turkey was damaged when Turkey criticized Israel’s attack to Gaza Strip in December 2008. Subsequently, another incident which cooled down the relations was Erdoğan’s behavior in World Economic Forum in 2009, DAVOS. Additional to this, Turkey declined Israel’s participation in *Anatolian Eagle* air exercise in 2009. The tension between the two states continued during 2009. However, in 2009, there were several developments which cooled the relationship. The high level visits between the two states were decreased while the criticism against Israel increased in Turkey. Also the defense trade reached decreasing levels. Inbar mentions that the Palestinian issue gained greater place in Turkey’s agenda once AK Party came to power. Until this time, it was possible to talk about a strategic partnership between Turkey and Israel. As another crucial incident, the “Mavi Marmara” crisis took place in 2010 and the tension increased. (Inbar, 2011, pp. 132-135) Nuri Yeşilyurt defines the Mavi Marmara crisis as the most serious crisis in the history of the relations between Turkey and Israel. (Yeşilyurt, 2017) In May 26, 2010 a flotilla of seven ships and 600 international passengers moved from Istanbul to Gaza. The flotilla was organized by an

NGO named IHH and it “humanitarian aid” for the Gaza. Israel did not allow the ships and as a result, in May 31 it made a military attack and 9 passengers in the ship named Mavi Marmara were killed. (Gürpınar, 2008) Following the incident, Turkey downgraded diplomatic relations to charge d’affaires level. And announced five demands which are; Apology from the Israel’s side, Compensation, Removal of the Gaza blockade, establishment of an international investigation commission for the incident and lastly, the return of the seized ships. Israel fulfilled the last two demands of Turkey; the ships were returned back and a commission was established by the UN General Secretary. (Yeşilyurt, 2017)

On the other hand, Oran mentions about three reports which were announced regarding the incident. Firstly, a report by the Israeli “Independent Public Commission” stated that Israeli blockade is not against International Law. Secondly, United Nations Human Rights Commission Research Delegation report which stated that Israel’s actions are against the International Law. And lastly, the report announced by Palmer Commission (a political commitment) stated the Israeli blockade as legal and the resistance of the passengers as irresponsibility while they also stated Israel’s killing of the passengers as unacceptable. Following the Palmer report, Davutoğlu announced of a sanction list which consisted five items; the diplomatic relations will be downgraded to Second Secretary level, the military agreements between the two states would be suspended. (Oran, 2017) Tüysüzoğlu determines this as the worst period of the Turkish – Israeli relations. And he emphasizes that Israel’s behaviours against the Palestinians was the main reason behind this. As Turkey’s main target was to become a regional leader especially for the Arab world, their anti-Israeli behaviours also played a role in worsening of the relations between Turkey and Israel. (Tüysüzoğlu, 2014, p. 149)

Tüysüzoğlu argues that the main reasons for worsening of the bilateral relations between the two states are as the following; the first reason is AK Party’s policies. Different than the previous governments, AK Party has been following Islamic policies and as an outcome of these policies it has been “discriminating” Israel. According to Tüysüzoğlu, AK Party named the previous policies which required strategic cooperation, political and military dependence as “old Turkey” and decided to rename and reshape its policies depending on its own perception. Another reason behind

cooling down of the bilateral relations was the fact that Israel was not willing to resolve the “Palestinian issue” and its usage of military power. Tüysüzoğlu also presents a strong argument at this point by saying that “Turkey instrumentalized the Palestinian issue for itself”. He argues that another reason for this case is the offensive policies implemented by the extreme right-wing of Israel towards the new Middle East policies of Turkey. “The lower chair crisis” is an example for that. Another reason is the US-Israel tensions. Israel’s settlements in East al-Quds and its requirement for military operations got reaction from US since it was planning to become the hegemonic power in the Middle East who was the main actor in resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict and it did not want to get in a military conflict with Iran. Turkey took advantage of this situation and was aware of the fact that it was seen as the key point in this conflict. Therefore, “it pursued a controlled tension policy”. He argues that, as a result of Israel’s security concerns, Turkey does not believe in a peaceful result for the conflict. He also analyzes the developments from the Israeli side and explains the reasons of cooling down of the relations from their side. The crucial developments in Turkish Foreign Policy strategies, Turkey’s full support for the Arab states, Turkey’s will for having direct relations with US without needing Israel’s moderation. Another crucial reason that he mentions is the fact that Turkey’s criticism against Israel’s policies was finding support from the “right radicalists” in Israel. Another crucial reason was the situation Turkey put Israel through after the Mavi Marmara incident. Israel’s attack was condemned by the international community and it damaged Israel’s reputation. Turkey’s NATO membership and US alliance played big role in this. Another reason is the background of the AK Party leaders from the concept of “political Islam”. (Tüysüzoğlu, 2014, pp. 151-155)

As an answer to this kind of perceptions, Kadir Üstün and Kılıç B. Kanat argue as the following;

“Some scholars have argued that the crisis was a result of the AK Party government’s pursuit of an “Islamist foreign policy,” however, such arguments take for granted the long-standing tradition of supporting Palestine by different governments of various ideological backgrounds. Others have labeled the harsh rhetoric coming out of Ankara “brinkmanship” and qualified Turkish efforts as “theatrical” while presenting the emerging tensions as a result of Turkey’s neo-Ottoman ambitions. These arguments similarly underestimate the fact that continued sympathy for the cause of Palestine combined with domestic political outrage over the killing of Turkish citizens in international waters created an extremely powerful incentive to push against Israel. If anything, Turkish politicians gave a chance to

diplomatic initiatives by the U.S. and the UN's Palmer report to be completed before taking definitive steps." (Üstün & Kanat, 2020, p. 178)

From another perspective, M. Cüneyt Özşahin investigates Turkish-Israeli relations in AK Party era within three periods. He argues that there is no stability between the two states since 1923. He divides the relations as; "the first period" where Turkey was working on becoming the mediator in the Arab-Israeli conflict, "the escalating period" where there were several crises between the two states such as Mavi Marmara and DAVOS and lastly the "détente period" which started in 2013 by the Israeli apology for Mavi Marmara. The new developments in AK Party's foreign policy were different from traditional West-centered policy of Turkey. He argues that the new foreign policy concept required new policy tools. And he argues that the concept of diplomacy adopted by Turkey required resolution of the old problems with the regional actors. In 2003, there was a short-term crisis between Turkey and Israel depending on Israel's support for the Kurds in Iraq. The crises were solved when Israel made a statement saying that Turkey's strategic alliance mean much more than the Kurdish issue for Israel. As another development, there was a tension between Turkey and Hizbullah in 2006, in Lebanon. As action to this conflict Turkey voted for "employment troops" to be sent to the region. Özşahin summarizes the situation as; "AK Party was trying to implement balancing policy between Hamas and Israel while on the other hand it was trying to keep co-operations between Hamas and Al-Fatah. Despite, Turkey's balancing policy the bilateral diplomatic relations was not flawless. Turkey's criticisms towards Israel's actions caused cracks in the relations. However, they were solved by statements. Another development which caused disagreements between the two states is Iran's nuclear program. He determines this period as the "first period". (Özşahin, 2018)

It is possible to say that "*one-minute crisis*" in DAVOS was an impact of Turkey's al-Quds policy. Following the crisis, the mutual *Anatolian Eagle* air force operation ended. Subsequently, there was another crisis which is known as the *lower chair crisis*. Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister called the Turkish Ambassador of Israel to his office and made him sit on a lower chair and mentioned that there was only one flag on the table which is the Israeli flag. This was retaliation against a Turkish TV serial which presented Israel with a bad reputation. In return, Turkish authorities called Israeli Ambassador of Turkey to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Additionally, Abdullah Gül

the President of the period announced that the diplomatic relations would be downgraded in case if Israel did not apologize. Eventually, the Israeli authorities apologized from Turkey in 2010. Another crucial development was the mediatory role which Brazil and Turkey played together in supporting Iran's nuclear program. This was not welcomed by the Israeli state. Özşahin argues that, this is one of the examples for the situation where one side used its co-operations with other actors to put pressure on the other side. Another example of it was seen in the gas cooperation between Israel and North Cyprus. The cooperation depended on sharing of the Eastern Mediterranean gas field and it was not welcomed by Turkey. As for the summit of the escalating period he addresses the Mavi Marmara crisis. UN Human Rights Council reported the Israeli attack towards the Turkish fleet as "cruel and immoral" and "violating international law". However, Turkey was not satisfied with the report. As an outcome of this crises Turkey's mediatory position in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was temporarily dysfunctional. Özşahin determines this period as the "escalating period". (Özşahin, 2018)

Özşahin argues that following the escalating period, the "détente period" began by the Israeli apology for the Mavi Marmara attack. However, Turkey had seven conditions; In 2014 Israel made an operation through Gaza and it was criticized by Turkey. Turkish Prime Minister Erdoğan determined the Israeli action as "state terror". Özşahin addresses the factors behind the détente period as "mutual strategic interests" especially in the case of energy. (Özşahin, 2018)

Deniz Tansı addresses the Palestine problem as the main barrier for a possible alignment between Turkey and Israel during the Cold War era. However, by the beginning of the post-cold war era, new problems appeared. Tansı addresses the problem of Northern Iraq is one of them. He mentions about an argument of "Israel has been working on Kurdistan and running operations in Kurdish areas of Iran and Syria" and then he counter-argues that this plan of Israel was not targeting Turkey but Iran. Then he mentions about various incidents which harmed the bilateral relations between two countries. He mentions about a crisis occurred by the launch of a TV series named "Ayrılık". The series were blamed to show the Israeli soldiers as child and baby killers. Following the launch of the series; the Israeli Foreign Ministry called the Turkish

Ambassador and gave a note in this regard. Despite the crisis, there were also co-operations between Israel and Turkey. However, while talking about an alliance between these countries, it is worth mentioning that there is a third party which makes it a “triangle’s alliance”; the US. As for the main issues for Turkish-Israeli relations, Tansı represents the following co-operations:

Table 4.1 (Tansı, 2009)

Co-operations between Turkish and Israel in the Middle East
US withdrawal process from Iraq
Iran’s activities in the Middle East
Syria’s rapprochement to the West
Palestine problem
Lebanon’s situation
Israel-Azerbaijan relations and positive affairs to Turkish approach to Caucasus
Al Ouida’s rising power on the earth and the Middle East
Related with 7th item, NATO’s AFPAK failure and negative affairs to struggle against terrorism

As for the economic relations, Tansı argues that Israel and Turkey are on the parallel economic bases. Turkey is in EU accession process and in this regard it has a customs union with EU. Israel has also signed Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with USA, and also Agricultural Agreement. (Tansı, 2009)

For analysis of the bilateral relations, Cohen and Freilich argue that before the rising of AK Party in 2002 in Turkey, the relationship between Turkey and Israel was in a level of strategic alliance. Depending on AK Party’s intention, the relations underwent. Before the AK Party government, the ties with the Arab countries were not so close. Therefore, the AK Party government was willing to improve its relations with the Arabs. This was an outcome of the Muslim version of AK Party. After the Mavi Marmara incident (2010), Israeli state offered apologies to the families of the victims in 2013. This was a proof of the fact that Israel was willing to repair the relations. However, Turkey's interest in repairing the relations was less than Israel’s. They summarize the most important developments between Turkey and Israel; in 1949

Turkey became the first Muslim country to recognize Israel, in 1992 Full diplomatic relations with Israel were established, and pave away of the strategic partnership during the 1990's and early 2000's. Turkey kept the relations with Israel in low-level until Arabs started negotiations with Israel. There were three main reasons for improving the bilateral relations; a common strategic outlook, Turkish military's intent of improving relations, and economics. During the post-Cold War era both countries feared WMD, terrorism, Islamic radicalism, the rise of Iran, and Iraq. And they both had an identity of a pro-western, secular, democratic and "isolated" state in Middle East. Turkey offered Israel geo-strategic depth by allowing Israel to train in its airspace, while Israel's territory was not large enough for it. Another point offered by Turkey was the fact that Israel gained diplomatic support from a Muslim nation. On the other hand, the Israeli lobby in the US for supporting Turkey's rights in the US. However, the AK Party government wanted to downgrade the ties with Israel depending on the following reasons; changing views of the international and regional environment, AK Party's Islamist identity, the shifting balance of power between the military and civilian organs in Turkey, the public opinion, the failure of the peace process. And they explain why Israel resisted apologizing after the Mavi Marmara incident until 2013 with three reasons; Turkey's turn to Middle East, little Turkish interest in rapprochement, Israel's internal politics. (Cohen & Freilich, 2014)

As for the relations between Israel and Turkey; Oruç points out that, six years after the Mavi Marmara incident, in 2016, there were attempts from both sides for normalization of the relations. (Oruç, 2017) This rapprochement process caused a debate between IHH and President Erdoğan. IHH claimed that rapprochement is not possible unless Israel removes the blockade. In return, Erdoğan stated that IHH did not inform PM of the period, Erdoğan. (e.g., Sputnik News, Sözcü Newspaper) Despite the rapprochement attempts, in 2017 it was obviously seen that there wasn't much of any improvements. The goals mentioned in the normalization agreement were not achieved yet. Both sides have lost interest in each other and this, shaped 2017 as one of the most distressed years so far. US' support for Israel and Turkey's criticism of what Israel has been doing was the summary of the year. However, in February 2017 there were negotiations between the two states regarding the natural gas pipeline. Both states had different perceptions for the conflict between Israel and Palestine. Oruç argues that this

fact led the two states get away from each other. As an example for another separation between Israel and Turkey, he addresses Israeli support for the blockade against Qatar. This behavior of Israel damaged the relations since Turkey and Qatar had strong ties. Israel stated that Qatar used to support Hamas (which is identified as terrorists by Israel) and that was the main reason for Israel to support the blockade. However, at the latter stage they presented Qatar several conditions for any kind of reconciliation, and one of the conditions was very interesting; they required the Turkish military forces to withdraw from Qatar. He also points out that, this was not relevant with Israel's claims regarding terrorism for sure. (Oruç, 2017)

On the other hand, there was another incident which caused tension between the two states. Israel's policies towards Al-Aqsa Mosque caused protests all around the world and there was a short-term Twitter conflict between the Turkish and Israeli foreign ministries in this regard. However, at the end Israel had to remove the electronic gates from the entrance of Al-Aqsa Mosque and all the other restrictions. Another crisis between the two states occurred when Iraq announced its “illegal” referendum decisions. Israel supported the referendum while Turkey stood against it. On December 2017, the US decision of re-locating the US Embassy of Tel Aviv to al-Quds was another fact which increased the tension between Turkey and Israel. Turkey stood against the decision and left US alone with the decision. However, although the political relations were full of crisis between Turkey and Israel in 2017, their economic relations were not affected by that, and the trade relations continued. (Oruç, 2017, p. 272)

For the developments after 2016, Haydar Oruç argues that the relations between Turkey and Israel were generally shaped around Turkey’s critiques over the Israeli policy in 2017. And he adds:

“In this sense, the following headings in the determination of Israel's policy of Turkey in 2017 has come to the fore: the United States Embassy of Israel in Tel Aviv from al-Quds to relocate the debates, the Paris Peace Conference, the approval of new settlements on the Palestinian side of the reconciliation efforts and Hamas' new political document of description, the constitutional amendment referendum in Turkey, Trump's Middle East trip, and then began the isolation of Qatar, Al-Aqsa Mosque restrictions on Iraqi Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) independence referendum, natural gas oriented economic developments and what happened after Trump's al-Quds decision.” (Oruç, 2018, p. 291)

Oruç argues that the normalization process for the Turkish-Israeli relations achieved its goals neither in 2016 nor in 2017. He determines 2017 as “the most troubled year” depending on the fact that both states lost interest in each other as they solved the issues and their concerns. As a result of mutual visits/negotiations, US officials stated that the two-state solution will not function any longer. This was condemned by the Turkish officials. Despite the mutual visits between Turkey and Israel, they did not positively behave towards each other in case of any disagreement. The energy transportation is one of these aforementioned disagreements. Another disagreement was Israel's prohibition of *the call to prayer* throughout speakers. There were following disagreements which caused their distancing from each other. Especially, the fact that Israel supported the blockades towards Qatar caused tension between Turkey and Israel. The developments which occurred in al-Aqsa Mosque caused implementation of limitations by Israel and it was sharply criticized by the Muslim world. Following this, there was a short-term process called twitter conflict between the Turkish and Israeli officials. Another tension between the two states occurred by the referendum of Iraqi Kurdistan. The tension increased when the retired Israeli General Yair Golan stated that they do not see PKK as a terrorist group and they argue that the establishment of a Kurdish state would be in favor of the region for Israel's national security. Undoubtedly, one of the most profound/remarkable developments of the year was the US recognition of al-Quds (including East al-Quds) as an Israeli territory and the decision of relocating its Israeli Embassy from Tel-Aviv to al-Quds. In contrast, Turkey started an “opposition” towards the US decision. Following the decision Turkey arranged an urgent meeting with the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) members and as a result of the meeting East al-Quds was recognized as Palestinian territory by the OIC members. (Oruç, 2018)

Dilek argues that Trump's al-Quds move is based on his election promises in 2016 and al-Quds policy of US was a dilemma in its foreign policy. He explains the process with the following words:

“The US Congress has preferred to stay away from the ground of international law by accepting the ‘al-Quds Embassy Act’ in 1995 based on ‘Basic Law of 1980’. By the ‘Presidential Waiver’ mentioned in the law, they have started to suspend the al-Quds Embassy Act with six-month periods since June 1999. But Trump has accepted the al-Quds Embassy Act in December 2017 that will start the process of moving the American embassy to al-Quds.” (Dilek, 2018, p. 98)

Dilek mentions about six main factors which were effective in Trump's move; the first fact is closely related to the policy-making mechanism of the US. It is affected by the influence of Israeli policy-making actors and the Jewish lobby and the Jewish businessmen. The second fact is Trump's election promises which were made in 2016. The third fact is that the new administration will to adopt a different foreign policy. The fourth fact mentioned by him is the bias of the biases among the "appointed persons" for the Palestinian case. The fifth fact is, ignoring the international law and trying to legitimize the case by US and Israeli national laws. And the last fact is the proceedings against both Netanyahu and Trump. After providing an analytical framework for Trump's move, Dilek mentions about Turkey's actions in the following process. He argues that Turkey decided to make a move which is based on diplomacy and international law. However, Turkey's actions were not welcomed by US and Israel. At this point, he emphasizes the significance of creating awareness among the international community for such global issues. As a result, he argues that;

"Especially the fait accompli policies of the USA and Israel by neglecting the international law and constituting by their national laws have wounded the global law and conscience and made debatable the reliability and functionality of the limited mechanisms that supports the international system. This case shows that the ability to sustain the global peace becomes harder day by day." (Dilek, 2018, p. 137)

Üstün and Kanat emphasize that, eventually the policy was legislated by the US Congress in 1995. However, it was not implemented for not damaging the peace process. They address the main reason for Trump's al-Quds move as, his concerns regarding domestic policy and his willingness to receive support from the Jewish lobby. Following Trump's move, Turkey immediately led an international reaction. It called the OIC members for a summit. Here, it is possible to identify Turkey's target of "regional leadership". A crucial move from Turkey mentioned by Üstün and Kanat is, besides its call for recognition of Palestine as a state was the announcement of its "intent for opening an embassy to Palestine in East al-Quds". Üstün and Kanat determine this as the end of Turkey's decades lasting stance towards al-Quds. Another, significant attempt made by Turkey was its efforts for a UN emergency session. Kılıç and "This willingness is an evidence for the significance of al-Quds for Turkey's leadership. However, Turkey's leading position in this action made countries like Jordan and Saudi Arabia. They did not pay much attention to Trump's move since they cared more about their mutual regional concerns with Israel such as; Iran, Muslim

Brotherhood and the Arab Spring.” In the following process during 2019, Turkey kept condemning the Jewish settlements since it is against the two-state solution. As a result, Trump’s move affected Turkish-Israeli relations in a negative way. (Üstün & Kanat, 2020)

From the military aspect; Oran argues that the military was one of the most important dimensions of the relations between Turkey and Israel during 1990s and it continued until 2009 despite the tensions in the political relations. The economic relations consisted bilateral military trainings, military co-operations and visits in military levels. However, the crises in 2009 had a negative impact on the bilateral military relations and they were almost non-intercourse in 2011. Oran points out that the military relations were not affected by the tensions in political relations until this time and one of the most important examples of it was shown in the case of Lebanon. Although, Turkey criticized Israel for its actions in Lebanon, Israel supported Turkey in its participation to United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). He also points out three significant developments for emphasizing the level of military relations between the two states. Firstly, there was an agreement signed between the two states considering cooperation for dealing with international terrorism and organizational crimes in 2003. Secondly, an agreement was signed between the two states in 2005 for intelligence cooperation against terrorism. Lastly, in 2008 the Minister of National Defense thanked Israel for the Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV) which were rented by Turkey for its operation towards Iraq. However, in 2009 the political crises started to influence the military relations. (Oran, 2017, pp. 448-449)

As for the bilateral economic relations considering the economic data; Israel was the 9th country for Turkey’s exportation in 2002 and 2003. In 2003 the exportation was 20 per cent more than 2002. In 2003 the trade volume highly increased between the two states. There was also high level of tourists visiting Turkey from the diversity of the co-operations. There were also co-operations for universities, think tanks, media, NGOs and municipalities. The Özcan also states that they tried to include the Palestinian institutions as the third party to the co-operations which would add another dimension to it. (Özcan, 2005)

Sariaslan starts her article by determining the structure of the Turkish – Israeli relations. She firstly presents the two types of models; the Middle East and the US-EU model. She mentions that Paul Rivlin classifies Turkish-Israeli relations as US-EU model. Basically, in Middle East model the trading and economic developments depend on politics. On the other hand, in the US-EU model, the politics depend on economy. In this model, any kind of obstacle against economy would be eliminated. According to Rivlin's model Sariaslan argues that the economic cooperation between the two states started to develop in 1950's and was affected by the politics. There were up and downs in economic relations parallel to the political developments. In 2000's, by the developments in politics, the economic facts were affected as well. She argues that Turkey started to implement "economy-centered foreign policy". The decisive actors in Turkish-Israeli relations were developed and the business world had become a new decisive actor (additional to the others). As a result of this, especially in 2010's, the tensions in political relations between the two states did not affect the economic relations. Between 1997 and 2000, Turkey followed "region focused foreign policy". She argues that the turning point for the Turkish-Israeli relations for the 2000's was the US annexation of Iraq in 2003. The tension between the two states increased since Israel was "training and supporting" the Kurds in Iraq and it was US' ally. This meant that they had contrasting interests in the region since Turkey had security concerns about the Kurds. Erdoğan in 2005, as the Prime Minister of Turkey visited Israel for normalization of the bilateral relations. However, the development in 2006 caused up and downs in the relations. Firstly, the "majority winner" of the 2006 parliamentary elections of Palestine was Hamas and in following weeks a Hamas committee arranged a visit to Turkey. The visit caused crisis in the Israeli side. Another significant fact affecting the relations was the Israeli attack towards Palestinian territories for rescuing a soldier. Subsequently, the Israeli annexation towards Lebanon took place. At this point Sariaslan emphasizes that tension depending on these reasons were in words and especially they were considered within political relations. (Sariaslan, 2019)

Considering the other developments, Turkey obtained-gained a reputation of being the only "mediator" state in the region for the conflicts since it could "communicate" with all the states located in the region. Besides its mediator identity Turkey also took place in negotiations between Israel and Syria. However, Turkey's

mediation role ended up by Israel's Operation Cast Lead towards Gaza in 2008. Sariaslan also argues that contrary to popular belief the trust issues between Turkey and Israel did not start in 2010 by the Mavi Marmara incident but it started when Israeli launched the operation mentioned above in 2008, five days after Israeli Prime Minister's visit to Turkey. (Sariaslan, 2019)

As it was mentioned above, Turkey's mediation attempts between Israel and other states is a significant point to be noted. In this regard, the researcher finds it beneficial to provide a table as the one in below:

Table 4.2 (Eralp, 2016, p. 7)

Turkey's Mediation Attempts within the Scope of Israel during the AK Party Governments	
Israel – Syria	December 2003
Israel – Palestine	May 2005
Pakistan – Israel	September 2005
Israel – Hamas (kidnapped soldier)	July – August 2006
Israel – Lebanon	July 2006
Israel – Syria	May 2008

From another perception, Oğuz Han Urhan argues that, there is a connection between peace and the economic relations and he adds; it is the same for Turkey and Israel. There is a difference in both countries' trade volume depending on their relations with each other. In this regard, if the policymakers decide to cool down the relations with the "other" country, the trade volume may decrease and this may also affect the nations of the country economically. Israel for Turkey is an important partner in the Middle East since the 90's. However, policies implemented by the policy-makers during the 2000's, affected the political relations between the two countries in a negative way. On the other hand, both countries achieved economic growth during this era, and this brought the two countries in a situation that they have become "commercial partners." (Urhan, 2017) As a conclusion, Urhan emphasizes the fact that although there are up and downs in political relations between Israel and Turkey, the economic relations are not badly affected by this situation and it maintains its current status. In this regard, it is

possible to say that both countries are following realist policies and they are considering the national interests; although they sometimes face one another within political issues, both countries are aware of the fact that they are facing common issues in the Middle East region such as being an isolated state in the Middle East and they both need an ally. This could be attributed with interdependence theory in international relations.

Sibel Turan and Nergiz Ö. Köseoğlu points out that, trade is one of the determinant fields for Turkish-Israeli relations. They emphasize the crucial fact that, Palestine's import takes place from Israel, which means Turkey's exportation to Israel is a part of its exportation to Palestine. Additionally, there is a free trade agreement between the two states. From 2005 to 2014, Turkey's exportation to Israel increased from 1.5 billion American Dollars to 3 billion. In 2013, Turkey exported more than 8,000 tons of drinking water to Israel. Although the tension between the two states in political relations do not affect trade "amounts", they affect the tourism area. The amount of visitors decreased and increased depending on the political and diplomatic relations. As for the trade area, rather than the decrease in 2008 crisis; there was an increase in trade between 2006 and 2010. However, during 2011 and 2012 there was a decrease, within the following years it started to increase again. They argue that, Israel is more important for Turkey than the either state partners. However, Turkey is not dependent to Israel in this case. They mention about a state of inter-dependency which explains the reason why the economic relations are not affected by the political tensions. (Turan & Köseoğlu, 2018, pp. 103-106)

Sibel Turan and Nergiz Ö. Köseoğlu provided the tables given below for the tourism and trade data:

Table 4.3 (Turan & Köseoğlu, 2018, pp. 103-106)

Tourism Data by Years									
Years	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Turks Going To Israel*	5 607	42 312	10 683	11 956	12 099	4 860	5 099	20 016	13 482
Israelis Going To Turkey**	288 398	400 205	454 765	252 041	93 265	81 715	87 951	129 414	172 823

Table 4.4 (Turan & Köseoğlu, 2018, pp. 103-106)

Bilateral trade data (thousand US Dollars)									
Years	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Turkey's Export*	1 529 158	1 658 195	1 935 235	1 522 436	2 080 148	2 391 148	2 329 531	2 649 663	2 950 902
Israel's Export**	782 149	1 081 743	1 447 919	1 074 727	1 359 639	2 057 314	1 710 401	2 417 955	2 881 262

Additionally, according to Turkish Statistical Institute's (TÜİK) data, between 2015 and 2019 Israel is the 9th country in the list of Turkey's Exportation. (Republic of Turkey - Ministry of Trade, 2019)

Lastly, the data about Turkey-Israeli trade is given below:

Table 4.5 (Republic of Turkey - Ministry of Trade. Retrieved June 2020)

Turkey-Israel Foreign Trade Value (Thousand US Dollars)				
Year	Exports	Imports	Volume	Balance
2004	1.315.292	714.143	2.029.435	601.150
2005	1.466.913	804.691	2.271.603	662.222
2006	1.529.158	782.149	2.311.308	747.009
2007	1.658.195	1.081.743	2.739.938	576.452
2008	1.935.235	1.447.919	3.383.154	487.316
2009	1.528.459	1.074.727	2.603.186	453.732
2010	2.080.148	1.359.639	3.439.786	720.509
2011	2.391.148	2.057.314	4.448.462	333.835
2012	2.329.531	1.710.401	4.039.932	619.129
2013	2.649.663	2.417.955	5.067.618	231.708
2014	2.950.902	2.881.262	5.832.164	69.641
2015	2.698.138	1.672.500	4.370.638	1.025.638
2016	2.956.450	1.385.595	4.342.045	1.570.855
2017	3.409.532	1.505.074	4.914.605	1.904.458
2018	3.894.853	1.713.601	5.608.454	2.181.252

4.2 The Relations Between Turkey and Palestine (2002-2019)

Turkey continued relations with PLO since 1975 and it was among the first countries to recognize the state of Israel. Considering the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Turkey supports the two-state solution. In other words, Turkey supports the related UN Resolutions which consider the East al-Quds as a Palestinian territory. In case of Israeli actions of obstructing the peace process, Turkey stood beside Palestine and kept supporting it both in the conflict and the international arena. The development which consolidates Turkey's support for Palestine is the Turkish NGOs located in the land.

Besides its aids via Turkish NGOs, Turkey also supported Palestine within The United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) and Temporary International Presence in Hebron (TIPH). Turkey argues that it is a must to improve the economic relations as well. At this point “a viable and sustainable socio-economic infrastructure of a future Palestinian state” must be established. “Within this framework, Turkey announced a comprehensive economic and social action plan for Palestine in December 2003. This plan is coordinated by the Coordinator for Economic and Social Cooperation with Palestine.” Another co-operation was the “Ankara Forum (Ankara Forum for Economic Cooperation between Palestine, Israel and Turkey)”. The project focused on establishment of “industrial zone” in Palestine. Another significant evidence of Turkey’s support for Palestine is Turkey’s offer for professional training of the young Palestinian diplomats. By the Free Trade Agreement signed in 2004, the commercial and economic relations between Turkey and Palestine gained a stable structure. (Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs Website. Retrieved May 28, 2020)

Mainly, the most visible development in Turkey’s position in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is the Turkish Palestinian relations. Despite the ups and downs in the Turkish-Israeli relations, the relations with the Palestinians were more stable. In 2004, the tension increased on the Palestinian conflict and it grabbed Turkey’s attention. President Erdoğan determined Israel’s actions towards the Hamas as “state terror”. It was a signal of the fact that Turkey was supporting Hamas (which was accepted as a terrorist group by EU and US) against Israel. Oran argues that Hamas’ victory in democratic elections of Palestine was a turning point for Turkey’s policy towards Palestine. Following the elections, a committee from Hamas visited Turkey. The visit was criticized both in domestic and international arena; the opposition and the West. However, Turkey explained the visit as a meeting where Turkey suggested Hamas to soften its actions and to disarmament. This was the first time when Turkey was involved in the conflict this much. On the other hand, there were cracks in the Palestinian side among itself. The two groups; Hamas and Al-Fatah were having an on-going conflict. In this conflict, Turkey did not take part as a mediator since this role was taken by Egypt and Egypt did not want Turkey to be involved. Oran argues that this was the point where Turkey acknowledged the limitations of its influence in the region. By the Gaza crisis in 2008-2009, the Palestinian issue took a place at the center of Turkish foreign

policy. A crucial point mentioned by Oran is the fact that, following the beginning of Operation Cast Lead, Prime Minister Erdoğan arranged visits to Syria, Egypt, Jordan and Saudi Arabia and in the following process Turkey continued “intensive diplomatic relations” until the truce between Hamas and Israel in January 2009. In 2009, One Minute Crisis took place and as a result of it Turkey’s and Erdoğan’s reputation increased in the Arab world. During its temporary membership in UN Security Council in 2009-2010; Turkey made several attempts for resolving the Israeli blockade in Gaza. In 2010, besides the Mavi Marmara attack, there was a prior intervention against the Turkish convoy leading to Palestine caused short-term crisis between Turkey and Egypt. (Yeşilyurt, 2017, pp. 430-431)

In 2011, there was an agreement signed between Hamas and Israel regarding the prisoner exchange. According to the deal, an Israeli soldier; Gilad Shalit and around a thousand Palestinian prisoners would be released. (The Guardian, 2011. Retrieved July 04, 2020) The deal was made as a result of the negotiations which were held by mediations of Germany and Egypt, and with contributions of Turkey. (Erkmen, 2011. Retrieved July 04, 2020) It is noted that, this was the first time that a kidnapped Israeli soldier by the Palestinians was returned back to Israel alive, since 26 years. Additionally, around 40 of the prisoners were expelled from the country and they were sent to other countries; including Turkey, Syria and Qatar. Around 10 of them were welcomed in Turkey. (Hürriyet, 2011. Retrieved July 04, 2020) On the other hand, Turkey’s relations with Hamas are mostly criticized by the Israeli side and the Israeli supporters. The above mentioned incident was one of these criticized subjects. For instance, Jonathan Schanzer argues that Turkey provides financial support for Hamas and it is not easy for Israel to prove it since Turkey’s support is in cash. He emphasizes Israel’s demands for distribution of the “Hamas center in Istanbul.” He claims that, many of the major Hamas members are located in Istanbul. He points out to the prisoner exchange deal mentioned above and criticizes the fact that the released Hamas prisoners were welcomed in Turkey and some of them were granted with Turkish citizenship. Taking this as a reference, Schanzer blames Turkey for being a “terror sponsor state.” (Schanzer, 2016. Retrieved July 04, 2020)

As for the relations between Turkey and Palestine; Oruç emphasizes that, Turkey's policy toward Palestine in 2017 was more effective. He argues that Turkey and Qatar were the two countries who supported Palestine. However, the actions against Qatar caused concerns for the future of Palestine. Qatar was blamed for supporting terrorism and this attitude has threatened the other states which were willing to support Palestine. As a result, the other states started to stay away from the Palestinian issue. Despite all the threats Turkey continued its support for all parties from Palestine, not only Hamas. Turkey's support for the Palestinian nation continued also during Israel's restrictions around the Aqsa Mosque. Oruç argues that there were protests both within the region and the international arena regarding Israel's action. He points out that Erdoğan called the international community to stand against Israel's implementations which restrict religious freedom and his efforts were efficient for Israel's removal of restrictions. As a result, Turkey's supported Palestine not only within bilateral relations but also within the international arena and the international organizations. Turkey played an important role in the meeting which was for Palestine's INTERPOL membership. This was an important step which proved that Palestine was accepted as a state in an international organization. Another significant point proving Turkey's support for Palestine was when it stood against the US decision of recognizing al-Quds as the capital of Israel. Turkey pointed out the fact that Israel is preventing Palestine to be recognized by the other countries as a state, and this lays the ground for legitimizing its actions. Additional to the facts mentioned above, there are also corporations between the two states in the context of education and economy. Moreover, TİKA and Kızılay continue their existence in Gaza and in the West Bank for humane aids and some other educational and health projects. (Oruç, 2017, p. 270)

Turkey's policy towards Palestine in 2017 was described as a more efficient and result-evident one compared to previous years both depending on Turkey's OIC presidency and the statements of the new US administration which "restricted" the regional powers to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian issue. As another development in 2017, there was an operation which was launched towards Qatar, the best ally of Turkey in case of resolving the issues of the Palestinian people. The regional actors avoided to involve in the resolution of the Palestinian issue after the announcement of a joint statement issued by Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Bahrain, and

Egypt, demanding Qatar to end its relations with the actors, and accusing Qatar of supporting terrorism in relation to actors such as Iran, Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood. As a result of these developments the Palestinian issue was no longer on the agenda of some regional actors.

“Turkey's 2017 Palestinian politics are shaped under the following main headings: Israel occupied holding the decisions that involve the opening of new settlements in the Palestinian territories, the Popular Conference for Palestinians abroad in Istanbul, the new political document issued by Hamas and reconciliation government, Hamas efforts to establish , Restrictions on Al-Aqsa Mosque, Palestine's INTERPOL (International Police Organization) membership and developments after the US decision to change the status of al-Quds” (Oruç, 2018, p. 291)

Oruç claims that Turkey supports both of the Palestinian sides; Hamas and PLO. And he addresses the conference held in Istanbul, 2017 as the main example of this. The above mentioned conference was held in Istanbul. It was argued in the conference that half of the total Palestinian population lives in the Diaspora and it was also claimed that the administration in Ramallah did not adequately defend the Palestinians in the Diaspora. Additionally, the conference stated that the Palestinians in the abroad willed to take part in the national decision-making mechanism for the right to return to their countries. (Oruç, 2018) Saleh and Nafi mentioned that the conference hosted six thousand Palestinians. However, the sources do not mention about any participants from the Turkish officials. (Saleh & Nafi, 2007, p. 104) The researcher argues that the reason for not participating of the Turkish officials is related to the political identity and statement of the conference which were especially targeting PLO. On the other hand, it was mentioned in the Turkish sources that PLO criticized the conference and announced that there would be no participants from PLO's side and criticized Hamas for aiming to provide an alternative for the Palestinian Administration via this conference. (Milliyet, 2017. Retrieved June 17, 2020)

Oruç argues that the relations between Hamas and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) gained a new dimension by the Hamas' political document.¹ In following, the parties announced to the world that they agreed on the government of reconciliation. Turkey supported and congratulated both sides in this. The details about process will not be repeated as it is described in the relations with Israel section, but it is

¹The political document issued by Hamas stated the acceptance of Palestinian borders of 1967. This was accepted as a détente move from the Palestinian side.

useful to emphasize that President Erdoğan's efforts are effective in removing restrictions. Because, by reminding the purpose of its establishment to the OIC, taking action on this issue was possible only through a good leadership despite the chaotic environment of the period. Turkey's support to Palestine will remain insufficient to evaluate only in the context of bilateral relations. This is because Turkey supports Palestine in the eyes of international institutions and organizations and demonstrates intensive efforts to ensure the representation in these institutions. In this respect, 2017 was a lucrative year. (Oruç, 2018)

Another significant development within the same year was the INTERPOL membership of Palestine. According to Oruç, Turkey's support for Palestine in international organizations was effective in this decision. Turkey's support for Palestine was not limited to these incidents. Besides the Economic Cooperation Council between the two states, the cooperation in the Forestry Area and the Cooperation Agreement on Education and Higher Education were approved by the President. In addition, TİKA and Kızılay continue to provide direct humanitarian aid to Gaza and the West Bank and to develop projects for housing, hospitals and schools in these regions. In this context, the 320-housing project completed in Gaza was delivered to its interlocutors in December. In addition, a ship called the "Compassion Ship" was sent to Ashdod from Mersin in June, carrying 10 thousand tons of humanitarian aid collected under the coordination of AFAD to meet the needs of Palestinians before the feast. Israel's 2014 Gaza for reconstruction of Gaza after the attack in the executive conference is to be used between 2014-2017 \$ 200 million in aid promised Turkey that has spent a large part of this money. Help and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East in July, the United Nations (UNRWA) was elected to the advisory commission vice-president and will assume the presidency, which subsequently is expected to increase Turkey's assistance to Palestine. (Oruç, 2018)

Additional to these political developments, Yeşilyurt interprets the economic relations between Turkey and Palestine. At this point he mentions about nine developments. There was an agreement between Turkey and Palestine in 2004 for 900.000 dollars of foreign aid; a free trade agreement was signed in 2004; negotiations between Turkey, Israel and Palestine started for the Ankara Forum in 2005; TİKA

opened its first office in 2005, Ramallah; 1.000.000 dollars agreement for foreign aid was signed between Turkey and Palestine in 2006; via Kızılay Turkey continued its human aids for the Palestinians in Gaza; Turkey provided support for the NGOs helping Gaza; Turkey continued providing grants for contributing the reconstructions in Gaza; Turkey provided evidence from the Ottoman archives for those Palestinians who were expelled from their properties in al-Quds. (Yeşilyurt, 2017, p. 433)

4.3 Turkish NGOs Located in Al-Quds as a Tool of Foreign Policy

As actors have foreign policy goals and they use tools to achieve their goals, Aydemir and Çoban argue that the main determinant of foreign policy targets and tools is the national interest. According to them, the ideological facts do not have influence as much as national interest although they play crucial role. They determine the main tools of foreign policy besides diplomacy and war as; “economic reward and punishment”, “obtaining natural resources”, “expanding the area of influence”. They argue, for usage of economic relations and commercial as a tool of foreign policy such as embargo, boycott and foreign aid there must be “unilateral dependence”. They emphasize the fact in the post-Cold War era there was a new environment which caused new security concerns for the states. At this point, Aydemir and Çoban emphasize the determinant role of economy in foreign policy and point out that the new environment, international actors started to play more active role in international arena. They also contributed to states’ foreign policy; which is mentioned as “active policy”. In this regard, they point out that TİKA became Turkey’s foreign policy tool in practice which organizes Turkey’s foreign policy aid. (Aydemir & Çoban, 2017)

K. E. Yıldırım and Ali Yıldırım emphasize the significance of soft power in today’s world and argue that one of the main reasons behind civil war is the soft power wars since there is an interaction with domestic developments of a state and another. In this regard, soft power became one of the most important characteristics of current Turkish foreign policy and the tools for it are the Turkish NGOs operating around the world such as; TİKA, YTB and Türk Kızılayı (Turkish Red Crescent). Additional to these, also the Turkish TV series are efficient and they grab attention around the world. Yıldırım argue that, as a result of policies implemented by AK Party, Turkey became an actor which “sets the agenda” in the region. As a result, the importance soft power

increased for Turkey. It is possible to say the policies implemented by TİKA especially in the regions where it has common historical and cultural roots, raises awareness among these countries and helps to establish strong bonds. They also point out; in Turkish state tradition it is a must to show attention and importance to every citizen in the world. By this way Turkish citizens abroad will accept Turkey still as a homeland. In this regard, TİKA's main scope is the Turkish citizens living abroad. Another working area of it is the international students, since Turkey aims to establish good reputation in the eyes of the new generation. Lastly, TİKA aims to establish good relations with the NGOs. According to Yıldırım, the main targets of TİKA are; firstly, to contribute to its citizens abroad to quality life and secondly to establish a good reputation of Turkey overseas. (Yıldırım & Yıldırım, 2017)

Helin Sarı Ertem, an international relations assistant professor at İstanbul Medeniyet University argues that generally Palestine and specially al-Quds has a special place in Turkish foreign policy. She points out that is mostly related to the historical heritage of Turkey since al-Quds was an Ottoman territory and also because of the status of al-Quds in Islam. She also points out that the land was strategically important depending on its close location to the Mediterranean. She argues that the “Palestinian policy of Turkey” is closely related to its “perception of security”. Ertem points out that Turkey mostly supported the Palestinians and condemned/criticized Israel for its violent actors. However, there is a point to be noted that Turkey is a “medium-sized regional power” which means that it has limitations. Considering the “international balance of power” and Turkey's need for US military support caused limitations for Turkey. At this point, the best option for Turkey was to shape its policy towards al-Quds by using the elements of soft power as efficient as possible. She emphasizes that Turkey adopted “development and human oriented foreign aids” in 1980's for the first time and currently, it increased the amount of these aids to use them effectively as a tool of its foreign policy. Ertem determines TİKA, YTB, Yunus Emre Institute (YEE), DİB (Directorate of Religious Affairs) and İHH as the new actors of Turkish foreign policy which are the tools of its soft power. Palestine is one of the top receiver of these aids from Turkey and the “entities” mentioned above are the main actors for reaching the aids to the land. (Ertem, 2019)

Ertem emphasizes that, Türk Kızılayı (Turkish Red Crescent) is an actor which takes part in 2016-2020 strategic plan. It aims “more international relations and more assistance.” It has nine permanent delegations and one of them is located in Palestine. It leads humanitarian aid projects for Gaza. Besides the “urgent humanitarian aids,” Kızılay also provides “improvement and development aids.” Additionally, it contributes to the socio-economic issues of the Palestinians by providing technical equipments to hospitals, improving the construction and water supply system. The “entity” functions by the (through the) individual donations, municipalities, civil society stake-holders and there is also public support from Turkey to Kızılay.

The second significant actor which is investigated by Ertem is TİKA. She emphasizes that TİKA plays active role in current Turkish foreign policy. It has an office in Ramallah which helps it to provide support for development and humanitarian projects in West Bank, Gaza and East al-Quds. It provides help for the Palestinians in similar fields with Kızılay. Ertem provides information on the amount of TİKA’s aids to Palestine. According to the data she took as a reference, TİKA provided 20 million \$ in aid for Palestine. There are ongoing projects held by TİKA in Palestine. One of them was based on establishment of a hospital with education and research faculty which is be ruled mutually by Turkey and Palestine. The hospital is located in Gaza and called as the Palestine-Turkey Friendship Hospital. The construction of the hospital valued 40 million \$. Additional to its projects located in Gaza, TİKA also has projects being held in al-Quds. Ertem determines the mission of TİKA in Palestine as to protect the Palestinian identity and assets against Israel and also to support its claim of leadership within the Muslim world by restoration of the Muslim owned buildings around Al-Aqsa Mosque. (Ertem, 2019)

In 2017, TİKA stated that it implemented more than 400 projects in East and West al-Quds and Gaza since the establishment of its office in Palestine in 2005. 71 of the projects were implemented in East al-Quds while 120 of them implemented in Gaza. The projects based on areas of health, education, emergency aid, water, production, public health and protection of common historical heritage. (TİKA, 2017. Retrieved June 19, 2020) Two of the significant activities of TİKA in 2017 could be considered as; Gaza Housing Estate Construction and Installation of Solar Energy Panels. As for

the housing construction, TİKA reports that “320 houses were built in Gaza by TİKA for Gaza families in need, who lost their homes during the war in Gaza in 2014. In line with the instructions of H.E. President of Turkey, the housing estate project in the region of Al-Wusta in Gaza Strip, whose construction was initiated in 2016 by TİKA, was built on an area of 20 hectares. The project consists of 20 blocks and there are 16 buildings in each block. Nearly 2.250 Gaza people will benefit from the project, which includes 320 apartments each measuring 100m2.” And as for the solar energy panels it states that, “In cooperation with the Republic of Turkey Ministry of Energy and Natural Sources, in order to meet the energy requirements of Gaza, the PV panels were installed on the roof of public institutions such as schools, hospitals, etc. in Gaza. At the first stage of the project, PV panels with a capacity of almost 200 kW were installed on the roof of 2 clinics and 1 school. (TİKA - Department of Strategy Development, 2017)

Subsequently, TİKA’s activities in Palestine in 2018 are given below:

Table 4.6: TİKA Annual Report 2018

TİKA’S ACTIVITIES IN PALESTINE - ANNUAL REPORT 2018
Furnishing of Friendship Hospital
Emergency Medicine Capacity Increase Program – ATKAP Trainings including Palestine
Construction of Water Treatment Station
Furbishing of Language Training Laboratory
Maintenance and Repair of Houses of Disabled Families from Gaza
Installation of Solar Energy System in Gaza
Establishment of Nursery Plant
Emergency Drug Medical Material Aid

YTB is another efficient actor of Turkey as a tool of its soft power. The entity aims to collaborate with the Turkish citizens all around the world, the international students being funded by the Turkish government and the “brother communities”. As there are students granted scholarship from different countries, the Palestinian students are also granted to complete their education in Turkey. Besides its training projects for

the young graduates, Turkey provides a crucial service for the Palestinians by granting access through the Ottoman archives it opens the gate for them to make claims upon their freeholds. YEE as a part of the Yunus Emre Foundation works attached to the Turkish Consulate General of al-Quds since 2013. It also has an office in Ramallah. The main focus of the institute is to provide cultural and traditional activities. As a result, it also provides teaching of Turkish language. “Besides promoting its own culture, YEE also supports the Palestinian cultural activities.” (Ertem, 2019)

Olgun Gündüz emphasizes the fact that YTB is the institute which provides the coordination between the other institutions for providing a successful process for the students who come to Turkey for education (for the non-international students). And he adds that the authority for the international students is given to the International Student Evaluation Committee. However, he points out a development in 2010 when the committee decided for establishment of an ad-hoc committee to prepare an *International Student Strategy Document* within the YTB Secretary. Olgun Gündüz mentions about eight goals for the document;

“Compatible with the regional and global vision of Turkey, Contributing the development of economic and socio-cultural relations, dynamic and adaptable to developments, Defining the criteria for determination of the quota, Addressing the principles of the student selection system, containing basic policies for student work related to citizen and relative communities, which includes guidance services to be provided to students, guiding for policies that define post-graduate relationships.”

Considering these, Gündüz also argues that, “Turkey’s *multi-dimensional international student policy*” depends on four focal points. Which are; firstly, Central Asia and the Balkans where Turkey must establish close relations depending on the historical ties. Secondly, the Asian and Far East countries, thirdly, the Middle East which Turkey has strong religious and cultural ties with; Palestine is one of them and lastly, Africa and South America. (Gündüz, 2012)

Gündüz emphasizes that in today’s world, countries use higher education as a tool for promoting their country and in this regard they develop strategies considering the international students. He argues that; “... the international dimension of higher education forms the backbone of development, diplomacy, dialogue and cultural exchange and gains importance as an indispensable part of international competition besides parameters such as economy and military power.” Palestine is determined

among one of the countries which has more students in Turkey. He mentions that between 2011 and 2012 there were 298 Palestinian students in Turkey. During the 2012-2013 periods, there were 105 students from Palestine granted with scholarship. (Gündüz, 2012, pp. 32-35)

Besides the NGOs, as another example for Turkey's soft power, the Master of Arts in Quds Studies program at the Social Sciences University of Ankara could be given. ASBÜ introduces the characteristics of the field as given below:

"Bayt al Maqdis Studies is an intellectually exciting and stimulating field of inquiry that seeks to understand the region of Bayt al-Maqdis from inter-disciplinary and multi-disciplinary perspectives. The field explores the theoretical and conceptual framework within which Muslims approach Bayt al-Maqdis, as well as examining the ways in which the region has been manifest within the contexts of international relations, politics and history from the time of the rise of Islam to the present day. The approach consists of political, social, religious, historical, and geographical perspectives on Bayt al-Maqdis with in-depth studies and critical analyses of particular aspects and approaches. Bayt al-Maqdis Studies address how the region can be understood within the context of the relationship between the land, the people, and the vision of Bayt al-Maqdis as a model for multiculturalism." (Social Sciences University of Ankara Website. July 04, 2020)

It is also emphasized that this is the first Master degree in this field both in Turkish Universities and in the Middle East. The field of inquiry was firstly established in the British Universities and lately in the Malaysian Universities by Abd al Fattah El-Awaisi. It is addressed that, depending on its cultural and historical heritage Turkey is one of the most suitable places, to investigate about Bayt al-Maqdis. It is mentioned in the university website that:

"As well as engaging students with the contemporary academic debates on several aspects of Bayt al-Maqdis, such as, the geopolitical uniqueness of the Bayt al-Maqdis region and its effect on the rest of the world in the past, present and future, the program will highlight how modern Bayt al-Maqdis is shaped in part by dialogue with its own past and in part by response to external influences in the region, and how contemporary Muslims seek to relate their heritage in Bayt al-Maqdis from the past to the radical situation of today. It encourages postgraduate students to specialize on this timely needed field of inquiry, to educate and produce the next generation of scholars in Bayt al-Maqdis Studies who will advance research in the field. It will give the student a solid theoretical, conceptual and historical grounding in order to better comprehend and interpret the recent developments in the region." (Social Sciences University of Ankara Website. July 04, 2020)

The first recruitment for the program was made in 2018 and it will give the first graduates in; summer 2020.

As a conclusion, Turkey has been playing active role generally in regional politics, specifically in the Arab-Israeli conflict during the AK Party era. During this

period there were various significant crises between Turkey and Israel. These crises influenced the political and diplomatic relations between the two states. The bilateral military relations were effected to some extent as well. However, the economic relations were not affected at all. On the other hand, as for Turkey's perception for the Palestinian side, it is possible to say that Turkey did not prefer being choosing a side in the conflict among the two Palestinian parties and tried to keep the relations balanced with Hamas and PLO. Turkey's leading position for its support for the Palestinians in the region is not a pleasing fact for some of the other states in the region. However, its position in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict contributes to its reputation and the goal of becoming a regional power. For increasing its influence and reputation Turkey uses soft power efficiently and its NGOs are one of the most important tools in its regional policies. Although the NGOs are more active in Gaza, they implement projects targeting al-Quds as well, within the scope of the Israeli preventions.

CHAPTER FIVE

ANALYSIS OF THE TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS AL-QUDS (2002-2019)

This chapter can be determined as the backbone of the research since it will be based on analysis, interpretation and evaluation. At the beginning of the chapter, the main structure and characteristics of Turkish Foreign Policy towards al-Quds between 2002 and 2019 will be discussed and analyzed especially within the scope of decision-making process and the dominants of Turkey's foreign policy. As for one of the most significant subjects of the research, the differences and similarities between the current policies and the previous policies will be discussed in this chapter to make a clarification of the main differences in the characteristics of these policies. This chapter will also provide a general understanding of Turkey's approach towards the Arab-Israeli conflict within different periods. Subsequently, the limitations, outcomes and the internal and external determinants of the current policy will be discussed. Mainly, the chapter will be where the current policies, relations, the developments and their impacts will be discussed and analyzed.

5.1 The Main Structure and Characteristics of Turkish Foreign Policy Towards Al-Quds (2002-2019)

For foreign policy analysis it is significant to provide a framework of the structure of the actor's foreign policy decision-making process and to address the main determinants playing role in it. There is a consensus among most of the authors that there were changes in the structure of Turkish Foreign Policy towards al-Quds by the beginning of AK Party rule (e.g., Oran, 2012; Bayraktar, 2019). Considering this visible change, it is also significant to determine whether if there was change in practice or the structure or in both. While investigating the decision-making structure and process it is also significant to investigate the structure of crisis management of the governments. In his article, Fuat Aksu addresses the issue of crisis management besides the decision makers. His analysis includes Mavi Marmara crisis. He emphasizes that there are different arguments for the decision-making process during this period. It is known that

Davutoğlu played role in foreign policy-making process both during his time at the foreign ministry and before. Before his presidency he played role in decision-making as a senior advisor in AK Party government. Mainly, during this period he took the responsibility of decisions. However, a point to be noted is the fact that on the other hand Erdoğan's influence continued in the decision-making process. (Aksu, 2018)

To provide a framework for the current Turkish foreign policy decision-making process, the researcher takes a new research as a reference. The research presents several determinants for the process. Mainly, the authority for the decision-making is the President. The other determinants are addressed as; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Security and Foreign Policy Committee, the National Security Council, the National Intelligence Organization, formally appointed advisors of the President, and the President's connections outside the Presidency as the informal advisors, and the Turkish Military. All these sources provide information directly to the President and there is no hierarchy among them. (Neset, Aydın, Dikici Bilgin, Gürcan, & Strand, 2019. Retrieved May 22, 2020) The structure is shown in the diagram given below:



Figure 5.1 (Neset, Aydın, Dikici Bilgin, Gürcan, & Strand, 2019)

The research mentioned above classifies the dominants as; providing assessments and providing practical information. In this case the assessment providers are listed as the Security and Foreign Policy Committee and informal/formal advisors. The practical

information providers are; National Intelligence Organization (MIT), Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and the Military. Eventually the President is the decision maker of the policy. In this case the significant point is the fact that the entities mentioned above cannot be determined as the dominants since they can only provide information and they have very limited power in decision-making. In the research the argument is that, "...decisions are taken within the Presidency in a highly compartmentalized and personalized fashion." The entities will not be investigated within details to remain the scope of the study. The information given above is to establish a general understanding of Turkish foreign-policy-making structure. Another claim of the research is the fact that the non-governmental actors such as academia, civil society organizations, think-tanks, and media outlets are not able to take part in policy-making process. (Neset, Aydın, Dikici Bilgin, Gürcan, & Strand, 2019)

"...the main decision-making body is the Presidency whereas different entities have advisory roles, including networks of informal advisors. The processes of decision-making involve parallel sources of information provided to the Presidency that makes up the basis on which the President and his closest aids make decisions on foreign policy". "...In addition there is a need to understand the factors that contribute to the foreign policy decision-making of Turkey under the new system. Since the end of the Davutoğlu era, there has been a vacuum when it comes to formal doctrine of Turkish foreign policy and thus there is little known about what structural and conjectural determinants which shape policies. In this project we have started to map these factors. When it comes to structural variables we started looking into perception of constraints and opportunities in connection with geographical position and national image. Furthermore, through our research, we have identified several conjectural determinants of Turkish foreign policy: the government system; economic constraints; the geopolitical situation; regional re-alignments; and the Kurdish issue." (Neset, Aydın, Dikici Bilgin, Gürcan, & Strand, 2019)

A point to be noted is the fact that the framework provided above belongs to the Presidential system in Turkey which began to be implemented since 2017.

After providing general information of the structure of current Turkish foreign policy, it is beneficial to explain Turkey's position in the Palestinian issue and the main characteristics of its policy towards al-Quds. As a point of reference, Mohammed Alsaftawi argues that Turkey under the AK Party rule became a key player in the Middle East by implementation of the concept of *strategic depth* in its foreign policy. He also points out that by following this concept, Turkey's soft power increased since it united the concept of Western democracy with the Eastern Islamic concept. This soft power was in favor of Turkey especially for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; Turkey has been trying to become the third party in the conflict. He also argues that the reason why

the Palestinian issue became one of the priorities of Turkish foreign policy is closely related with the ideologically Islamic background of the AK Party members, the same historical heritage with the Palestinians which is based on the Ottoman era and the same religious roots; Islam. Additional to all these reasons, Turkey is aware of the fact that human rights are violated in Palestine which is a very sensitive cause for Turkey to support the rights of the Palestinians. (Alsaftawi M. , 2016)

Another reason for Turkey to make the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as a priority for its foreign policy is because Turkey wanted to become a regional power. Alsaftawi cited Altunışık's explanation of "*regional strategic competition*" for the situation, which claims that, any country wants to become a regional power in the Middle East should lead the Palestinian issue. At this point, the most interesting point is the fact that, this policy of Turkey was in contrast with the previous one which predicted the concept of "zero problems with neighbours" policy. Another significant point to be noted was the fact that, although there was tension between the two states politically, the economic relations between them were not affected at all. On the other hand, as for another significant turning point in Turkish foreign policy, Alsaftawi emphasizes the fact that there was a change in the structure of Turkey's policy-making process in regard of policy makers. Until the time of Erdoğan, the policy makers were; the Parliament, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Presidency. However, by the empowerment of Erdoğan, two of the policy-making organs disappeared. This caused repositioning in Turkish Foreign Policy. Eventually, the failures in their policies and the appearance of new threats in the region such as ISIS, brought Israel and Turkey together again. (Alsaftawi M. , 2016)

As for the main characteristics of AK Party government's al-Quds policy, Yeşilyurt argues that the main characteristics of Turkey's foreign policy towards the conflict were; "Turkey tried to become the mediator for resolution of the conflict, it adopted a sensitive discourse for the conflict, attempted for negotiations with both sides, deepened its economic and humanitarian relations with the Palestinians". There was an ongoing chaos in the region which caused a need of support for Turkey. As a result of this dynamic environment, Turkey started to play a more active role in the region and this helped to improve its reputation. However, the Yeşilyurt emphasizes that, the

Western influence in Turkish foreign policy continued although it opened up with the Arab world (2011). (Yeşilyurt, 2017, pp. 404-405) On the other hand, Tüysüzoğlu from another perspective claims that Turkey's new concept in its Middle Eastern politics caused "discrimination" of Israel while it required close relations with the Arab states. (Tüysüzoğlu, 2014)

5.2 The Differences Between the Current Turkish Foreign Policy (2002-2019) and the Previous Foreign Policies (1923-2002) Towards Al-Quds

Depending on its cultural heritage and historical background, al-Quds has a unique place in Turkish foreign policy. However, the fact that whether it is a priority or not is determined by; the policies implemented by different governments, the dynamics of the regional environment and the developments in the bilateral relations and the peace process. (Yeşilyurt, 2017)

Besides the changes in the structure of Turkish foreign policy-making process since the AK Party rule, there are also changes in Turkey's usage of foreign policy tools. Veysel Kurt argues that, since 2002, there were changes in the amount of foreign aids, area of their influence and the level of institutionalization comparing to the previous periods. As an example, he addresses the institutionalization of TİKA since the early 2000s. Additionally, he emphasizes the terms being used for defining the concept of foreign policy during the AK Party are such as; "zero problems with neighbours", "proactive foreign policy", "central country", "rhythmic diplomacy", "win-win", "multidimensional foreign policy" and "soft power". He argues that this change in Turkish foreign policy was a belated respond from Turkey to the developments following the post-Cold War era. Kurt emphasizes that the AK Party government made legal changes within MFA and TİKA depending on its foreign policy preferences and he adds that there were developments and new foreign policy concepts besides classical diplomacy such as; "humanitarian diplomacy", "conflict resolution", "economic integration" and "foreign aid". Kurt defines these as the parameters of "non-compelling power potential." (Kurt, 2018) The concepts mentioned above explain the characteristic differences between Turkish foreign during the AK Party government and the previous ones. From another perception, according to Özşahin, the fact that AK Party set the

concept of “establishing peace with the regional powers” as a priority differs its policies from the previous ones. (Özşahin, 2018)

On the other hand, for discussion of the differences in practice, as it was mentioned in previous chapters, in 2000 the second intifada occurred and the Palestinian issue took place in Turkey’s agenda and there were five visits to Israel from Turkey in Foreign Minister Level within two years. Besides its intensive contacts with Israel, Turkey also had similar contacts with the Palestinian side. To summarize, 2000 was a year that Turkey took the Palestinian side and criticized Israel. Oran argues that in 2002 the criticism increased by the Israeli occupation of Ramallah. Ecevit sharply criticized Israel by claiming its actions as genocide. However, he points out to a crucial point which is the fact that, this tension between Israel and Turkey was “all about words” and it did not establish barriers between the two states. Oran argues this was a part of Turkey’s balance policy. He also argues that Turkey, despite all the efforts, was not powerful enough for reaching success in playing mediatory role between Israel and Palestine. (Yeşilyurt, 2017) As a visible development, there is a consensus among the foreign policy analysts that, there was a significant change in Turkey’s foreign policy towards the Arabs in 2002 when AK Party came to power. (e.g., Oran, 2012; Bayraktar, 2019) And this was a “reflection” of Davutoğlu’s doctrine; “Strategic Depth”. Oran determines the main characteristics of Turkey’s foreign policy towards the conflict as;

“Turkey tried to become the moderator for resolution of the conflict, it adopted a sincere and sensitive discourse for the conflict, and attempted for negotiations with both sides, deepened its economic and humanitarian relations with the Palestinians”.

And he crucially argues that, especially the last two factors differentiate the AK Party government’s policy towards al-Quds from the previous governments. (Oran, 2017)

Göktürk Tüysüzoğlu argues that the nature of Turkish – Israeli relations were shaped “around” the concept of “strategic cooperation”. However, there were crucial changes in their relations in 2000’s. The main reason for this cooperation in 1990’s was the fact that both states had mutual concerns about mutual threats. However, in 2000’s Turkey’s perception of the region changed and also its concerns were changed. As Turkey’s perception changed, its interests changed as well. At this point, the Turkish – Israeli relations were affected. “By contrasting” interests the states went on conflicts at some point. Different than the previous governments, the AK Party rule starting from

2002 started to implement new policies in foreign policy depending on its fundamentalist-democratic nature. Gökürk Tüysüzoğlu also emphasizes the significance of Davutoğlu's doctrine in this regard. He supports that by this doctrine, Turkey started to implement policies shaped by its cultural background and its social and diplomatic experiences and its advantages. He determines it as an example for the concept of soft power. Turkey's main target by this new policy was to become a regional leader and a balancing actor. Middle East was one of the main focal points of the new policy and religion was going to be used as a reference. Although this policy was helping Turkey to improve its relations with the Arab and Muslim states in the region, on the other hand, it had negative impacts on its non-Muslim and non-Arab neighbours. Israel was one of them. (Tüysüzoğlu, 2014, pp. 139-144)

Bayraktar argues that, the Palestinian issue was not a priority for Turkey. However, it grasped Turkey's attention by the Oslo Peace process. During that time, Turkey's foreign policy had focused more on the Kurdish problem and PKK. Depending on its security concerns, Turkey saw the peace process as an advantage to gain Israel's support against the "Kurds". Although, Turkey was having relations with Israel, it openly showed support for the Palestinians. There were several attacks to damage the Oslo Peace Process from both sides. Despite its support for the Palestinians, Turkey did not approve these terrorist actions and condemned all terrorist actions from both sides. In 1995 the Israeli Prime Minister was assassinated by a Jewish extremist and Benjamin Netanyahu was brought to task. Turkey followed the following developments and in 1996 Israel visited Süleyman Demirel. Bayraktar emphasizes the fact that Turkey's close relations with Israel caused issues within Turkey's domestic policy; among the Islamist and seculars. This is how Bayraktar summarizes the 1990's. (Bayraktar, 2019, p. 22)

As for the 2000; Bayraktar mentions about Al-Aqsa intifada which took place in 28th September. Four Palestinians were killed during the Al Aqsa intifada by the Israel soldiers and this ended up the peace process. Bayraktar argues that, this caused changes in Turkish foreign policy towards Israel and Palestine since its balanced policy was synchronized with the peace process. As a result, Turkey stood beside the Palestinians. The Muslim identity of the Turks population and public opinion played role in it.

Bayraktar argues that Israel started to implement a unilateral policy to provide security for its citizens. He analyzes this with two main “components”; to build a wall around the West Bank and provide security for remaining its borders and secondly, Israel wanted to weaken Hamas by keeping “low in intensity conflict”. Turkey criticized Israel for its violent actions in the Al Aqsa intifada against the Palestinians. Turkey followed the developments from close and tried to participate in the process, to keep its balanced policy with Palestine and Israel. The Palestinian side wanted Turkey’s support and believed Turkey could have an influence on Israel while, on the other hand Israel wanted Turkey’s support for putting pressure on the Palestinian side. Significantly, Bayraktar points out that Turkey did not only take part in the peace process by only arranging visits from both sides but also tried to bring the international organizations to stop the violence in the land. As a very crucial example for that, Turkey hosted an OIC-EU Joint international summit in İstanbul and the result was to come to a “peaceful two state solution” based on the UNGA Resolutions. (2002) (Bayraktar, 2019, pp. 26-28)

However, the violent actions continued. Bayraktar argues the international environment after the 9/11 attacks in 2001, gave Israel a “free hand” to fight with the Palestinians under the umbrella of “fighting with terrorism” since there “terrorism” was a very sensitive issue all around the world (especially during that time). The attacks from the Palestinian side targeting the Israeli civilians led continuation of violence in the land. In 2002, there was another international “movement” for negotiation of the two sides, in the Arab League. Depending on an attack from Hamas against Israel on the same day as the summit, Israel “denied it”. Jewish civilians were killed in this suicide bombing. Bayraktar argues that this influenced Turkey’s behavior and it became harder for Turkey to stand beside the Palestinian side. At this point, Turkey expressed its concerns as, this on-going conflict in the land could cause a regional conflict. Therefore, Turkey suggested Israel’s withdrawal from Palestine and asked for US’ help to convince Israel in this regard. Bayraktar argues that things changed between Israel and Turkey changed by the elections made in 2002 in Turkey especially when Erdoğan determined Israel as a “terror state”. Then Bayraktar argues that the new government adopted a new policy. He explains the five components of the policy presented/submitted by Ahmet Davutoğlu in 2002 which were; “balance, ‘zero problems with neighbors’, relations with neighboring regions and beyond, multi-

dimensional foreign policy, complementary relations instead of competition, rhythmic diplomacy.” He argues that these were the main principles which shaped Turkish foreign policy for 10 years. “While talking about AK Party governments’ foreign policy, it is important to note that one of the key players and policy maker was Ahmet Davutoğlu”. (Bayraktar, 2019, pp. 29-32)

As for the structural differences in Turkish foreign policy Lars Haugom argues that there were visible changes in Turkish foreign policy especially in 2014 and 2016. He mentions three main features for this change. Firstly, Turkey started to play a more active role in the Middle East. Secondly, there were diplomatic disagreements between Turkey and its Western allies. And thirdly, there were rapprochements in the relations between Turkey and the Arab countries. The researcher argues that the developments mentioned above are closely related with Turkey’s al-Quds policy. (Haugom, 2019)

Haugom argues that the focal point of foreign policy during the Erdoğan became “national security”. This was a change in the scope of its foreign policy. It affected both diplomatic and military actions of Turkey beyond its borders. He points out the three “strategic visions” on Turkish foreign policy in different periods which are; “Kemalism,” “Neo-Ottomanism,” and “Turkish Gaullism.” He argues this is a commonly used analytical tool for Turkish foreign policy. According to the classification, the period between the establishment of the Republic of Turkey in 1923 and the end of the Cold War in 1991 is determined as the Kemalist era which was ruled by the “old Republican elite”. The concept of Kemalism provided a profile of Turkey which is non-aligned, isolated and neutral at times. Additional to these, Turkey joined NATO during this period. During the Cold War era, the focal point of Turkish foreign policy was “to preserve its national independence and its secular identity” in the unstable region it is located in. As a result, it was “defensive” in international relations. He adds that the economic and political relations with the West were established and improved while on the other hand the relations with the East were kept in minimal level. However, significantly by the end of Cold War Turkey’s geostrategic importance was increased. (Haugom, 2019)

Within following decades Turkey improved its economy and its focal point changed from the concept of “national security” to “economy”. By the end of 1980s and

the beginning of 1990s, there was a new strategic concept which was firstly adopted by Turgut Özal and later on followed by AK Party. The concept is called as “Neo-Ottomanism.” It focuses on Turkey’s potential of becoming an economic and political center within its neighbourhood and in the region. The main target of the concept is to provide “re-connection with the countries which once belonged to the Ottoman Empire. During the period between 2002 and 2007 Turkey was focused on playing a role of a bridge between the East and the West. Then he argues, that, this has changed during the second period of the AK Party ruling which is between 2007 and 2014, following the EU membership process. (Haugom, 2019)

Haugom argues that, during the Davutoğlu period there was a shift in Turkish foreign policy and it focused on improvement of the relations between the Eastern and Southern neighbours. This is explained by Turkey’s aim of becoming a regional power. The concept of strategic depth proposed by Davutoğlu “promoted an” activist foreign policy pursued by soft-power.” Besides the regional improvements Turkey also improved its relations with Asian, African and Latin American countries for developing its economy. By focusing on improvement of the relations with neighbouring countries and regions Turkey did / lose interest in the West. Haugom points out that, according to Taşpınar, the concept of Neo-Ottomanism “superseded by a third strategic vision” which is called “Turkish Gaullism”; which is similar with 1960’s French foreign policy under Charles de Gaulle. According to this perception, Turkish foreign policy combines the “components” from both Neo-Ottomanism and Kemalism. Haugom evaluates this situation as; “Turkey’s foreign policy outlook has, in other words, become more overtly nationalistic, independent, self-confident, and defiant.” (Haugom, 2019)

5.3 Analysis of the Current Turkish Foreign Policy Towards Al-Quds

According to Sönmezoğlu’s description, there are three main elements for foreign policy analysis which are; *power* as a concept, the *decision-making process*, and the *relationship between domestic and foreign policy*. (Sönmezoğlu, 2012) Considering this description, the researcher will analyze the current Turkish foreign policy towards al-Quds.

As for the concept of power; commonly there are two types mentioned by the authors which are *hard* and *soft power*. Turkey's current policy towards al-Quds is shaped around the concept of *soft power* which is developed by Joseph Nye. Nye used the concept of soft power "to describe a nation's ability to attract and persuade". In this regard, soft-power refers to "attractiveness of culture, political ideals and policies" while on the other hand, hard-power refers to "military and economic features. Hard power is used for preventing violence and protecting independence. However, according to Nye, soft-power is an effective "tool" for preventing the terrorist actions and violence.

Considering this definition, Sönmezoğlu emphasizes the close relation between *soft power* and *legitimacy* since "...soft power requires having the desired influence by legitimizing, persuading and appealing the other party." He mentions about two significant key concepts; control and influence. Additionally, he mentions are two dimensions of power; military power and economic power. While considering power as a concept for analyzing Turkey's foreign policy towards al-Quds, it is possible to say that Turkey had been adopting concept of "soft power" in its current policy. Sönmezoğlu mentions about three analytical tools for analyzing power; capacity, target and influence. In case of its capacity Turkey is a "medium-sized regional power" and this causes various limitations. (Sönmezoğlu, 2012) However, it might increase the amount of its influence by using the elements of soft power as efficient as possible. (Ertem, 2019) In this regard, there is a consensus among the authors that Turkey's adopting and implementation of the concept of *soft power* increased its influence in the region and also in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. (e.g., Yohanan and Öktem, 2015; Yıldırım and Yıldırım, 2017)

As for the decision-making process, Turkey's perception of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the structure of the decision-making process of its foreign policy must be investigated. The details about the structure of Turkey's foreign policy-making process were mentioned above. Briefly, there are assessment providers which are the Security and Foreign Policy Committee and informal/formal advisors. And there are practical information providers which are; MIT, MFA and the Military. As a result, the entities mentioned above are the information providers and they are not considered as the

dominants. Eventually, President is the decision maker of the policy and the decisions are taken within the Presidency. (Sönmezoğlu, 2012)

Considering the interaction between domestic policy and foreign policy, there were times when Turkey's policy towards al-Quds was criticized by the opposition parties and the public opinion within the scope of its relations with Palestine and Israel. The internal dominants are related to the domestic facts which influence the foreign policy-making process. (Sönmezoğlu, 2012)

Additionally, Sönmezoğlu analyzes foreign policy outputs within three points; foreign policy goals, foreign policy strategies and foreign policy tools. He categorizes foreign policy goals as; *to preserve existence, security and prestige, long-term ideological and geopolitical purposes* and the *imperialist/expansionist* goals. In this regard, it is possible to say that the goal of Turkey's foreign policy towards al-Quds could be considered as a long-term ideological and geopolitical one. Turkey is willing for peace in the region and this is the geopolitical aspect of its foreign policy goals. Additionally, the ideological background of AK Party is considered as Neo-Ottomanism which requires Turkey to adopt the lands which once belonged to the Ottoman Empire and to do something about them. This could be accepted as the ideological aspect of its foreign policy goals. On the other hand, Sönmezoğlu categorizes the foreign policy strategies of states as; *Neutrality, Isolation, Non-allegiance and Alliance*. While taking a closer look to Turkey's foreign policy towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, it is possible to say that Turkey adopted *Alliance* strategy since it argues this is the only way for a two-state solution. He also mentions about foreign policy tools of the states and categorizes them into four groups. Political tools; *diplomacy* and *propaganda*, Economic tools; which include trade preventions such as *Boycott, Embargo* and *Blockade*, the financial preventions and the Military tools which are related with arms and wars. Lastly, *Intervention* is accepted as a mixed tool. In this regard Turkey uses two of the above mentioned foreign policy tools efficiently. These are diplomacy as a political tool and foreign aid as an economic tool. (Sönmezoğlu, 2012)

Ayşegül Sever takes “multilateralism” as the parameter for analyzing the bilateral relations. She argues that, the US policy towards Iraq in 2002 was defined as “unilateral” and the international actors were classified as “unilateral” and “multilateral”

regarding their response towards the US policy in Iraq. As a result, Turkey adopted multilateral policy while Israel adopted unilateral policy. She emphasizes the mutual characteristics of both states. Both states see themselves close to the West but the way they establish relations with the West is different. Turkey preferred improving bilateral relations with the Western states and becoming a member of the Western organizations while Israel preferred improving relations with US. As a crucial fact pointed out by Sever, when Turkey had trust issues with UN it improved its relations with the non-Western organizations. However, Israel in case of same kind of a situation preferred improvement of bilateral relations. As for the relations with NATO, she argues that Israel has concerns about the possibility of NATO's entrance to the Arab-Israeli conflict. She argues that Israel's traditional characteristic is to lean on its own power, this helps Israel's deterrent reputation and in case of its entrance to NATO this reputation could be damaged. However, especially in 1990s and 2000s Israel improved relations with NATO and this had a positive impact on Turkish-Israeli military relations. (Sever, 2019)

Sönmezoğlu mentions about continuity and change for the goals and governance, strategies and tools for a state's foreign policy. He argues that continuity is much more seen in foreign policy than the domestic policy. Geopolitical location, historical background and national characteristics are some of the continuous facts of a state's foreign policy. He takes this as a reference/tool for understanding/defining Turkey's identity. Policy makers and the regional conditions represent continuity. He argues that the ground of Turkish foreign policy had changed within years since its establishment. The domestic politics, political system, and the socio-economic structure have changed as well. Considering the affect/reflection of these facts to foreign policy Sönmezoğlu, addresses these as the source of change in foreign policy. As for the main continuous fact in Turkish foreign policy he addresses loyalty to Lausanne status quo. He explains this as "saving the old Ottoman territories" which most of the Turks are located in. Irredentist politics were abounded. Therefore, he argues that loyalty to Lausanne status quo means loyalty to the frame which was established by the Last Ottoman nationalists. The reason why Turkey adopted this as a determinant fact of foreign policy is because by Lausanne Turkey's territory become closest to the goals of Misak-ı Milli. The result was obtained by diplomacy and international law. He argues that these lines of Turkish

foreign policy make it to be defined as far from adventure and passive at times. At this point, it is important to note that preserving of this fact is related to the efficiency of impact tools of influence. The amount of influence of the actors who would like to change this fact of status quo of Turkey is important. At this point Sönmezoğlu mentions about two options to implement; the first one is to establish co-operations against the competitor, the second one is to take into account some of the opponent's little demands. (Sönmezoğlu, 2012)

During the first years of its establishment, the new republic followed the first option. In between two world wars Turkey implemented both at different and at the same times. The first revision towards this classical diplomacy and (status quo) was made by Özal's neo-Ottomanist perception in the early 1990s. Turkey followed the same policy within a different strategy in post-World War 2 era by its participation in NATO. Another important fact of the new republic was *Westernization*. The reflection of it in foreign policy is related to Turkey's perception of co-operation with the Western states. Turkey does not seek for any other co-operations as long as it has co-operations with the West (on condition that there is stability in the West). The main fact is the co-operation with the West. Another continues fact is Turkey's *security concern* related to Turkey's geopolitical location. Its neighbors and their characteristics are the main determinants of these security concerns. (Sönmezoğlu, 2012, s. 346)

Despite these continues facts there are also changes in Turkish foreign policy. Sönmezoğlu argues that the external facts have an influence in these changes. Considering Turkey's foreign policy goal of "minimum conflict, maximum stability" he also argues that change is a requirement in this case. He emphasizes the interaction between the changes in Turkish foreign policy and the development and changes in international system. He points out five periods of change in Turkish foreign policy as; 1923-1945, 1945-1965, 1965-1980, 1980-1991, 1991-2003 which are shaped within the changes in international system during the 20th century. However, different than the above mentioned periods the changes after 2003 were shaped around the changes in domestic politics. (Sönmezoğlu, 2012)

Sönmezoğlu argues that by the AK Party rule, Turkish foreign policy went far from the traditional frames, especially within its policy towards the Middle East. In

traditional Turkish foreign policy, Turkey tried to keep its balance policy towards the Arab-Israeli conflict although one of the sides was supported in different cases and times. However, the AK Party regime adopted an anti-Israeli approach. Additionally, the traditional policy required not to involve in the conflicts among the Arab states. These changes explained by Sönmezoğlu as a result of Israel's distancing from reconciliation besides Turkey's change of behavior. Secondly, he argues that there is a crucial change which has two dimensions; firstly, he emphasizes that in traditional foreign policy Turkey used to stay neutral towards the conflicts among the Arabs and in case if it is necessary to choose a side, it would take place beside the Arab side which are closer to the West. However, this was changed during the AK Party rule and it was one of the obvious examples for Turkey's new foreign policy identity of non-Westernization. Another positive change/development according to Sönmezoğlu is a general one, as an outcome of Turkey's diplomacy, Turkey was granted by non-permanent membership in the UN Security Council membership. He argues that this was related to the policy-makers and their different perception. (Sönmezoğlu, 2012)

Turkey's interest in al-Quds can be explained in three main dimensions; the historical heritage, the spiritual bond, the on-going conditions of injustice. The historical dimension is the almost 400 years of Ottoman rule in the land. The spiritual link can be explained by the fact that although the Republic of Turkey is a secular state, the majority of its population is Muslims and in the Islamic faith al-Quds is sacred from various aspects. As for the injustice situation, it is possible to say that Turkey is sensitive regarding the Israeli policies and restrictions towards the Palestinian population. Especially following the current developments, Turkey was the leading country for the movements against illegal actions towards al-Quds such as the US decision of moving the US embassy from Tel-Aviv to al-Quds while the land was considered as under occupation in international law. Mainly, considering Turkey's perception, al-Quds is different from the other countries located in the Middle East region in these three bases.

Serhat Erkmen points out that there is an ongoing peace process in the region under the name of "Middle East Peace Process" which focuses on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the issues of recognition and identity. He emphasizes that, although the

sides of the conflict seem as Palestine and Israel; the Arab states, the US and the European states also became a part of the resolution process. However, the process is not functioning well. (Erkmen, 2019. Retrieved June 03, 2020)

NATO does not play an efficient and strategic role in the Middle East nowadays. In this regard, it does not have a negative impact in the Israeli perception. Another reason for this is the fact of US' role in NATO. Although NATO accepts the fact that the conflict must be resolved, it does not involve in the resolution process unless there is a demand from the sides of the conflict. Ayşegül Sever argues that, 9/11 incident made things easier for Israel in sense of legitimating its actions towards the Palestinians under the concept of "fighting with terrorism" and "preserving its national security". As for the main characteristics of Israel's foreign policy, Sever mentions about "isolation". She argues that, as a result of its isolation policy Israel denied becoming a part of multilateral co-operations. (Sever, 2019)

On the other hand, Turkey had been focusing on multilateral co-operations. As an example of it, she mentions about the EU-Turkey cooperation and argues that it was more than an integration process since it even shaped Turkey's domestic and foreign policy. This is accepted as an evidence of the fact that Turkey would like to become a part of multilateral co-operations. In contrast, Israel avoided political and strategic cooperation with the EU since it had a perception that the EU is implementing an Arab-sided policy conflict and it caused trust issues in this case. The fact that there is sympathy towards the Palestinians among the Europeans and they provide foreign aid for them supported this argument of the Israelis. Sever points out a significant point that, according to a research 60% of the Europeans see Israel as a threat to world peace and supports the Palestinians while according to another research 74% of the Israelis think that the EU supports the Palestinians in this conflict. Aryan analyses EU-Israeli relations as "lacking in case of political and strategic dimensions while on the other hand successful in commercial, technological and scientific dimensions. Although Turkey's negotiations with the EU are not the first priority in Turkish foreign policy nowadays, EU and Turkey implement very similar policies towards the conflict. However, Turkey's Palestinian sympathy both among the public opinion and the AK Party government was more determinant in its policy-making process towards al-Quds

and Palestine. Sever points out that, Turkey's positive perception towards multilateral co-operations have an impact on its policies towards the Middle East. "Following the post-Cold War era Turkey strengthened its relations with international organizations and became a part of various multilateral co-operations." Turkey seemed these co-operations as a fact which would contribute to establishment of peace in the region. She argues that this is an indication of Turkey's faith for the possibility of elimination of threats by multilateral co-operations and Turkey's multidimensional policy also requires that. Turkey improved its relations with the Arab League in 2000s. As a result, the Turkish-Arab Cooperation Forum was established in 2007. Additionally, a "strategic dialogue mechanism" was established in 2008 with the Gulf States. Turkey also established close relations with the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC). Turkey also played mediator role in the relations between OIC and the other organizations such as NATO. She emphasizes that during 1990s there were intensive co-operations between Turkey and Israel. (Sever, 2019)

However, by the 2002 elections and the beginning of the AK Party rule and the ending of the peace process the dimension of the relations changed. Turkey adopted a multi-dimensional and multilateral foreign policy concept while Israel adopted isolation policy, unilateralism and bilateral relations. Sever points out a very crucial point and argues that Turkey abandoned adopting power as the most important figure in foreign policy and preferred shaping its foreign policy within co-operations rather than a power-centered and military defense focused one. On the other hand, Israel's main focus for foreign policy was security and defense concerns. At this point Sever argues that this makes it harder for Turkey to improve relations with Israel. Additionally, these changes affect their regional policies and relations with the international organizations. She also argues that, this causes synchronization issues between Turkey's policy towards the region and Israel. She argues that, multilateralism is required for providing regional peace and conflict resolution since none of the states are as strong as establishing peace on their own. Turkey is dissatisfied with the ongoing conflict and chaos environment in the region. Therefore, generously makes effort for providing peace in the region. However, Israel's security concerns and perception of threats continue and this causes differences between the foreign policy of Turkey and Israel towards the region. She also emphasizes that the Turkish public opinion supports a two-state solution. A peaceful

environment would help improve the relations between Turkey and Israel as well. (Sever, 2019)

Finally, peace in the Middle East cannot be established unless there is a successful resolution for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. However, there are several facts which make it difficult. One of the most important facts in this regard, is Israel's security concerns and threat perceptions.

5.4 Interpretation of the Current Turkish Foreign Policy Towards Al-Quds: The External Facts, Limitations and the Outcomes

5.4.1 The External Facts: Triangle Alliances and Multilateral Relations

While investigating Turkey's al-Quds policy it is another point to be discussed is the external facts. In this regard, the researcher would like to highlight the triangle alliances and relations and their impacts. Israel has a powerful strategic partner which is the US. As a result, Turkey's policy towards al-Quds influences its relations not only with Israel but also with the US. This is how the Turkey-US relations are affected indirectly. In this regard, one of the most effective triangle relations is US, Israel and Turkey. Especially within the last few years, Turkey and the US implement contrasting policies towards al-Quds. The most important example of it was the US decision of recognizing al-Quds as the capital of Israel. Another example is Turkey's need for the Jewish lobby in the US. In this regard, it is possible to say that the close ties between US and Israel is an external fact which influences Turkish foreign policy as well.

Secondly, the triangle between Turkey, the Arabs and Israel is another external fact. Although it seems as Turkey is making a strategic mistake by standing with the Arab side, it continues the economic cooperation and diplomatic relations with Israel. At this point it is beneficial to remind the argument of Sariaslan which is the fact that the economic relations between Turkey and Israel remain the same despite the political tensions. (Sariaslan, 2019) Eventually, this means Turkey's support for the Arabs does not cause unaffordable outcomes for Turkey and it is not contrasting Turkey's national interests. In this regard, a remarkable point is Turkey's position of mediatory in the Relations between Arabs and Israel.

As for another external fact Oran emphasizes that besides the Palestinian issue, in 2000's Turkey had concerns about the conflict between Syria and Israel. As for preventing a possible war in the region, Turkey tried for improvement of the relations between the two states in 2004. Also in 2007, and it ended up in 2008. While there were disagreements between the two states in the regional policies, close ties between Israel and Cyprus were established especially after the Mavi Marmara incident. On the other hand, in 2005, by the rapprochement of the relations between Turkey and Israel the relations with the Jewish lobby were also improved. (Yeşilyurt, 2017, p. 419)

Additionally, there is a triangle alliance which is not in favor of Turkey. Although there is no formal military treaty between the three states, Zenonas Tziarras argues that there is a visible cooperation between Israel, Cyprus (RoC) and Greece since 2011 for the discovery of hydrocarbons in Exclusive Economic Zone. The common motivations for all three countries were; Turkey and the energy factor! They all have been seeing Turkey as a security threat, the other reason related to energy is not as strong as the first reason. Since the cooperation is flexible/comfortable and informal; any development between any of these countries and Turkey; it will not affect this quasi-alliance much. He explains; a quasi-alliance, just like a formal alliance aims either on winning or deterring a common enemy, or a common threat. According to Tziarras, the reason why there is no military alliance is listed as; 1) They do not wish to upset Turkey, 2) They do not wish to reduce any possibility for an rapprochement between any of the states and Turkey, 3) The “geopolitical triangle” depends on pre-existence of outstanding bilateral issues with Turkey, 4) Turkish military existence in Northern Cyprus since 1974 is not only an external threat for RoC but it is also a domestic one, 5) Turkey and Greece share the Aegean Maritime zones, airspace, 6) The positive relations between Turkey and Israel (2002-2010). However, in May 2010 Turkey downgraded the diplomatic relations with Israel and even after the Israeli apology there was not a constructive diplomacy between Turkey and Israel. He explains it as mutual distrust between the two states. The period between 2011 and 2015; the efforts to discover hydrocarbon in caused an angry reaction of Turkey. Tziarras argues that in contrast, there were “illegal” agreements between TPC, Turkey, and Turkish/Cypriot administration. After loss of Turkey's alliance Israel started to look for new partners in the region. “An alliance would help Israel to counter-balance the regional power and

threat both Turkey and the Arabs. Motivation of Israel like Cyprus and Greece was; power/profit and threat-related. As a result, developments in the energy sector caused energy-related insecurities. The cooperation between Israel, Cyprus and Greece provides defense capability in this regard. (Tziarras, 2016)

5.4.2 The Limitations of Turkish Foreign Policy Towards Al-Quds

There are several limitations for Turkey's al-Quds policies. These limitations could be investigated within several dimensions. At this point the researcher aims to determine the limitations within considering; the Turkish-Israeli relations, Turkish-Palestinian relations, the external and internal determinants.

As an example for the limitations, firstly Turkey's NATO membership is mentioned by several authors. (e.g., Oran, 2012; Alsaftawi, 2016) Alsaftawi mentions about the limits of Turkey in this issue. The most notable limitation is the fact that Turkey is a NATO member. However, Turkey was prepared and it was aware of its limits in this regard. Therefore, it shaped its foreign policy and its support for Palestine in a careful way. Although it supported the Palestinians' rights, on the other hand it did not cut off the bilateral relations with Israel, and this behavior was seen as Turkey's encouragements/attempts for two-state solution. (Alsaftawi M. , 2016)

Mustafa Bıyıklı addresses the two dimensions of the limitations of Turkish foreign policy towards Middle East as; the regional domestic facts which are Turkey's strategic location and Middle East's geostrategic location. Secondly, as for the external facts he addresses other actor's policies towards the Middle East. Taking this as a reference, the researcher will specialize this from the regional (Middle East) to local (al-Quds) as from Middle East to al-Quds. Since the geostrategic position of Turkey, Israel, Palestine and al-Quds were mentioned in the previous chapters, it will not be repeated in this chapter. However, the researcher will shortly go over the subject to make some additions. Turkey's geostrategic position causes advantages and disadvantages in different situations. As for the conflict between Arabs and Israelis, Turkey needs to consider its national and regional interests for implementing policies. From a national/realistic point of view, Turkey strategically needs to have good relations with Israel since the two states share mutual characteristics (state characteristics) and they need each other's alliance in case of a possible conflict or war in the region. On the

other hand, Turkey also needs to remain its good relations with Palestine since it is a “state tradition for Turkey to establish good relations with the territories which belonged to the Ottoman Empire in history. Additionally, Turkey needs Palestine for its reputation in the region as a “regional leader”. Eventually, the “state of conflict” causes concerns of a possible war which will cause regional chaos and instability. This is something Turkey would not will/wish in the Middle East. These contrasting interests create a rough situation and environment for Turkey which can be determined as limitations. At this point, the traditional balancing policy of Turkey takes place. (Bıyıklı, 2019)

On the other hand, there are external determinants which are the foreign influences in the region which would be considered as another limitation for Turkey’s policy towards al-Quds. In this regard the US-Israel alignment is an example for it. Although Turkey seems not to be affected by the US policies towards al-Quds and stands against it, there are sanctions and threats as an impact of Turkey’s opposition against US influence. The impacts could be considered as direct and indirect ones. As an example for the indirect impact of it, the sanctions and the international movement “led by US” could be given. Qatar is one of the important allies of Turkey in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. The examples could be expanded. (Bıyıklı, 2019)

From another perception Ertem argues that US, UN, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and UAE make Turkey face difficulties while it is implementing policies towards al-Quds and Palestine. She argues that by the developments in the past 9/11 and with the Arab uprisings, the achievement of the two-state solution did not seem possible. She emphasizes Turkey’s support for the two-state solution. Additional to this, the UN situation is criticized by Ertem and she claims that the UN prevents any actions against Israel. She also emphasizes that the Turkish support for the Palestinians cause tensions with US and Israel. As for the Trump government, Ertem argues that the government sharply supports Israel. She crucially argues that the situation requires Turkey to remain its traditional balance policy which requires remaining in dialogue with the states. She points out that Turkey did not cut off its economic relations with Israel following the Mavi Marmara incident cutting off the relations would destroy Turkey’s support for the Palestinians. This addresses the question of why Turkey continues economic

cooperation with Israel while it supports the Palestinians in the conflict. (Ertem, 2019, s. 189) Israel's sanctions and policies towards the Palestinians could also be considered as another limitation against Turkey's influence in the area.

5.4.3 The Outcomes of Turkish Foreign Policy Towards Al-Quds

While making foreign policy analysis, it is important to note that policies implemented by states can bring positive or negative impacts. These will be discussed as the outcomes of Turkey's current al-Quds policy. Besides the outcomes, there are also the limitations which from a more realistic perspective reveal that there are binding and limiting/deterring factors in the foreign policy-making process. At this point it is also crucial to address the internal and external dominants playing role as a determinant for the foreign policy-making process of the state. These factors mentioned here in general will be used for pointing out the important facts which will provide an understanding for the current Turkey's current foreign policy towards al-Quds. A point to be noted is the fact that the classification of the factors is made by the researcher and they might be expanded. The purpose of this title is to bring some of the main determinants together under the same headline. As it is known, foreign policy is a result of a process. Additional to this, the implemented policies have positive or negative consequences. These consequences may have further impacts such as change state policies or change in structure of diplomatic relations with other states. In this regard, the researcher argues it is important to discuss the consequences and the outcomes of Turkey's al-Quds policy. Al-Quds is a sensitive and a unique land which is a conflict area. Since there are two states claiming rights over it, if a policy supporting one side is implemented then the relations with the other party may be strained. This, once again reveals the importance of the foreign policy decision process and the decision makers. Another point to be noted is the fact that the limitations and the outcomes are closely related to the internal and external determinants of foreign policy.

From a general point of view, Özşahin argues that Turkey's mediatory position in Israeli-Palestinian conflict is one of the outcomes of its concept of *regional peace policy*. (Özşahin, 2018)

As for one of the outcomes of its al-Quds policies, the AK Party Government is criticized by the domestic and international actors as for the fact that AK Party caused

an axis shift. As it was mentioned above, the AK Party Government's main target was to become a leader in the Middle East. In this regard, it needed the Arab support. One of the most visible changes in Turkish foreign policy during this era is the fact that Turkey left its West-centered policy and started to implement a Muslim-sided policy. This was sharply criticized within domestic policy actors. They criticized the AK Party regime for opposing the secular identity of the state. They also claimed that Turkey is opposing purpose of establishment of the Republic of Turkey. On the other hand, the international actors criticized Turkey for axis shifts especially, following "One Minute" and "Mavi Marmara" crises. However, Gntay argues that Turkey did not cut off relations with the West. The co-operations between the two sides continue. Although, there are axis shifts in foreign policy bases and differences, there are no changes in the main axis. The main point to be noted is the fact that Turkey abandoned the policy of solving its security problems leaning on the West and the US. The Mavi Marmara crisis is an example for that. He also argues that the balance policy is no longer available for Turkey in the region considering its relations with the East and the West. This could be accepted as an outcome of the regional developments. He points out that the periodic developments in the region will play determinant role in Turkey's policy and the facts mentioned above do not guarantee that Turkey will become a regional leader, despite the policies it had been implementing increase its reputation in the region. At this point, he argues that the decision of two axes; "switch" and "status quo" depends not only on the policy makers but also on the structure of domestic policy. And he also emphasizes that it would not be accurate for Turkey to stick to an axis while the international environment has a dynamic characteristic. He also emphasizes the fact that the deterioration in US-Turkey relation was an outcome of the Mavi Marmara crisis and US support for Israel. (Gntay, 2016)

On the other hand, Alsaftawi asks the question of "who wins, who loses?" and evaluates the situation from three perspectives. From the Turkish point of view; there has been a chaos in the region and Israel was one of the very few states which were stable. While on the other hand, Turkey was struggling from several issues. Therefore, both countries wanted to repair the relations. Alsaftawi made a citation from Altunışık as; "Turkish-Israeli relations have always based on interests. Turkey had an objective of becoming a regional power. However, the problems it was facing were preventing

Turkey to reach its top objective. In this regard, Turkey urgently needed to establish cooperation with Israel.” From the Israeli perspective; Turkey and Israel had common enemies and this would lay the ground for cooperation. Additionally, one of Israel’s top objectives was to establish full diplomatic relations with a Muslim country, Turkey would fit this definition. From the Palestinian perspective; the Turkish-Israeli cooperation was a disappointment both for Hamas and PA. However, the AK Party government tried to maintain the relations with Palestine. As a conclusion, the Turkish government in 2016 reshaped the bilateral relations both with Palestine and Israel. It established close links with Israel, while on the other hand it reshaped the structure of its relations with Palestine and Hamas. (Alsaftawi M. , 2016)

As for one of the positive outcomes, Benhaim emphasizes that there was a significant transformation in Turkish foreign policy in 2000’s. Benhaim and Öktem argue that Turkey’s realistic and Western orientalist featured policy was turned into an active policy which supported active engagement with the world. At the later stage, from “zero problems policy with neighbors” and “strategic depth doctrine”, to a more opposing Israel policy was implemented by Turkey. This increased Erdoğan’s reputation in the Arab world. They argue that Turkey’s “soft power” discourse promoted it as a dynamic player in regional politics. The “soft power” discourse was also a way of increasing its autonomy against the other powerful actors in international arena such as US. This helps Turkey to stand against in front of US and Israel independently. (Benhaim & Öktem, 2015, p. 12) As for another positive outcome, Oran points out the improvements in different times for the relations between Turkey and the Jewish lobby. As an example, in 2005, the Jewish lobby introduced courage prize to Erdoğan for the fact that Selahattin Ülkümen who saved Jews during World War II. He addresses this as an outcome of Turkey’s good relations with Israel which could be considered as a part of Turkey’s al-Quds policy. (Oran, 2017, p. 446)

As a conclusion, considering the developments in current Turkish foreign policy and the differences between the current and previous policies, the first point highlighted in most of the sources is the fact that during the AK Party era, Turkey plays a more active role in the region. As a result, it is more active in the al-Quds issue as well. Secondly, especially in 2010s Turkey’s one of the stable dominants of its policies;

perception of Westernism started to change. Additional to this, in 2017 changes in the foreign policy-making process occurred and the main foreign policy maker became the President. On the other hand, the active policies of Turkey in the al-Quds case and its stance against US' and Israel's al-Quds policies brings consequences. One of the best example for this, is the sanctions implemented towards Qatar; one of Turkey's closest ally in the al-Quds case. Besides this, it is important to note that Turkey has limitations regarding its policies towards al-Quds.



CONCLUSION

Al-Quds is a unique land and it is commonly called as a land of conflict. Since there are two sides claiming rights over it, the other regional and international actors should deeply acknowledge and analyze the situation and produce their policies considering the claims of both sides. It is worrying how the same land has two contradictory characters; “*the conflict land*” and “*the holy land*”.

Firstly, considering the “sacred” identity of al-Quds, it is beneficial to mention about several facts. Before discussing its identity of “*the land of conflict*” it is beneficial to mention about the fact that, there were times in history when al-Quds was known as *land of peace*. Considering the historical heritage, it is possible to say that, although Al-Quds is accepted as a holy land for the three Monotheistic religions, the way they celebrate the sanctity of this land is different. As discussed in Chapter Three, according to the Jewish faith, if something is sacred and holy, its sanctity is celebrated by “separation principle”. In this regard, in the Jewish belief there is a separation between Jews and non-Jewish communities. In particular, for the case of Al-Quds, Jews seen it as a holy land only for themselves. Therefore, it is possible to say that the Jewish perception for Al-Quds is an exclusive one. Similarly, the Christian perception for Al-Quds is an exclusive one as well, as it was proven in history. During the Byzantine ruling period, Jews were not allowed to enter the holy land. Similarly, during the Crusaders ruling, both Jews and Muslims were not allowed to enter the land and they were even slaughtered. On the other hand, the Muslim vision for Al-Quds was different than the above mentioned ones. Muslims adopted an inclusive vision which was different from the Jewish and Christian perception. According to the Muslim faith, other religious communities could also benefit from the holy land as well, therefore, Jews and Christians were not expelled.

As another point which was discussed in Chapter Three, there are several examples in history regarding the inclusive vision of the Muslims. Firstly, peace in the region was established during the Umar ibn Al-Khattab ruling in Al-Quds. The model implemented by Umar had an inclusive vision. Secondly, the same vision was adopted

and implemented by Salah ad-Din. Another example for the inclusive vision and peace in the region is the Ottoman rule in al-Quds. Although, there were uprising at times, as one of the traditional characteristics of the Ottoman policy there was a multicultural society, multi-ethnic and multi-religious society living together in al-Quds.

On the other hand, considering the current situation in the area, sacred and historical background of the land and the geostrategic and geopolitical characteristics of it require a sensitive approach. In this regard, Turkey's implemented policies towards this land from the Ottoman era until now, is an evident of its sensitive approach through the land. However, Turkey's recognition of Israel as a state and its following co-operations with Israel was sharply criticized in the Arab world. In this case, it is beneficial to point out that in International Politics "emotions" cannot be a determinant fact. In scientific approach, the first step for producing resolution is to acknowledge and recognition of the issue. In this regard, it is possible to say that, both in general and in the case of al-Quds, Turkey uses *diplomacy* as an efficient tool of its foreign policy. At this point, to intervene in the developments Turkey was supposed to recognize the state of Israel. In case, if Turkey did not recognize Israel, it would not be able to take part in the negotiations as a mediator and would not be able to contribute to the peace process. On the other hand, Turkey and Israel had similar security concerns which brought them together for co-operations. It is possible to say that the co-operations served national interest of both states.

As for the differences between the current and the previous Turkish foreign policy towards al-Quds, besides the structural changes and developments during the AK Party rule, there were also practical changes. One of the most radical changes in Turkish foreign policy is the "non-Westernization" and its abundance of West-centered policies. This general change in Turkish foreign policy affected its foreign policy towards al-Quds. Additionally, this is one of the main differences between the previous and current policies implemented by Turkey towards al-Quds. Another radical change occurred in 2017 by the structural revision of foreign policy-making process. These changes are closely related to the *individual level* of foreign policy analysis. Considering the latest development, President is the foreign policy decision maker in Turkey. However, at this

point it is crucial to mention that President Erdoğan himself had influence in the process during the Davutoğlu and Yıldırım period.

Another crucial development to be noted is Turkey's adoption of *soft power* as one of its main determinants of foreign policy. Subsequently, this had positive impacts and it increased the amount of efficiency of Turkish foreign policy. It contributed Turkey's foreign policy goal of becoming a regional leader. The examples of Turkish NGOs around the world and its foreign policy aid, cultural commercials presented by these NGOs are some of the contributions of the concept of *soft power*.

There is a consensus among the authors that, Turkey's leading position for resolution in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict contributed to Turkey's establishment of a good reputation among the Arab and Muslim world. In this case, there were several significant developments which are a sign of the new identity of Turkish foreign policy. Firstly, Turkey's stance against Israel throughout its "violent actions" towards the Palestinians and secondly Turkey's stance against the US decision of moving its embassy from Tel-Aviv.

On the other hand, as a reflection of *Realpolitik*, despite all the tensions and disagreements in their policies, the economic relations between Turkey and Israel were not affected. The problems stayed within political level.

As it was discussed in Chapter Five, there is an on-going peace process in the region and Turkey's contribution to the peace process and its mediatory position continues during the AK Party regime and the Palestinian- Israeli conflict is still one of the top priorities of Turkish foreign policy.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Important quotations from Haim Yacobi's article of Borders, Boundaries and Frontiers:

Notes on Jerusalem's Present Geopolitics are given below

1.1 "... is a common belief among Israelis, who see a "united al-Quds" as a fixed urban space, a given subject of Israeli sovereignty and ethno-national aspirations. However, the city of al-Quds is manufactured by geopolitical practices including not just military occupation but also planning policy, demographic engineering and the production of imagined geographies. Yet, often these fields of studies are analyzed separately, overlooking the relevance of urban planning to the growing literature on geopolitics. Moreover, the critical discussion of geopolitics and ethnic conflicts tends to focus on states' borders and national territory while ignoring the relevance of analyzing the urban realm. Following this, in this paper I attempt to discuss planning in al-Quds, within the growing literature on geopolitics."

1.2 "In fact, it is possible to say that the wall not only sets the borders of sovereignty and annexation of the settlements inside and around al-Quds to form the metropolitan Jewish al-Quds but also sets obstacles to any possibility for the evolution of the integrated urban unity of a Palestinian al-Quds in the center of the West Bank that is capable of serving as the capital of a future Palestinian state. The geopolitical and geo-demographic reality imposed by Israel through construction of the wall imposes a new reality on the future of al-Quds through which al-Quds is being redefined. The conventional division of West al-Quds (the one occupied by Israel in 1948) and East al-Quds (the part occupied by Israel in 1967) no longer exists in reality." ... "...although the implementation of power over territory and society has changed throughout the years, the colonial logic has maintained its hegemony, thus creating new apparatuses of control through legislation, planning and design. Such technologies are usually associated with terminologies that indicate "progress," yet, as I noted, these concepts

have been manipulated in order to achieve ethno-national spatial and demographic control in the city. As this paper shows, geopolitical concepts are highly relevant for understanding urban planning and vice versa. Specifically, I pointed to the ways in which borders boundaries and frontier sites are produced internally and externally. In more detail, colonial practices articulate empirical manifestations of ethno-national logic that refer to the nexus of state power and territorial control, mainly in “alien” areas within or outside the boundaries of the state, into which the dominant nation attempts to increase its monopoly control due to high concentrations of “enemy” people. This process is subject to struggles over the control of land, power and resources – such “alien” areas are known as frontier regions. In this sense, frontiers are “spread” into the whole of the dominant nation and become symbols of the sovereignty of the state, emphasizing the moral right of the dominant nation to possess the territory.”

Appendix 2

Important quotations from Hugh Macdonald's article of Geopolitics and Middle East Conflict are given below

2.1 "It is crucial to note that none of these three societies is fully 'Arab', and that in the case of Iran there is intense religious rivalry. Iran and Iraq have large debt burdens due to war, though Iraq's position is clearly worse. Turkey has borrowed heavily to fund industrialization. There is no accurate published data on the aggregate overseas investments of the region's regimes, but these far outweigh its debt burden, making the region an exporter of vast amounts of capital. The social geography of this interface between states and societies underpins all differences, ranging from the highly conservative traditionalism of Saudi Arabia, to the pulsating expectancy of Palestine. In all cases we find a gradual 'pluralization' of societies and economies, which is exercising pressures for change and response on governing regimes. Many of these forces of change come from long-term structural changes in economies and demographic patterns, or from Globalization and other trans-national influences. Thus, when the focus is shifted to 'domestic' or internal features of state and society, the picture of two variants of authoritarianism on the Arab and Islamic side, with Israel and one or two partially democratized Middle East states on the other, gives way to a more variegated picture. This is also true if one examines Cyprus, or if one extends the analysis of Arab and Islamic states from the Mashraq to the Maghreb. But these extensions are beyond the geopolitical focus of this paper."

2.2 "For Judaism, Temple Mount is the summation of everything God covenanted with his chosen people. The remains of the Western wall of the Second Temple are a site of the utmost reverence, the tangible location in prayer of the scriptural tradition. The Jewish cemetery beyond the eastern wall of the Old City also speaks uniquely to the Jewish people: to 'spin in your grave' means that your soul is seeking this place. For most if not all of the ultra-Orthodox communities that live here, political Zionism is a deplorable though conceivably necessary means to the recovery of Eretz Israel, the Promised Land. It is unthinkable that the State of Israel, which accords Rabbinic

authority to the Orthodox, should rescind its 1980 Annexation of al-Quds. There can be no meaningful division of the City, or sharing of sovereignty.”

2.3 “For Christians the Old City of al-Quds is the place where Jesus of Nazareth brought his followers to symbolically challenge Roman rule; and was betrayed, tried and executed, the divine victim of human fallibility. Most biblical references to the burial and resurrection of Jesus are also located in al-Quds. The Church of the Holy Sepulchre inside the Old City symbolizes Christian unity and typifies Christian disunity. Beneath its Dome, Russian, Greek, Syriac, Uniate and Coptic Christians, whose presence is in a sense unbroken through the millennia, vie with the smarter, more numerous, presence of the Vatican and other Catholic Orders. Other Christian denominations, Presbyterian, Lutheran, Church of England, cluster around the Old City, or outside its Ottoman walls in East al-Quds, or around the Church of St Andrew. Christian pilgrims come here in vast droves from the rich societies of the west. Pope John Paul II visited al-Quds in April 2000. This both codified a rapprochement between the Catholic church and Israel which has led to recognition and a half-apology for not denouncing the Holocaust, and endorsed the need for a Palestinian state, with particular favour towards the role of Christian Palestinians. The Pope has also proposed that al-Quds should have a new international status, neutralized under the auspices of the UN. In this pivotal city the geography that matters are existential, inside the head and the heart rather than on the ground. So, unlike Eilat, where clear boundaries are easily permeated, in al-Quds the boundaries that matter may be undetectable by empirical methods, but are razor sharp in the diametrically opposed views of the protagonists.”