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TURKEY IN THE CASPIAN SEA REGION

by

SEYMA AKKOYUNLU  
B.S. Istanbul University, 2005

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of the Masters of Arts  
in the Department of Political Science  
in the College of Sciences  
at the University of Central Florida  
Orlando, FL

Spring Term  
2008

Major Professor: Houman Sadri

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis will determine the influence of Turkey's domestic resources on Turkey's foreign relations with the five Turkic states in the Caspian Sea Region. The spheres analyzed in this study are the common ties, which are history, culture, religion and language, with the regional countries, pan-Turkism, Turkey's initial interactions as well as ongoing constructive policies in the region. Findings showed that both Turkey and the five Turkic republics were enthusiastic to carry their relations in every field to future cooperation following the break up of the Soviet Union. However the Turkic Republics' interest in Turkish development model gradually declined starting from the 1990s. The hypothesis that socio-cultural ties will ease establishing close foreign relations is applicable to all five republics. The Turkic states welcomed Turkey's educational and cultural policies with great willingness. In the field of business we find that Turkish economy follows a similar pattern in its relations with the Azerbaijani and Central Asian markets. Accordant policy goals of Turkey and the five republics led Turkey to establish close foreign relations with the regional countries. Turkey tried to give military aid to the Turkic republics of Central Asia in their struggle against terrorist groups which have the capacity to destabilize governments and to threaten international security. The hypothesis that the more Turkey has business interests in the Caspian Sea Region the more Turkey will have closer foreign relations with Turkic countries is mostly apparent in the case of Azerbaijan. In the area of energy politics Turkey has its strongest link with Azerbaijan. Besides being strong economic partners Turkey is Azerbaijan's biggest supporter in the region against Armenia.

To my uncle,

Akif Babali (1961-2006)

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

This thesis would not have been possible without the guidance of my advisor and committee chair, Dr. Houman Sadri under whose supervision I chose this topic and began the thesis. I also thank the members of my graduate committee, Dr. Trudi Morales and Dr. Barbara Kinsey for their suggestions. Lastly, and most importantly, I would like to thank my parents for their constant encouragement and support.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES .....	xi
LIST OF TABLES .....	xii
LIST OF ACRONYMS/ABBREVIATIONS .....	xiii
CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW AND LITERATURE REVIEW .....	1
1.1 Defining Concepts and Theory .....	1
1.2 Literature Review .....	6
CHAPTER 2: TURKEY’S HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL TIES WITH THE TURKIC COUNTRIES .....	16
2.1 Introduction.....	16
2.2 Turkic People of the World and Pan-Turkism.....	16
2.2.1 Turkic People of the World.....	16
2.2.2 Kemalist Ideology: Nationalism in the Turkish Republic .....	18
2.2.3 Pan-Turkism: The Union of all the Turks.....	21
2.2.4 Leading Ideologists of Pan-Turkism.....	22
2.2.4.1 Ismail Gaspirali.....	22
2.2.4.2 Yusuf Akcura .....	26
2.2.5 World War I and Pan-Turkism .....	27
2.2.6 World War II and After.....	31
2.2.7 Reactions on Pan-Turkism.....	33
2.3 Language.....	35
2.3.1 Dialectic Similarities between the Turkish Language and the Languages of Central Asian Countries.....	37

2.3.1.1 Azeris .....	37
2.3.1.2 Kazakhs.....	37
2.3.1.3 Uzbeks.....	38
2.3.1.4 Turkmens .....	39
2.3.1.5 Kirghizs.....	40
2.4 Islam as a Shared Identity between Turkey and the Turkic World .....	40
2.5 Conclusion .....	47
CHAPTER 3: ECONOMIC RELATIONS BETWEEN TURKEY AND THE REGIONAL COUNTRIES.....	49
3.1 Introduction.....	49
3.2 Basic Drawbacks and Motivations to Invest in the Caspian Sea Region .....	50
3.3 Bilateral Economic Relations between Turkey and the Regional Countries.....	54
3.3.1 Turkey-Azerbaijan .....	54
3.3.1.1 Turkey’s Oil Demand .....	54
3.3.1.2 The Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Pipeline Project .....	57
3.3.1.3 The South Caucasus Gas Pipeline Project .....	60
3.3.1.4 Trade with Azerbaijan.....	62
3.3.1.5 Eximbank Credits from Turkey .....	64
3.3.2 Turkey-Kazakhstan .....	66
3.3.2.1 Turkish Investment in Kazakhstan.....	66
3.3.2.2 Trade with Kazakhstan .....	69
3.3.2.3 Eximbank Credits.....	71
3.3.3 Turkey-Kyrgyzstan .....	72



3.3.3.1 Turkish Investment in Kyrgyzstan.....	72
3.3.3.2 Advantages and Disadvantages of Investing in Kyrgyzstan.....	75
3.3.3.3 Trade with Kyrgyzstan.....	78
3.3.3.4 Eximbank Credits.....	80
3.3.4 Turkey-Turkmenistan .....	80
3.3.4.1 Turkey’s Need for Natural Gas.....	80
3.3.4.2 Turkmen-Turkey-Europe Gas Pipeline.....	83
3.3.4.3 Trade with Turkmenistan.....	85
3.3.4.4 Problems that Businesspersons Face In Turkmenistan.....	87
3.3.4.5 Eximbank Credits.....	88
3.3.5 Turkey-Uzbekistan.....	89
3.3.5.1 Turkish Investment in Uzbekistan .....	89
3.3.5.2 Trade with Uzbekistan .....	92
3.3.5.3 Eximbank Credits.....	93
3.4 Conclusion .....	94
CHAPTER 4: POLITICAL RELATIONS BETWEEN TURKEY AND THE REGIONAL COUNTRIES.....	97
4.1 Political Relations between Turkey and Azerbaijan.....	98
4.1.1 Initial Interactions between Turkey and Azerbaijan.....	98
4.1.2 Turkey’s Reaction towards the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict .....	102
4.1.3 Turkey’s Energy Politics towards Azerbaijan .....	106
4.1.3.1 Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Pipeline Project .....	106
4.1.4 Turkey’s Constructive Policies in Azerbaijan .....	110

4.1.4.1 Turkey's Contributions to Azeri Education .....	110
4.1.4.2 Turkish Policy in Culture.....	115
4.1.4.3 Technical Cooperation between Turkey and Azerbaijan.....	117
4.1.4.4 Turkey's Contributions in Azerbaijani Transportation.....	118
4.2 Political Relations between Turkey and Kazakhstan.....	119
4.2.1 Initial Interactions between Turkey and Kazakhstan.....	119
4.2.2 Turkey's Constructive Policies in Kazakhstan .....	124
4.2.2.1 Economic Relations .....	124
4.2.2.2 Turkey's Contributions to Kazakh Education.....	126
4.2.2.3 Cultural Relations .....	128
4.2.2.4 Technical Cooperation between Turkey and Kazakhstan.....	130
4.3 Political Relations between Turkey and Kyrgyzstan.....	131
4.3.1 Initial Interactions of Turkey and Kyrgyzstan Following the Independence of Kyrgyzstan .....	131
4.3.2 Turkey's Constructive Policies in Kyrgyzstan .....	136
4.3.2.1 Turkey's Contributions to Kirghiz Military.....	136
4.3.2.2 Turkey's Contributions to Kirghiz Education.....	137
4.3.2.3 Cultural Relations .....	139
4.3.2.4 Technical Cooperation between Turkey and Kyrgyzstan.....	141
4.4 Political Relations between Turkey and Turkmenistan .....	142
4.4.1 Initial Interactions of Turkey and Turkmenistan Following the Independence of Turkmenistan .....	142
4.4.2 Turkey's Energy Politics towards Turkmenistan.....	145

4.4.2.1 The Blue Stream Project .....	145
4.4.2.2 Trans-Caspian Gas Pipeline Project.....	147
4.4.3 Turkey’s Constructive Policies in Turkmenistan.....	149
4.4.3.1 Economic Relations .....	149
4.4.3.2 Turkey’s Contributions to Turkmen Education .....	150
4.4.3.3 Technical Cooperation between Turkey and Turkmenistan .....	152
4.5 Political Relations between Turkey and Uzbekistan .....	153
4.5.1 Initial Interactions between Turkey and Uzbekistan.....	153
4.5.2 Turkey’s Constructive Policies in Uzbekistan.....	157
4.5.2.1 Turkey’s Contributions to Uzbek Military .....	157
4.5.2.2 Turkey’s Contributions to Uzbek Education .....	159
4.5.2.3 Cultural Relations .....	161
4.6 Conclusion .....	163
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION .....	166
5.1 Findings .....	166
5.2 Some Questions for Future Studies .....	186
REFERENCES .....	191

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Caspian Sea Region.....	4
Figure 2: Turkey's Oil Production and Consumption between 1986 and 2006 .....	56
Figure 3: The Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Pipeline.....	58
Figure 4: Trade Volume between Azerbaijan and Turkey between 1992 and 2005 .....	63
Figure 5: Trade Volume Between Kazakhstan and Turkey between 1992 and 2005.....	69
Figure 6: Trade Volume between Kyrgyzstan and Turkey between 1992 and 2004.....	78
Figure 7: Turkey's Natural Gas Consumption.....	82
Figure 8: Trade Volume between Turkmenistan and Turkey between 1992 and 2005....	85
Figure 9: Trade Volume between Turkey and Uzbekistan between 1992 and 2005 .....	92
Figure 10: The Blue Stream Project.....	145
Figure 11: Trans-Caspian Pipeline Project.....	148

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Eximbank Credits .....	65
Table 2: Number of Turkish Schools in the Region .....	113
Table 3: Number of Turkic Students in Turkey in 2001 .....	127

## **LIST OF ACRONYMS/ABBREVIATIONS**

AGSP (Azerbaijan Gas Supply Company)

ACC (Atlantic Cooperation Council)

AIOC (Azerbaijan International Operating Company)

BOTAS (Petroleum Pipeline Corporation)

BP (British Petroleum)

BTC (Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Project)

BTE (Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum Project)

CSCE (Conference on Security and Cooperation)

DEIK (Foreign Economic Relations Board)

GOGC (Georgian Oil and Gas Corporation)

KOSGEB (Small and Medium Sized Industry Development Agency)

NIS (Newly Independent States)

SCP (South Caucasus Pipeline)

TCGP (Transcaspian Gas Pipeline Project)

TICA (Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency)

TPAO (Turkish Petroleum Cooperation)

TPOC (Turkish Petroleum Overseas Company)

TUDEV (Turkic States and Communities Friendship, Brotherhood and  
Cooperation Foundation)

TUPRAS (Turkish Petroleum Refineries Cooperation)

## **CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW AND LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **1.1 Defining Concepts and Theory**

I built my theory around the idea that Turkey's domestic sources of foreign policy affect Turkey's foreign relations with the Turkic countries in the Caspian Sea Region. My independent variable is domestic sources of Turkey's foreign relations with the Turkic countries, which are Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan from Central Asia and Azerbaijan from the Caucasus and my dependent variable is Turkey's foreign relations with these countries. Domestic sources are divided into three categories, which are Turkey's historical, cultural and political relations with the Turkic states and Turkey's economic interests in the region. My question for this thesis paper is to see how Turkey's domestic sources of foreign relations affect Turkey's foreign relations with the regional countries.

Apparently the traditional separation of domestic politics and foreign politics may have sensible advantages but today, especially with increasing global communication and transportation networks, the study of political science does not isolate domestic politics from foreign politics. In other words, it is hard to draw a strict line between domestic and foreign politics in current international system which offers intense interactions between states. London (1956) gives a great example to explain this relation. He argues that "foreign and domestic politics resemble the positive and negative components of electric current; eliminate one and the other will not function, they produce power only when

combined.”<sup>1</sup> In accordance with the theory of this thesis paper London argues that “in any political system domestic issues have an important bearing on the management and substance of foreign policy.”<sup>2</sup> This study is directly based on London’s approach and seeks to find the influence of domestic sources of Turkish policy on Turkey’s foreign relations with the regional countries and the strength of this influence.

The theoretical framework of this study is strengthened by Rosenau’s linkage politics. Currently political life has changed with almost the virtual interaction of national and international politics. According to Rosenau’s linkage politics, “recurrent sequences of behavior that originate in one system are reacted to in another.”<sup>3</sup> Although Rosenau “acknowledges the importance of policy boundaries” he adds to it that “both national and international boundaries are becoming central to daily lives.”<sup>4</sup> The initial stage of a linkage is called input and the latter stage is called output. In this thesis paper, the inputs are Turkey’s historical and cultural ties and political relations with Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, Turkey’s business interests in the Caspian Sea Region and the output is the interaction between Turkey and these states. We may call this output as foreign relations as well. In view of Rosenau’s linkage politics, I suggest that patterns of Turkish character within the region will stir up boundary crossing responses and eventually will turn out to be Turkey’s constructive foreign policy in the region.

Linkages are commonly used concepts. One set of linkage that will be applied in this thesis paper is ideology. This linkage offers that “policy formation-implementation is



ideological”.<sup>5</sup> In this thesis paper the ideology, which was supposed to hold the Turkic states together, is pan-Turkism and the general boundary of this ideology is mainly Turkey and also the Central Asian countries. Turkey’s further sets of functionalities which influence the domestic policies of the regional countries and which are utilized in this study are Turkey’s diplomatic services, secular and political doctrines, exchange of goods and students.

Today’s international system as Rosenau argues “is linking polities ever more firmly”<sup>6</sup> than before. For example; different countries from the far East to the far West are involved in the post-Soviet region with their policies. Furthermore, these policies in pursuit of different goals, somehow, are interlinked. As this study is going to show the post-Soviet international system brings different policy options towards the Caspian region for different countries.

For Turkey, the break up of the Soviet Union means exercising political influence by offering Turkish political and economic system as a development model. For the Western countries, particularly the US, being a major actor in this newly emerging region is crucial to prevent the spread of Iranian fundamentalism. Turkey, in this context, as an ally of the US, could avoid the US’s such concerns by acting as a stabilizing factor in the region. From a Russian perspective, it is important for Russia not to lose Russian dominance in its “backyard” and to have control over the pipeline routes. China, on the other hand, wishes to realize its economic calculations on the pipeline routes to transport oil and gas to the country.



Source: Energy Information Administration

**Figure 1: Caspian Sea Region**

**Hypothesis:** Given the enthusiasm and mutual expectations of Turkey and the Turkic countries in terms of establishing close and cooperative political and economical relations with the break up of the Soviet Union I hypothesize that;

\_ The stronger the socio-cultural ties are between Turkey and the Turkic states the closer the foreign relations between Turkey and the Turkic countries are.

\_ The more Turkey has business interests in the Caspian Sea Region the more Turkey will have closer foreign relations with Turkic countries.

\_ The more Turkey has common policy goals with the Turkic states the more

Turkey has closer foreign relations with Turkic countries.

**Methodology:** This is a qualitative study and the spheres analyzed in this study are the common ties, which are history, culture, religion and language, pan-Turkism, which is the ideology of the union of all the Turks, Kemalist ideology, Turkey's energy politics and trade relations with the region, Turkey's initial interactions with the region and Turkey's ongoing constructive policies in the region. In addition to explaining the areas that are mentioned above I will talk about the contextual factors influencing these areas. I will try to analyze domestic contexts of the countries, particularly Turkey's domestic context in terms of social relations, political stance and economic needs.

**Data collection:** I will refer to news reports and Turkish economic institutions' annual reports. I will try to access information from the documents of the websites of the Turkish international organizations such as Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency (TICA) and I will make interviews with the officials from these organizations. I will also use journal articles and the existing literature on the history and culture of the Turks and the Newly Independent States (NIS) of Central Asia and the Caucasus as secondary sources.

**Limitations:** The amount of knowledge on the Turkic countries is limited. Especially there is lack of information on Turkey's bilateral political relations after 1994. Also the documentation and research of Turkey's involvement in the region in terms of Turkey's cultural and educational contributions to the Turkic states is scarce.

## 1.2 Literature Review

Historically the amount of studies on Central Asia, which is a peripheral region, has been relatively little when compared to studies on Europe or the US. Despite this fact there is still substantial literature on the geopolitical issues of the Muslim states of the former Soviet Union and Turkey's interactions with these states in terms of economic, political and cultural relations in the post-Soviet international order. These works focus on the official and work visits of Turkish businessmen and politicians immediately following the independence of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, Turkey's contributions to the region in educational, cultural and economical fields and Turkey's involvement in the energy game. However the literature lacks significant resources on Turkey's bilateral relations with these countries. This thesis paper is going to fill this gap by analyzing Turkey's relations with the Turkic countries on a bilateral basis.

With the break up of the Soviet Union Turkey's presence was felt heavily in the region. Turkey took its place in the "New Great Game"<sup>7</sup> with its constructive policies such as Turkish entrepreneurs' attempts to establish schools, business and cultural centers, to give scholarships to students, to supply educational materials or to appoint teachers and imams, who lead prayers in mosques, to the places in need. Unfortunately these contributions of Turkey have not been recorded in an organized and chronological fashion. One of the few sources giving extensive information on Turkey's contributions in the region is TICA. Another limitation of doing research on the Caspian Sea Region is that the information on the current relations between Turkey and the Turkic Republics is

scarce. The literature mostly talks about Turkey's interactions with the five Turkic states at the initial stages of their independence. At this stage we can find numerous works explaining Turkey's and the newly independent countries' enthusiasm to establish close relations and cooperation. However it seems like this enthusiasm has declined starting from the mid-1990s.

***History and Culture:*** Findley's book, *The Turks in World History*, traces Turkic peoples' history starting from early period's steppes to today's nation states. It makes a great contribution to this thesis paper by projecting the cultural, economic, social and political history of modern Turkish Republic and the five post-Soviet republics. This work sheds light on the history of Turks for non-specialists considering it as a part of the history of humanity. The author answers the question of "what the most distinctive large-scale patternings in politics, culture, society or economy and how things differ for Turkic peoples who somehow avoid incorporation into these patterns."<sup>8</sup>

Hostler's book, *Turkism and the Soviets*, gives us extensive knowledge on the origins and characteristics of the Turkic peoples of the world. It is a strong source to learn about the ethnic, cultural and religious ties between the Turks living in Turkey and the Turks living in the former Soviet Union. It is a sufficient source to learn about a significant manifestation of the Turkish issue, pan-Turkism, which concerns Anatolia and the Turkic speaking areas of the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republic as well as other Asiatic territories. The author discusses the emergence and development of pan-Turkism in the post-Soviet region.

**Politics:** The two strong sources on Turkey's relations with the Turkic Republics are *Turkey's relations with the west and the Turkic Republics*, and *Turkey in Post-Soviet Central Asia*. Bal's main concern is to argue whether Turkish development model, which offers a secular, democratic and multi-party political system, and a liberal economy integrated with global economy, is an appropriate model for these republics. He presents how enthusiastic the Turkic leaders were to support this model in 1991 and how this support began to decline by the end of 1992. This is the first study which gives detailed information on the initial interactions between Turkey and the Turkic Republics.

Winrow's *Turkey in Post-Soviet Central Asia* is a short study on the same topic. Winrow informs us about Turkish foreign policy towards the Turkic republics from the demise of the Soviet Union until 1995. Winrow gives place to the First and Second Turkic Summits and the results of these summits. Winrow, like Bal, contributes to the literature by examining the achievements and shortcomings of Turkish policy towards Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Kyrgyzstan from the enthusiasm and optimism of 1991-92 to the realism of the mid-1990s.<sup>9</sup>

Menashri's *Central Asia Meets the Middle East* examines the impact of the emergence of the newly independent republics of the former Soviet Union in Central Asia and its influences for the Middle East. Robins goes through Turkey's efforts to introduce democratic politics and an open market economy to the newly independent states. Hale in *Turkey and Transcaucasia* studies Turkey's policy interests and determinants in the region. Both of these works refer to pan-Turkism, which is the ideology to unify all Turks, while discussing Turkey's policies in the region.

Jung and Piccoli study Turkish politics with a pan-idealistic approach as well. In their book, *Turkey at the Crossroads*, they analyze Turkish politics in view of the Ottoman-Turkish submerged legacy. They link the current political problems of Turkey to this legacy. Moving from this perspective the authors see Turkish policies in Central Asia and the Transcaucasus as the revival of pan-Turkism. In addition, there is a study on Islamic modernism, pan-Turkism, Turkish nationalism and economic and cultural ties between the Turkish Republic and the Turkic states.

In the last days of the Ottoman Empire Young Turks, who initiated the reform movement of the Ottoman administration in the first quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and the two principal exponents of pan-Turkism, Ziya Gokalp and Yusuf Akcura, pursued purely pan-Turkic oriented policies. Also, during the Second World War, pan-Turkist groups in Turkey supported the Germans in their war against the Soviet Union with the hope to defeat Soviet troops and free Turkic peoples of Central Asia and Caucasus from the Soviet command. These were two different time periods when pan-Turkism was popular in the Ottoman Empire however it may be not be accurate to justify Turkey's policies in the Caspian Sea Region by referring to pan-Turkism.

In my view, naming Turkey's involvement in the region through its development organizations, and Turkey's efforts to get closer to the Turkic people as signs of pan-Turkism is misleading. Although there have been some marginal groups who advocate that the ideology through which Turkey pursues its policies in the region should be pan-Turkism, dominant Turkish centrist leaders of the Turkish political life do not support

such pan ideals. Centrist politicians are aware of the negative implications of such policies. It is the apparent prediction of Turkish leadership that such “pan-Turkic oriented foreign policy creates virtual state of war in Central Asia considering many ethnic Turks living on the territory of Iran, China and Russia.”<sup>10</sup> Moreover Turkic people, who have lived under the Soviet command up to 1990s, do not want to see another “big brother”.

Aras’s *The New Geopolitics of Eurasia, and Turkey’s Position*, is an effort to create a guideline for Turkish foreign policy in Eurasia. In his book, Aras analyzes the new geopolitics of Eurasia focusing on the roles of the newly involved actors in this area following the break up of the Soviet Union. The author discusses Turkey’s position in this region to provide insights for the future of Turkish foreign policy towards the region. The author claims that “for the first time in its republican history, Turkey seeks to develop a sphere of influence with its pro-Western and secular orientation in the region.”<sup>11</sup> Aras also studies Turkey’s energy politics, pipeline route selection in particular, in the region. However the author’s argument that all parties involved in the energy game can benefit through cooperation needs to be supported by tangible evidence.

Similarly Chufirin’s *The Security of the Caspian Region*, is a study focusing on the geopolitical aspect of the region. This book takes an innovative approach to analyze regional issues with a concentration on the geopolitical environment. It addresses specific issues such as the national, political and security interests in the region during the post-Soviet period. Authors from twelve different countries including Turkey and the Caspian Sea Basin countries have contributed to this book. They introduce data on a wide range of



topics from the true energy resources of the Caspian Sea Region to military spending by regional governments.

Karaosmanoglu's contribution to this edited volume is about Turkey's objectives in the Caspian Sea region. This chapter tells about the geopolitics of pipelines, Turkey's cooperation with Russia and Turkey's internal and external constraints. Like Aras, Karaosmanoglu describes Turkey's economic considerations in the area of oil and gas reserves.

Turkey's relations with the Turkic states cannot be understood excluding Russia. In this respect this thesis utilizes some works on Russian involvement in the region with a particular focus on Russian-Turkish relations. One of these works is D. B. Sezer's article, *Turkish-Russian Relations: The Challenges of Reconciling Geopolitical Competition with Economic Partnership* which explores the Turkish Russian relations mostly in terms of economics starting from the 1980s. These two countries have traditionally belonged to two different continental systems however their relations have been shaped by a combination of cooperation and competition over the past decade. Akturk's article, *Turkish-Russian Relations after the Cold War (1992-2002)* examines this cooperation between Turkey and Russia in the post-Cold War restructuring. The author proceeds by giving references to international relations theories. The author's argument is that the retreat of Russian threat allowed for the possibility of Turkish-Russian cooperation.<sup>12</sup>

Lastly Aydin's *Foucault's Pendulum: Turkey in Central Asia and the Caucasus*, is

a great source discussing Turkey's position in the Caspian Sea basin. It introduces Turkey's challenges and opportunities which were born after the emergence of eight independent states in Central Asia and the Caucasus in a clear way. The author's prediction is that "although economic and political conditions in the region are unlikely to stabilize for some years, it is without doubt that Turkish policymakers will continue with their efforts to create new networks of interdependency between Ankara and the regional capitals".<sup>13</sup>

***Educational Policies:*** Demir, Balci and Akkok make a great contribution to the literature with their article, *The role of Turkish schools in the educational system and social transformation of Central Asian countries: the case of Turkmenistan and Kyrgyzstan* considering the scarcity of documentation on Turkey's educational policies in the region. They suggest that "all throughout history the educational process has been perceived as a very influential agent of the socialization process with the power to shape, reshape, refresh or build the social and psychological environment"<sup>14</sup> Moving from this theory they explore the role of Turkish schools in transforming society in Central Asia. Considering the good reputation of these schools throughout the region one can conclude that Turkish schools have made a positive contribution to the future of Turkic countries.

Another work on Turkey's Educational Policies in the region is Yanik's *The Politics of Educational Exchange: Turkish Education in Eurasia*.<sup>15</sup> This article assesses Turkey's educational exchange programs as a foreign policy tool. It examines Turkey's public and private educational ties with the Turkic populations of Eurasia. The author

discusses the roles of Turkey's educational activities in the Turkic peoples' cultural reorientation. This work gives the reader an idea of education's importance which is a tool of soft power in helping people identify themselves beyond giving descriptive and statistical information.

***Business:*** The majority of the Turkish business interests in the Caspian Sea Basin lie in the energy field. Aras and Foster, in their article, *Turkey and the Azerbaijani Oil Controversies: Looking for a Light at the End of the Pipeline* talk about the oil controversies in the Caspian basin with a particular focus on Turkey's involvement. This article suggests that the collapse of the Soviet Union has caused a great shift in Turkey's foreign policy. From a political perspective Turkey acted to spread the model of Turkish government and society. From an economic perspective, Turkey has always wanted to take the advantage of the mutual development opportunities that cooperation can create.

For Turkey, economic opportunities include "guaranteed access to vital energy resources, lucrative oil transport revenues, as well as increased diplomatic clout and strategic importance."<sup>16</sup> For the new republics these opportunities include the prospect of attracting investment and technological expertise, as well as of establishing a secure route for distribution of their products to the West. Particularly Azerbaijan, a Turkic-speaking former Soviet possession that shares borders with Russia, Georgia, Armenia, and Iran, has attracted the greatest interest of Turkey among the newly independent states. The authors argue that "the source of this interest is not only the linguistic, ethnic, religious and cultural affinity shared by Turkey and Azerbaijan, but also the tremendous oil

reserves possessed by the tiny Caucasian state.”<sup>17</sup>

There are some Turkish scholars who contribute to the literature by focusing on particular pipeline projects which are in Turkey’s interest. In this context Bacik’s *The Blue Stream Project, Energy Co-operation and Conflicting Interests*, analyzes the discussions about the Blue Stream Project which envisages the transportation of Russian natural gas to Turkey. The context of this article is Turkish politics and regional energy-oriented relations. Bacik argues that “Turkey has contributed to the emergence of an energy regime in Eurasia by connecting itself to the major energy markets through complex energy projects”.<sup>18</sup> Furthermore Oztun and Hepbasli’s article, *Natural Gas Implementation in Turkey. Part 2: Natural Gas Pipeline Projects* is a comprehensive source for Turkey’s natural gas demand and natural gas pipelines in which Turkey is involved.

Although they are not many in number, some authors have studied business relations between Turkey and the Turkic countries bilaterally. For example, Dikkaya and Keles, examine Turkish investment in Kyrgyzstan, in their article, *Foreign Direct Investment in Kyrgyzstan*. This article analyzes FDI characteristics in Kyrgyzstan in a case study context and provides suggestions for FDI issues. This article basically touches the issues of the importance of company and host country specific factors in FDI decisions, the drawbacks of operating in the country and the effects of company performances on FDI.

It has been only sixteen years since the countries of this region of the world gained independence. However the number of studies on the Caspian Sea Region is expected to increase in the coming years. Although the existing literature is limited it has been quite helpful and intriguing for this thesis.

## **CHAPTER 2: TURKEY'S HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL TIES WITH THE TURKIC COUNTRIES**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter aims to shed light on common ties, which increase the credibility of Turkey in the eyes of the five former Soviet states, between the Turkish peoples living in Turkey and the Turkic people living in the Caspian Sea Basin in terms of language, ethnicity and religion. I will start with explaining the historical identity of Turks to see how far modern Turkey's ethnic tie with the region goes back. Then I will explain Turkish nationalism created by Ataturk, the founder of the Turkish Republic, and pan-Turkism. I will try to explore Ataturk's approach towards pan-ideals and also pan-Turkism with relevance to the Caspian Sea Region. It is significant to understand these two points in order to interpret today's Turkish policies. Next I will explain linguistic similarities of Turkic countries considering that language is an important tool that eases any kind of relationship whether it is political, economic or cultural. Finally another unifying factor, Islam as the major religious faith in Turkey and in the region, will be explained.

### **2.2 Turkic People of the World and Pan-Turkism**

#### **2.2.1 Turkic People of the World**

Turks are defined by their language, Turkish, and by certain shared elements of culture, history and religion. They maintained their identity while moving across Eurasia. As Findley explains “when we track the Turks back in history we find not one route ending in the West but radiating routes beginning in Eastern Asia, interconnecting along the way, and ending at points all across Eurasia or, even since the 1960s around the world.”<sup>19</sup>

The oldest known Turkish inscriptions are the Orkhon runes in the valley of the Yenisei River in Siberia and in the valley of the Orkhon River in Mongolia in 1889.<sup>20</sup> They include the oldest known material in Turkic language. In these inscriptions are mentioned the Uyghur Turkish people and the Kirghiz people. The name Oguz, which refers to a Turkic tribe, is used for the first time on these stone slabs.

The present Turkish territory is enclosed by the boundaries of the Turkish Republic. The history of the contemporary Turkish republic is based on three roots which are composed of the Anatolian heritage, the Islamic heritage which was born in the seventh century in Arabia, and the Turkic heritage which goes back to the earliest Turks in inner Asia. Turks are a part of the combination of Turkic-Islamic-European civilization; they are Muslim by religion and they speak Turkic dialects.

Central Asian Turks, who have been moving to Turkey for centuries, and Eurasian Turks compose a large segment of the Turks in Turkey. There are some Central Asian tribes still living in Turkey. For example; the Yuruks, which form the largest

Turkic group in Turkey, live in small groups from the region around Izmir. Yuruk is the Turkish word for nomad and yuruks have preserved many of their Central Asian habits. Turkmen tribes form another Turkish group in Anatolia. They have come together around the Salt Lake ( Tuz Golu ). The Kizilbas Turks live in Ankara and Tokat. They have historical affiliations with trans-Caucasia. However the Kemalist regime with its principle of nationalism has blended them with the rest of the Turkish population through the teachings of the modern school system.

Turks living outside the Turkish territory are gathered in Azerbaijan, Afghanistan, Western Turkestan ( Kazakistan, Kirgizstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan ), Eastern Turkestan ( including Turkic peoples of China ), Southwest Asia ( Iran, Iraq, Syria ), Russia, Europe and South Europe (Ex-Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Greece, Romania), and Cyprus.

### **2.2.2 Kemalist Ideology: Nationalism in the Turkish Republic**

Before I analyze the effects of pan-Turkist ideology on the Caspian Sea Region countries I will give some brief information on Turkish nationalism and Ataturk's nationalist ideas which form the base of contemporary Turkish policies.

Turkish nationalism is an old phenomenon. The 1908 Young Turks' Revolution activated the nationalistic awareness of the political leaders in the Ottoman Empire. World War I and the break down of the empire accelerated the wave of nationalist



inspirations.

The ideas of Ataturk, who is the founder of the Turkish Republic, are gathered under the ideology of Kemalism, the central pillar of which is nationalism. The year 1923 marks the beginning of a new era in the history of the Turkish Republic. On July 24, 1923 the Lausanne Treaty was signed and Turkey was admitted to the new international community of free nations. In October Turkey was proclaimed as a republic and Kemal Ataturk was elected as the first president. Kemalist philosophy is based on six principles. In 1937 these principles were later formally incorporated into the constitution as republicanism, nationalism, populism, statism, secularism, and revolutionism. Among these principles nationalism is the primary principle and all other principles are derived from it.

From these principles we find that Ataturk has always been the advocate of nationalist policies rather than pan ideals like Pan-Islamism and Pan-Turkism. In Ataturk's Eskisehir talk we find his approach toward pan ideals. Ataturk said:

Neither Islamic Union nor Turanism can form a doctrine, a logical policy for us. In order that our nation should be able to live a happy, strenuous and permanent life it is necessary that the state should pursue an exclusively national policy and that this policy should be in perfect agreement with our internal organization and be based on it.<sup>21</sup>

The nationalist aspect of Kemalist ideology mostly found its expression in the Turkification of the language. The foreign elements of the Ottoman language were

replaced with the genuine Turkish words. Ataturk stated that, “The Turkish nation which knew how to defend its country and its noble independence must also liberate its language from the yoke of foreign languages.”<sup>22</sup> The Turkish Linguistic Society, which was founded in July 1932, published Ottoman-Turkish and Turkish-Ottoman pocket glossary and encouraged people not to use Arabic or Persian words.

Ataturk developed the Sun Language Theory (Gunes Dil Teorisi) concerning the Turkic linguistics. He gave great importance to the issue of history as well as language. According to Ataturk’s another thesis relating to the origin of the Turks, the Turkish History Thesis, Turks formed the cradle of human civilizations in Central Asia and in the view of this thesis Turkish was acknowledged as the mother of all languages. The purpose of the Turkish History Thesis was to examine the roots of the Turkish nations and development of Turkish history within the framework of world history. Prior to Ataturk, the role of Turkish people’s literature and culture belonging to the pre-Ottoman and especially the pre-Islamic ages were particularly neglected. The history of Turkish nations was thought to be a part of the history of Islam or Ottomans. Moreover both the Seljuk historians and the Ottoman historians did not leave enlightening works on the cultural heritage of the ancient Turks of the pre-Islamic ages. Unlike past historians, Ataturk suggested to study the early movements of the Turkic peoples of Central Asia to firmly establish Turkish culture and history. By doing so; Turks would take their appropriate place in the world history.

According to Ataturk’s thesis, in the light of archeological, anthropological and

ethnological knowledge, all civilizations of the history of mankind originate from Central Asia. Plentiful pre-historic artifacts and craft skills in the Central Asian sub-strata indicate rich cultures dating back to the ages before the Christian era.<sup>23</sup> This theory suggests that a pre-historic civilization, which was developed in Central Asia, lived on through the stone, bronze and iron ages. With the migration of people from Central Asia to Mesopotamia, Anatolia, Egypt and Europe new civilizations were born and later they were developed. The origin of the pre-historic peoples of Anatolia was also in Central Asia. Here we see that Central Asia was a cradle of civilizations and left its mark on many following civilizations. Central Asian influence was eventually seen in the cultures of many other nations and peoples.

As Kocaturk explains Ataturk did not claim that “the races of mankind, history and language come from one common origin” but he wanted to emphasize “how the earliest civilizations of Central Asia took elements of their cultures to Anatolia, Europe and other parts of the world as they migrated extensively”.<sup>24</sup> Currently patriotic feelings are still pervasive and nationalism is still a dominant ideology in Turkey.

### **2.2.3 Pan-Turkism: The Union of all the Turks**

As Khalid defines, “Pan-Turkism professes the goal of the political unity of those who belong to the Turkic nation.”<sup>25</sup> Pan-Turkist ideology aims to give Turks a common soul and consciousness. The importance of this ideology in relation to the Caucasus and Central Asia is that nationalist and separatist movements, which were on the rise

especially after the Russian Revolution of 1917, were justified with this ideology. Upon these nationalist demands the Russian empire was eventually transformed into a number of republics with varying degrees of autonomy in the last decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It should be noted that Turkism, pan-Turkism, Islamism and pan-Islamism are closely related concepts. As Hostler points out “there is a terminological chaos in Russian sources reflecting the intermixture of nationalism with pan movements among the Turks of the USSR.”<sup>26</sup>

The nationalist and reformist movements among the Eastern Turks were evaluated within the scope of Pan-Islamism and Pan-Turkism in principle and most importantly these ideas were spread to this region from Turkey. Historically Turkish policy has moved toward Pan-Turkism in times of war in the twentieth century. This was the policy of the Young Turks during the First World War and after the Russian Revolution of 1917. Also, during the Second World War, pan-Turkist groups in Turkey supported the Germans in their war against the Soviet Union with the hope to defeat Soviet troops and free Turkic peoples of Central Asia and the Caucasus from the Soviet command. Today, nationalism still forms an important trait of Turkish policy.

## **2.2.4 Leading Ideologists of Pan-Turkism**

### **2.2.4.1 Ismail Gaspirali**

Gaspirali is an important figure in the history of the Turkic people in the Russian

Empire. He undertook actions in the areas of education, language and social reform, and politics. The whole organization of the Pan-Turkist movement in Russia was in the hands of Gaspirali. He had profound influence on the nationalist awakening of Turkic people. Accordingly, he is considered to be the real leader of the all-Turkish movement.

He went to a traditional Muslim school (medrese); he continued his education in a Russian gymnasium and he ended up in Military Academy in 1865. In 1867, he left his education in the academy to go to the Ottoman Empire and fight against the Greek rebels. He spent the years between 1871 and 1875 in Paris and Istanbul. In 1882 he married Zühre Hanim, daughter of a wealthy Tatar family from Kazan.<sup>27</sup>

During his lifetime, Gaspirali met several Russian intellectuals and prominent figures of the Ottoman Empire. As Tuna suggests “his 1879 appeal to the Russian authorities to publish a Tatar language journal shows that he had reached a certain level of intellectual sophistication by this time and wanted to put his ideas into practice.”<sup>28</sup>

Gaspirali sought ways of conveying pan-Turkist ideas to people. After trying for four years and making numerous trips to St. Petersburg, Gaspirali succeeded in getting permission to publish a newspaper, *Tercuman*. His biggest idea was to introduce social and religious reforms in the Turkic-Islamic world through congresses with wide participation. He actively participated in all the Turkic congresses and during his life, he organized two congresses with the same topic: The Union of Turco-Muslims of Russia.

He called for the unity and solidarity among all the Turkic people and he expressed these ideas in *Tercuman*. His well-known motto was "Unity in language, thought, and action."<sup>29</sup> Gaspirali was also a supporter of women rights believing that better education of women was a key to bringing the Islamic society into the mainstream of modern life. Moving from this theory he initiated a new journal for women, *Alem-i Nisvan* (World of Women).<sup>30</sup> He was an advocate of equality in matters of marriage, divorce, and inheritance.

He improved new teaching methods which gained popularity throughout Russia. In 1912, Gaspirali traveled to India to demonstrate the effectiveness of his new method of teaching. In February 1912 towards the end of his life, he attended a private meeting of Turkic leaders from the Volga region, the Caucasus and Crimea in St. Petersburg to discuss the viability of reviving the Union of Russian Muslims. In September 1914 he died in Bahcesaray and his funeral was attended by more than 6,000 people who had come from various parts of Russia and elsewhere to pay their last respects to the great man.<sup>31</sup>

His experiences in Turkey and Western Europe inspired him to raise Turkic people to the level of the west. He believed that this aim could only be achieved through the extension of education to the masses. His starting point would be the linguistic and spiritual unity of the Turks. He introduced curricular reforms encouraging children to use their mother tongues. The idea of a common language was understood by Gaspirali as "one shared by all Turks from Crimea to Heart, from Istanbul to Kashgar, and not only

for the educated but as well for the simple people.”<sup>32</sup>He increasingly got interested in the issues concerning Turkic people’s education. At the same time he tried not to anger his Russian opponents. He concentrated his efforts in the cultural field and he avoided any direct contact with current politics. He was hopeful about the future. He said; “I believe that in the future the Russian Muslims shall be more civilized than any other muslim nation. Give us the possibility to learn and the sciences should be admitted to the Tatar schools, and in the Tatar language.”<sup>33</sup>

Gaspirali also supported the Djadid (Modernist) movement, which was initiated to reinterpret religion in Russia with a solid program. He guided the religious reform aspect of the movement. He was enthusiastic to spread practical activism towards general cultural progress and modernized education rather than abstract discourses. The Jadids tried to introduce modernist ideas to the Turkic world through their works. They formed new opportunities through their schools and theatres where people could socialize. Their schools were places where the elites of the future would be trained. They put an emphasis on the education of women and children.

When it comes to religion, Gaspirali considered Islam as part of the Turco-national culture. Islam was an outstanding trait of the Turks and it was necessary to resist Russification. Gaspirali frequently referred to the Kur’an since it both united the modernists and the clergy.<sup>34</sup>

#### **2.2.4.2 Yusuf Akcura**

Yusuf Akcura (1876-1933) is another eager supporter of pan-Turkism. He spent many years in Turkey and he established strong political ties with Turkey. He was regarded as a member of an all-Turkish society and served as a symbol of the unity of Eastern and Western Turks.

As Hostler explains, Yusuf Akcura was born in Simbirsk, a district of Russia, and he was educated in Istanbul and in Paris. He was a member of the Russian Duma (Parliament) and he was a part of the All-Muslim Union 'Ittifak' Organization. He started living in Istanbul after 1907. He took part in the works of Turk Dernegi ( Turkish Association ) which aimed at the reformation of the Turkish-Arabic script.<sup>35</sup> Akcura was against European colonial policies and he wanted to be the voice of the nationalist feelings of the Turks living in Soviet Empire and Turkey.

He dreamed of an Islamic-Turkish Empire. He became famous for his article entitled 'Three Political Systems' in the Cairo paper in 1903. Principles of pan-Turkism were explained in this article.

It can be regarded as similar to that of the Communist Manifesto of 1848 for the Marxists. For this reason he is accepted as one of the founders of pan-Turkism. The first principle seeks to create an Ottoman Nation through assimilating and unifying the various nations subject to Ottoman rule. The second principle seeks to unify all Muslims living under the governance of the Ottoman State and the third principle seeks a policy of



Turkish nationalism based on ethnicity. Akcura was against the idea of pan-Islamism because from his point of view, pan-Islamism was not reflecting the national feelings of all Muslim nations.<sup>36</sup> Islam does not make a distinction between people with regards to their nations as opposed to nationalist ideologies.

### **2.2.5 World War I and Pan-Turkism**

Pan-Turkism and pan-Islamism formed the driving forces of Turkish policy during World War I. In other words, Turkey wished to unite with ethnically and linguistically familiar peoples and with those of the same religion. In this direction the Young Turks made their famous proclamation of November 23, 1914 with a Pan-Islamic spirit. It was assumed that they used Islamic terminology in this proclamation to capture a crowded audience. A part of the proclamation, which was signed by the Caliph, is as below:

All Mohammedans living in the territories exposed to the persecutions of the above named oppressive powers, such as the Crimea, Kazan, Turkistan, Bukhara, Khiva, India, China, Afghanistan, Persia, Africa and other countries, must consider it, in concert with Ottomans, as their most supreme religious duty to participate in the Holy War, with their bodies and goods, keeping in mind the inspirations of the Kuran.<sup>37</sup>

Turkic people of the former Soviet Union were on the side of the Ottoman Turkey and its allies in the World War I. This was not a surprising result considering the popularity of pan-Turkism and pan-Islamism in Russia.

Enver Pasha was recorded as a symbol of the military aspect of Pan-Turkism in the World War I. Enver Pasha was involved in the Caucasian offensive in 1914 as well as in the Turkestanian struggle with the Soviets in 1921-1922. He is linked strongly with the Turks in Russia and with pan-Turkism.

Enver Pasha was born in Istanbul on 22 November 1881. As Yilmaz states “his family was originally from Monastir and their ancestry can be traced back to the ‘Gagavuz Turks.’”<sup>38</sup> Enver took part in the Tripolitan campaign of 1912. At the beginning of the Balkan War he returned to Constantinople in 1913, where he was active in overthrowing the cabinet of Kamil Pasha for capitulating to the Bulgarians.

During World War I Enver Pasha was responsible for the command of the Third Caucasian Army on the Caucasian frontier. It was the assumption that such a victory would increase, as Yilmaz identifies, “his power and fame, while opening the way for more conquests in the east”.<sup>39</sup>

He arrived at Erzurum in December 1914 and the Caucasian battle began at the end of that month. By January 1915 it was clear to both Ottomans and Russians that Turkish offensive would fail. However, in spite of difficulties like cold, fatigue and hunger the troops on both sides were still willing to fight and the battle continued another fourteen days. It was impossible for Enver Pasha to be successful considering the topographic and climatic obstacles during the winter months. Some scholars attribute Enver Pasha’s failure to his own inexperience. For example; Rustow says that it was

Enver Pasha's "grandiose and amateurish conduct of the war"<sup>40</sup> that caused the loss of thousands of troops. The offensive resulted with astounding Turkish losses. There were about 75,000 casualties, many of which were armed. On the Russian side there were 16,000 people killed and wounded, and 12,000 people sick.<sup>41</sup> As Yilmaz suggests "his rise was determined by military successes, and his fall would also be closely tied to the defeat of the Ottoman Empire fighting on the side of the Germans during the First World War."<sup>42</sup>

New opportunities were born in the Turco-Muslim areas of Russia due to the outbreak of the Russian Revolution in 1917 and new half-independent states appeared in the region. As Hostler explains, although Enver Pasha was personally absent in the Caucasus from 1917 to 1919 it was through his directives that the Azerbaijan-Turkish military preparations got started. Enver Pasha decided to organize an army within the Republic of Azerbaijan with the aid of the Army of Islam. A base was chosen at the ancient Muslim town of Ganja and the Turkish Fifth Caucasian Division was moved there. A few days later, Enver Pasha's half brother Nuri Pasha arrived to take over command of the Army of Islam. Enver Pasha planned to capture Baku in nearly a month but the Turks received news that a German-Soviet agreement on Baku had already been practically concluded. The Turks left their Fifth Caucasian Division in Baku and at the same time the Thirty-sixth division moved northward along the railway toward Derbent. The only victory that the Army of Islam could get was the occupation of Petrovsk. Thirty-sixth Caucasian division continued its Pan-Turanian March along the shores of the Caspian and in October occupied Petrovsk. Thus some external issues put an end to the

adventures of Pan-Turkists in the region.<sup>43</sup>

Bolsheviks and pan-Turkists had a common goal of fighting against imperialism which was attributed to the West in general. Hostler explains that “Enver Pasha unofficially planned the reestablishment of the kingdom of Timur and saw himself as the ruler of the realm embracing Chinese Turkestan, Russian Turkestan, Kazakhstan and Afghanistan.”<sup>44</sup> Enver Pasha kept the belief that the center of this empire would be Turkey as part of his pan-Turkish movement. On the other hand the Bolsheviks, who saw Enver Pasha and all Muslims as enemies of the imperialists, were supporting Enver Pasha. Enver Pasha’s intention was also an alliance with the Bolsheviks in Bukhara in the fight for Islamic ideals against imperialism. He worked to free Bukhara emirate from the Russians. He attended the Congress of the Peoples of the East called by the Third International Soviets at Baku in September 1920 with these intentions. The Bolsheviks supported the Holy War of Muslims against the imperialists. He intended to mobilize Eastern Turkish resistance particularly the Basmachis against the Soviets and to set up an independent state in Central Asia.<sup>45</sup>

Enver Pasha was killed in the Tajik Hills in action against the Soviets on 8 August 1922. In Turkey, periodicals such as Bozkurt ( Grey Wolf ) and Cinaralti ( Under the Maple Tree ) while propagating the unity for all the Turkish peoples and liberation of the Turks of the Soviet Union also described the exploits of Enver Pasha in Turkestan.

With his death on Turkestan soil he offered the supreme sacrifice for the country

and for the history of the Turks.<sup>46</sup> It was acknowledged that “Enver Pasa spent his entire life in a perpetual battle in both the political and the military fields in order to restore the long-lost glory of an Empire which no longer existed.”<sup>47</sup>

### **2.2.6 World War II and After**

The outbreak of the World War II (1939-1945) created new hopes for the Turkish unification among the Turks in Turkey and Pan-Turkists in the Caspian Sea Basin as well.

Particularly, the eruption of the German-Soviet War produced a great stimulation among the Turks with the satisfaction of finding a powerful ally to fight against the Soviets. The Turkish foreign officers advocating the German-Turkish cooperation were actively engaged in the promotion of anti-Soviet schemes. Pan-Turkism was a helpful tool of anti-Soviet propaganda in the Caspian Sea area and pan-Turkists were eager to participate in the struggle against the Soviets. It can be noted that, along with these events, pan-Turkism became even more popular. There was a rise in the number of pan-Turkist periodicals and youth organizations which were the cultural centers of Turkey.

Increased cooperation occurred between the Germans and the Turks on the issues of intelligence gathering and military operations. Nearly all of the Turkish leaders in the West and Turkey supplied the Germans with various documents and the Germans also sought the opportunities for exchange of ideas.

From the military perspective there were Turks from the USSR in the German armed forces during World War II. These Turks were part of the pan-Turkist activity and they fought against the Soviets. This was the most important aspect of World War II pan-Turkist activity. As Hostler explains, the Germans were aware of the Turkish potential to make allies out of the Central Asian populations. The overwhelming majority of the Turkish volunteers were recruited from among Soviet prisoners of war captured by the Germans. As for the German objectives Turks fighting against the Soviets would be a great contribution to German forces.<sup>48</sup>

On December 30, 1941 the high command of the Wehrmacht was directed to establish a Turkestan legion consisting of members of the following nationalities: Turkmen, Uzbeks, Kazakhs, Kirghiz, Karakalpak and Tajik. Also a Caucasian Mohammedan Legion was composed of Azerbaijanis, Dagestanis, Ingushes, Lezhins and Chechens a Georgian Legion and an Armenian Legion.<sup>49</sup>

On the other hand the Turks were expecting some rewards in return for their help. Turkish ruling circles were hoping that the Turks would be united by establishing externally independent states. However it was in question whether the Eastern Turks, who were at the center of these plans, were supporting Enver Pasha and other pan-Turkist ideologists in Turkey. Some of these people believed that Turks who amalgamated in the new Turkish republic were not entitled to be included under the term 'true Turkish nationality'. From their perspective they had lost their Turkish character long ago. Despite the expectations of pan-Turkist circles Germany's defeat against the USSR

became the turning point of the expansion of Pan-Turkist feelings in Turkey.

### **2.2.7 Reactions on Pan-Turkism**

At the time of the outbreak of the German-Turkish collaboration against the Soviets during World War II., some private Turco-German diplomatic talks and the unofficial negotiations of pan-Turkists in Berlin were found. Concurrently youth organizations in Turkey were engaging in wide scale movements. As Hostler explains, these noisy demonstrations were patronized by some activists from the older generation. Common themes of these organizations were nationalistic passion for the ancient Turkish symbols of the grey wolf or of leaders such as Atilla or Cengiz Khan.<sup>50</sup>

Zeki Velidi Togan was one of the sponsors of the pan-Turkist organizations that emerged after the German-Soviet War. He was a scholar and a politician. As Paksoy identifies, “he was a key figure in the uprising against control by the Bashmachi, a group of disaffected intellectuals, Islamic patriots and others who opposed the new order.”<sup>51</sup> Zeki Velidi Togan established a secret society. The aim of this society was to create one unified Turkish state as soon as the German victory was guaranteed. In the broadest sense Zeki Velidi Togan and likeminded people viewed all of Central Asia as Turkestan.<sup>52</sup> They also planned to aid in the organization of the liberation of the prisoners of war of Turkish origin who were in German hands.

Another cluster of Pan-Turkists was led by the veteran politician, Dr. Riza Nur,

poet, writer, journalist and army officer who died in 1942. He wrote a detailed book on Turkish History published by the Ministry of Education in 1914-26.<sup>53</sup> As Foss explains this study gives the Turks dominance in world history by dividing them into the Turks of the Motherland and the Turks of the Outer Homelands. According to Riza Nur, groups, who do not belong to the Chinese, Egyptian, Indian, North African and American civilizations, form the Turks of the Motherland, Central Asia.<sup>54</sup>

After the death of Riza Nur, Nihal Atsiz took the leading role of the pan-Turkist intellectual movement. Atsiz was a secondary school teacher who was accused in 1944 of spreading racist and Pan-Turanist ideals among his pupils. This circle published several magazines among which was *Tanridagi* ( Holy Mountain ). According to Uzer, Nihal Atsiz was an advocate of racism and Turkism. Like previous nationalists Atsiz was also influenced by the expansionist and irredentist rhetoric of the political atmosphere of the 1930. The point that he differed from the earlier pan-Turkist thinkers was in the area of religion. As Uzer explains “he was not openly denying religion but his anti-religious bias was apparent in his articles.”<sup>55</sup> Uzer notes that, for Atsiz “everything should be national: language, literature, music and way of life.”<sup>56</sup>

In response to the above efforts to propagate pan-Turkism there were some reactionary presentations against Pan-Islamism and Pan-Turkism at the 1954 Tashkent Conference. As Hostler explains special interest was attracted by a paper written by Babadjan Gafurov the first Secretary of the General Committee of the Communist Party of the Tajik SSR. Gafurov claimed that “Pan-Islamism and Pan-Turkism were the two



ideologies that were under the special protection of International imperialism; America was trying in every way to exploit these ideologies for its aggressive aims.”<sup>57</sup> America was pretending to protect Muslims and to fight for their independence movements. However its actual aim was to organize military blocks in the Near and Middle East. Gafurov’s lecture supported the conclusion that nationalism in Central Asia and in Kazakhstan was primarily an expression of Pan-Islamism, Pan-Turkism and Pan-Iranism.<sup>58</sup>

### **2.3 Language**

Findley argues that “where different populations came into contact Turkic speech has usually prevailed with the result that linguistic assimilation has been a crucial element in the ethnogenesis of the Turkic peoples.”<sup>59</sup> Some scholars suggest that no factor unites all Turks but language. In support of this claim, linguists insist that the unity of the Turkic peoples is most apparent in language. There is resemblance among the Turkish languages because they all belong to a larger Altaic family. Turkish languages that divided into several courses in their historical evolution are as follows. According to Deny, the French Turkologist, the Turkish dialects are divided into eight groupings:

North Eastern: This dialect is spoken by Mongolians, Yakuts, Tuva, Karagais and other small Turkish speaking tribes

Hakas ( Khakass ): This dialect is spoken by the small tribes of the Abakan and

Minusinsk area.

Altaic: This dialect is spoken in the region of the Altaic Mountains.

Eastern Siberian: This dialect is spoken by the tribes of the Chulim river region

Volga-Ural: This dialect is spoken by the Tatars of Kazan and Baskhirs.

Central Asian: This dialect is spoken in Chinese Turkestan, Kazakhstan, Kirghizistan and Uzbekistan

South western: This dialect is spoken in Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan and the Azerbaijanis in Persia, Northern Caucasus and Anatolia

Other: spoken in Crimean and Chuvash Nogais of the Dobruja and Kuban region

According to Deny; all of these Turkish languages are related with the Turkish tongue except Yakut and Chuvash.<sup>60</sup> It should also be noted that the skill of communication has many variables other than being a linguistic matter. As Krader writes, “communication by words depends to a great degree on a common language but many other factors are involved.”<sup>61</sup> Some of these factors are social, political and historical factors. In Central Asia, for example, linguistic disunity is affected by political disunity.

## **2.3.1 Dialectic Similarities between the Turkish Language and the Languages of Central Asian Countries**

### **2.3.1.1 Azeris**

Azerbaijanis are the nearest Turkish kinsmen to the Anatolian Turks and their language is closely related. Turkish language started to gain influence in Azerbaijan during the period of Seljuk Empire.<sup>62</sup> There are several Azerbaijani dialects but all Turks of Azerbaijan understand each other without difficulty and can be understood by Anatolian Turks. Azerbaijanis differ from the Turks in Turkey in their religious sect, which is Shiite. However as Hostler explains, they are the nearest Turkish kinsmen to the Anatolian Turks and their language is closely related.<sup>63</sup>

Turkish TV programs are watched in Azerbaijan with great interest. This transfer helped to transfer some words in Anatolian Turkish to Azeri Turkish. For example; grandchildren translate some words that are used in a Turkish TV series to their grandparents while they are both watching the same program. As Karaman says, some of the new words that Azeri newspapers have started to use are “saygi, bilim, kolay, ekonomi, cadde, konu, mutlu”.<sup>64</sup>

### **2.3.1.2 Kazakhs**

Ethnically Kazakhs are of Mongolian descendant but they have retained a

primitive Turkish vocabulary. This pervasiveness of a pure Turkish speech throughout the Kazakh steppe shows that the Turkish element is ascendant in Kazakhstan.<sup>65</sup>

In 1928, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, the great Turkish reformer, instituted the Roman alphabet as standard for Turkey. The Soviet colonial administration, which was affected by this move, eliminated the use of the Roman alphabet in Kazakhstan. There, the instruction of children was switched to the Cyrillic spelling and the use of thousands of school books was halted. As a tool of writing Turkish the Cyrillic script was more fitting than the Arabic.<sup>66</sup> The Kazakh people did not resist to this change at the time. As Dave explains, in authoritarian post-Soviet states citizens easily accept the official identity categories in the absence of debates on important issues such as identity and language. Dave says that “when claiming proficiency in the state language is both easy and risk-free for the titular group, there are few incentives to fight a political battle over the language issue and resist the language policy of the state.”<sup>67</sup>

### **2.3.1.3 Uzbeks**

Turks form the largest group in Uzbekistan. Likewise Uzbeks are the largest group of Turks in Central Asia with many small Turkish clans in neighboring republics.

The literary language of the Uzbeks is Chatagatai which was developed in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and in diverse parts of the Muslim Turkish world. The Ottoman Turkish, which is the other prominent language developed in the same period with the Chatagatai, was replaced by Turkish which is used currently. Today the

language of the people in Uzbekistan is Uzbek while the old ruling class uses the written language of Chatagatai. In general the Uzbek government pursues strongly nationalist policies called "Uzbekization"; the intention is to distance Uzbekistan from Russia.<sup>68</sup>

Turkish and Uzbek proverbs show some similarities in terms of format and content. This matters with regards to the unity of culture as well as language. Two of the proverbs that both Turks and Kazakhs use are as follow:

Gapirganing kumus, gapirmagning altin. /Soz gumusse sukut altindir. / Speaking is silver, silence is gold.

Bir gun tuz iggan yerga kirk kiin salam ber. /Bir fincan kahvenin kirk yil hatiri var. / A cup of coffee has a 40-year memory.<sup>69</sup>

#### **2.3.1.4 Turkmens**

Turkmens form a link with the Western Turks since they do not differ essentially from the Persian Azerbaijanis and the Anatolian Turks. Their language belongs to the same group as Anatolian and Azerbaijan. Among the languages of Anatolia, Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan, the first two are more closely connected and the Azerbaijani can understand Anatolian Turkish with more ease than Turkmen people.

Like other Turkic Republics Turkmenistan was given the right to choose its own

alphabet. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, a purely Turkmen literary language developed and the unified Latin Turkish alphabet was eventually adopted in 1929-1930 considering the sounds that are not foreign to its own language.

### **2.3.1.5 Kirghiz**

The Kirghiz language is a member of the Turkic subfamily of Altaic languages. The Kirghiz have remained almost entirely unmixed and are on the whole the truest ethnic representatives of the Turks. Their language belongs to the groups of Turkic languages. After the alphabet was modified in 1924 and the unified Turkish Latin alphabet was adopted in 1928 the literary language showed remarkable development. The Latin alphabet was replaced by a Cyrillic alphabet in 1940. There were attempts to return to the Latin alphabet after the independence but this has never been implemented.

With the “Law on the Official Languages of Kyrgyzstan in 2001,” Russian was accepted as the official language of Kyrgyzstan and can be used in public sphere along with the national language, Kirghiz.<sup>70</sup>

## **2.4 Islam as a Shared Identity between Turkey and the Turkic World**

There is not extensive information on Turkish religious life in the pre-Islamic period. Turks’ religion was based on an ancient system of complex beliefs widespread in Inner Asia. The conventional name for this belief system was Shamanism. Shamanism is

a method to calm the body and mind and to get rid of stress in a mechanical way. It heals not only the mind but also it is believed to heal the soul.<sup>71</sup> In the period before Islam shaman leaders were not only called for routine religious practice but also they were called for medical needs. For example Krader notes that “a shaman is a curer who practices his medicine in a state of trance or ecstasy” and he continues writing that “a constant feature is the beating on a drum and singing songs which invoke Adam, Noah or Daniel.”<sup>72</sup>

From the Middle Eastern point of view, the Turkish flux into the Islamic world occurred with the capture of Turkish nomads in border raids. Actually Islam was introduced to the Turkish peoples of Anatolia with the Alparslan’s victory of the Malazgirt battle. This happened long after the rise of Islam. The conquerors of Anatolia were no longer the predominant Arab sources of the early Islamic conquests but rather Turks. It is noteworthy that the roots of today’s modern Turks are found in Anatolia. Turks were the descendants of the non-Muslim, non-Turkish peoples who inhabited the region before the Battle of Malazgirt (1071). In a much quoted phrase, “we are both the conquerors and the conquered.” Turks’ conversion to Islam had opened the gates of the Middle East to Turks. Anatolia became the place then where the Turks mixed their inner Asian nomadic heritage, their Islamic heritage and the ancient Mediterranean heritage of agrarian civilization.<sup>73</sup>

From the victory of Malazgirt to the fourteenth century, most Turks converted to Islam. This brought the first great civilizational divide in the history of Turks. The

creation of a Turco-Islamic culture started with the Central Asian peoples' entrance to Islam. The Turkish adoption of Islam changed their identity. It has been suggested that Muslim Turks sank their national identity in Islam as the Arabs and the Persians had never done.<sup>74</sup> As Cagatay explains Islam has become more than a faith for its believers. It is also a particular set of belief systems and morals which command the practices of daily life and socialization of the Muslims. Until the establishment of secular systems the Turks in Anatolia and the Turks in Central Asia were gathered around "a joint faith, a collective culture, a shared identity, and a common political goal."<sup>75</sup> In short Islam, one of the great world religions, was the basis for most Turks' identity. The significance of this change becomes clear from the basic features of Islamic faith.

As the last monotheist religion Islam means "submission [to the one God]," and a Muslim is "one who submits". The Qur'an identifies Abraham as a Muslim and Muslims see Islam as the religion of Abraham. Abraham has also submitted to God and he was a monotheist. Actually, Adam is believed to generate an understanding of relations among Islam, Christianity, and Judaism that proved profoundly important for later Islamic societies.

The revelations that Prophet Muhammad (sav) received during his life were compiled into the written text of Qur'an. The Qur'an includes many topics and characters that are also found in the Bible and frequently mentions Jews and Christians. This is because all of God's prophets (*nabi*) and messengers (*rasul*) received the same revelations.



Although the Prophet Muhammed (sav) is regarded as the last prophet, Muslims accept all the previous Prophets of God as they are acknowledged in the Qur'an. The Prophet Muhammed (sav) was born in 570 C.E., and his prophetic mission continued from 610 to his death in 632 C.E. The Qur'an, the holy book of Islam, includes all the principles of Islam for the community of believers to follow.

Accepting Islam means announcing the oneness of God, *tawhid*. It means accepting certain beliefs, summarized in this oft-quoted verse: "O you who believe, you shall believe in GOD and His messenger, and the scripture He has revealed through His messenger, and the scripture He has revealed before that. Anyone who refuses to believe in GOD, and His angels, and His scriptures, and His messengers, and the Last Day, has indeed strayed far astray." (Qur'an 4.136)

When a person believes in Islam, he becomes a member of the Islamic community, *umma*. There are certain rules that members practice. The most basic principles are the "five pillars" of Islam: the profession of faith (*shahada*), prayer (*salat* in Arabic, *namaz* in Persian or Turkish), almsgiving (*zakat*), fasting (*sawm*) during Ramadan, and the pilgrimage (*hajj*). The obligatory prayer ritual occurs five times a day, although of course one can also pray at other times; the pilgrimage is obligatory once in a lifetime for every adult Muslim who is physically and financially capable of it. Fasting time occupies a month in a year. During the fasting time people, rich and poor, go without food and drink from dawn to dusk.

The five pillars shaped Islamic societies in numerous ways. For example the fivefold prayer helped Islamize the carpet making. Turkic carpets were used as prayer rugs which are called *seccade*. Struggle ( jihad ) is a term meaning the struggle for inner development. Another meaning of it is the struggle for the defense of Islam, the Holy War. The latter was often referred to as Gaza. Originally it referred to the “raiding” that bedouin tribes carried out among themselves. This Islamic word gave Turks a common purpose, which transcended tribal difference.

By the time Turks began to convert to Islam the religion had already led to the development of a civilization that went far beyond those basics. After the death of the Prophet Muhammed (sav) there has been a political split notably between Sunni and Shii Muslims, of whom the former ultimately became the majority. This split was mostly because of the questions of how to choose a new leader for the community after the death of the Prophet and how to understand that leader’s role. Sunni and Shii Muslims represent the two sects in Islam. As Esposito explains, Muslims mention that “the differences between Sunnis and Shiis do not have to do with dogma but rather are political having to do with the qualifications for the head of the Muslim community.”<sup>76</sup> Sunni Muslims, followers of the Sunnah (example of the Prophet), believed that “Prophet Muhammad (s.a.v) had died without establishing a system for selecting a successor.”<sup>77</sup> On the other hand, Shiis believed that selection of the head of the Muslim community should be hereditary. Therefore they wanted Ali, Muhammad’s first cousin and closest living male relative, to be the successor. Today, Sunnis constitute approximately 85 percent of Muslims and Shiis make up 15 percent.<sup>78</sup>

In the period through the fifteenth century, both members of these two sects were expanding. While the Turkish warriors were leaving their footprints through the military and political expansion from Anatolia to India, Iranian ulema was spreading Persian and Arabic literature with Sunni synthesis in the same region.

The examples of this Sunni synthesis include the establishment of medreses (schools of higher Islamic learning) and the sufi tradition and teachings, which emerged in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. This Sunni synthesis became the official religion of the Ottoman Empire. (1300–1922). It also provided universal values and it became recognizable by Muslims from different parts of the world.

Islam has a centuries-old history in Central Asia. Islam entered Central Asia in the the mid-seventh century. It became the dominant religion of the region in the eighth century. Tashkent and Buhara are the important cities of the Islamic world with their “leading centers of learning and culture.”<sup>79</sup> Islam has left a deep impact on the regional people with its medreses and mosques of Bukhara, Samarkand, Khiva, and other cities. However as Gunn states “during 70 years of Soviet rule, the Islamic mosques and medreses that had previously thrived in Central Asia were closed, destroyed, or converted into museums or factories; Islamic literature was carefully controlled by the state, and only a pale, state controlled "official" Islam was permitted to exist legally, though an underground Islam continued.”<sup>80</sup>

In the pre-Islam era, Inner Asia provided the bedrock of Turks’ religiosity. Turks

adopted religions that were present in their area at some point. By comparison Islam covered all the periphery religions and served as a unifier for the Turks. In this sense Islam is the next most decisive constituent of Turkic identity after language. Islam made the Turks members of an international Islamic community and offered Turks universal standards in law and ethics derived from Abrahamic tradition. Naturally, the Turks' experience of Islam ranged across the wide spectrum that any great religious tradition offers its adherents.<sup>81</sup> Islam also allows people to adhere to different formats to practice. For example there are Sunnis and Alevis in Turkey today or a wide region, from the Balkans to China, hosts different traditions of Naksibendi or sufi order. Religiously devoted Muslims today do not strike out against modernity but they engage the modern world through the window of these different traditions. The whole Near East was transformed by the Islamic conquests of the Arabs but the process of Islamization was very slow and lasted until the twentieth century when some nomadic Turkish tribes of Northern Kazakhstan and Western Siberia were converted to Islam by Kazan Tatar missionaries.

Currently, Islam is a strong part of the Turkish peoples' culture in Central Asian countries and Azerbaijan. However, the official Soviet atheism that lasted for 70 years broke people's ties with traditional Islamic teachings and practices. People are working to reconstruct their Islamic identity within the five formerly Soviet Republics of Central Asia. As Krader writes "the continuity of the Islamic tradition on the folk level is but a part of the whole; the intellectual life no longer exists in the form which it formerly had."<sup>82</sup> Turkic people of the Soviet Union are trying to shape their own Islamic identity on

the basis of their historical past.

There are also non-Muslim Turks. These people, historically, are Orthodox Christians (the Gagauz of the Danubian delta, the Chuvash of the Volga region, and the Yakuts and smaller groups in Siberia), Buddhists (the Tuvans of Siberia or the Yellow Uyghurs of Gansu Province, China), and a few Jews (the Karaim of eastern Europe).<sup>83</sup>

## **2.5 Conclusion**

This chapter reveals that Atatürk's nationalist principle was far from pan-ideals. Atatürk acknowledged that the origin of the Turks of today's Anatolia was in Central Asia but he never advocated pan-Turkism, which is the ideology of the union of all Turks. Atatürk rather pursued territorial policies focusing on the development of the newly founded Turkish Republic. In opposition to Atatürk's nationalist principle, pan-Turkism suggests the gathering of all Turkic people of the post-Soviet region under the control of the same state. Atatürk's stance on pan-Turkism explain why Turkish leaders strongly avoided pan-Turkist policies in Central Asia and Caucasus. As a matter of fact, Pan-Turkist adventures, historically, put Turkey into trouble. The pan-Turkist policies of Enver Pasha, who saw himself as the ruler of a realm embracing Chinese Turkestan, Russian Turkestan, Kazakhstan and Afghanistan and who was the commander of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Caucasian Army in the World War I, drove Turkey to a complete catastrophe. Thousands of qualified Turkish military troops got killed in their struggle against Soviets to help Central Asians free themselves from Moscow's authority. This is an important event that

takes place in Turkish historical memory in a negative way. Additionally the defeat of the Turkish-German alliance against Soviets put an end to Turkey's pan-turkist adventures. These historical events explain political leaders' distance from pan-turkism. On the side of the leaders of the Turkic Republics they are also comfortable that there is no place for Pan-Turkism in Turkey's official policy since they all wanted equal relations with other countries and wanted to be respected.

Turkey has an ethnic link with the five republics which are the subjects of this study. The Turks of Anatolia originally came from inner Asia and the Turks of the republics are aware of their common origin with those of the Turkish Republics. This sense of belonging has not been destroyed over time.

In the case of language no other factor unifies Turkic people better than language. As French Turkologist Deny states dialects spoken in the regional countries are related with the Turkish tongue.<sup>84</sup> Islam is the last explained factor that Turkish people of Turkey and the region can gather around.

As it is apparent from the factors listed above Turkey is in a more advantageous position than any other country in the world in terms of integrating with the region and exploiting the potential of the region with its cultural closeness and familiarity of the language.

## **CHAPTER 3: ECONOMIC RELATIONS BETWEEN TURKEY AND THE REGIONAL COUNTRIES**

### **3.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, I will explore what the common ties that are explained in the previous chapter mean for the countries in practice by analyzing Turkey's economic relations with the Turkic republics. My systematic approach is to talk about the countries in an alphabetical order.

I will start with Azeri-Turkish relations. Azerbaijan, which is the major oil exporter of the region, is an economically significant country for Turkey, which is in need of energy for its growing industry. Next I will analyze Turkish-Kazakh economic relations. Kazakh economy displays strong growth with its gas producing areas and high oil prices and is open to foreign investors. Turkey did not want to lose the opportunity to exploit Kazakhstan's openness to foreign investors and became one of the largest investors in Kazakhstan. I will continue with Kyrgyzstan which is the only country that is a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO). Despite the institutional and structural problems plaguing the Kirghiz economy, Kyrgyzstan is a promising country with its open market economy. Turkmen-Turkish economic relations form the next section in this chapter. Turkmenistan is a very important exporter of natural gas having the 4<sup>th</sup> largest natural gas reserves in the world. Estimates place Turkmenistan's natural gas reserves among those of the world's top 15 gas producing countries.<sup>85</sup> It is important for Turkey to engage in international pipeline construction business relations with

Turkmenistan as a country, which needs natural gas for domestic consumption. The final part of this chapter is on Uzbek-Turkish economic relations. Turkey wants to take part in the reconstruction process of Uzbek industry and Turkey already has outstanding trade relations with Uzbekistan.

### **3.2 Basic Drawbacks and Motivations to Invest in the Caspian Sea Region**

The Caspian Sea Region offers some challenges for foreign investors as well as opportunities. There is an unstable investment atmosphere in the post-Soviet region, where proper tax regulations and legal frameworks are missing. The regional countries, which gained their sovereignty at the beginning of the 1990s, are still in a period of transition from command economies to liberal ones. This transition period, however, is obviously not problem-free. The area has to deal with deficits, low output, unemployment and high inflation rate.

Corruption is another pervasive problem of this region. The business groups operating in the region are affected by corruption which prevents companies from functioning well. This corruption might be normal to a certain extent considering that the regional countries are facing challenges in their efforts to develop their economic situation. One excuse local people pose for corruption is that the majority of the foreign companies are not contributing heavily to the country's economy. They are operating independently rather than working in cooperation with local companies. In this way people lose the opportunity to learn from foreign companies' experiences and they feel



alienated.

Foreign direct investments are crucial for the ex-Soviet states to be able to modernize their economic structure and integrate to the rest of the world. Under Soviet rule people of the Caspian Sea Region supplied Moscow with raw materials as their primary economic activity. To free themselves economically from Moscow, people need to diversify their economies. They are desperately in need of foreign capital and new technology to become economically independent. FDI is also necessary to be able to extract and deliver oil, gas, mineral and other raw materials to increase the level of income. Their economic structure needs to be renewed with new regulations. At the same time new road and rail networks and oil and gas pipelines need to be constructed. Additionally businesspersons of the Caspian Sea Region need to export their raw materials like copper and cotton to the outside world to generate hard-currency earnings.

It is worth mentioning that it is not as easy as it seems to make investments in these regional countries. Under current regulations, state monopolies restrict the entry of private firms into certain industries, such as pipeline construction. It has also become hard for Turkey, which is perceived as a brother company, to become involved in the region because of some economic policy constraints.

Turkey is aware that fostering commercial activities in the region will make a big difference in the economies of the newly independent Turkic countries and will lead to economic cooperation. Furthermore a cooperative atmosphere will establish closer ties

among the ethnically and religiously diverse states that occupy the Caucasus and Central Asia. Turkey also expect to gain major economic benefits from the development of closer ties with the regional countries, which are seen as promising markets for the growing Turkish industry. Especially for small sized companies it is profitable to invest in the region in the absence of serious competitors at the initial stages of the republic's independence. It was an opportunity for the Turkish entrepreneurs to locate their investment in a region where Western companies were slow in the region deferred by unstable business atmosphere. On the other hand Turkish entrepreneurs had very limited possibilities in Western countries where the market is more structured and the economy is more developed when compared to the Central Asian market.

Among other investor countries particularly Turkey is quite motivated to do business in the region. Indeed, potential for economic cooperation is quite substantial, and the Turkish private sector, with the support of the government, has moved extensively to exploit the region's economic potential. In addition to economic gains, from a policy perspective, the expectation is that Turkey will become politically more effective in regional and global politics because of cultural and ethnic links with the region's large Turkic populations, which are undergoing profound political changes. This view is also based on the belief that Turkey's secular and emerging democratic credentials will enhance its importance as a model for the former Soviet republics.

Turkish business groups are aware that there are many opportunities for small and mid-sized businesses in many sectors in Central Asia and the Caucasus because of a lack

of competition and the existence of several positions offering business opportunities. These benefits are valid for western investors as well. However, unlike Turkey, they need to overcome language and culture barriers first. Americans and Western Europeans often experience difficulties in negotiating and bargaining with their prospective Central Asian clients. Turkey, on the other hand, enjoys the privilege of language familiarity and cultural closeness.

Turkish people can adopt themselves more easily than Western business people to the local conditions in Central Asia and the Caucasus. Considering these factors, for the Western company owners, who want to start business in the region, cooperation with the Turkish companies may be beneficial. Westerners can benefit from Turkish peoples' cultural affinities with the local people. As Winrow suggests, although Turkey doesn't have the capability to act as an original source it can act as a conduit for Western and Japanese capital.<sup>86</sup> Winrow suggests that "Western companies can provide much needed capital and sophisticated technology while Turkish companies can provide quality labor at a reasonable cost."<sup>87</sup> Turkish businesspersons can also provide the necessary connections to start a business since they can establish social ties with the people relatively easily. Therefore it is recommended for multinational corporations to establish a base in Turkey to link up with Central Asia and the Caspian Region as well.<sup>88</sup> By doing so; they will also utilize the services of Turkish sub-contractors and personnel to secure access to Central Asia.

Economic relations between Turkey and the regional countries bring mutual

benefits as well. The new republics will gain by attracting investment and technological expertise as well as a secure route for distributing their products to the West. As former president Turgut Ozal recognized, Turkey does not possess the required capital, expertise, and technology to meet the needs of the newly emerging republics. For this reason, as Aras Argues, “Ozal marketed Turkey as a channel for Western and Far Eastern investments to explore, produce, and distribute the former Soviet republics' oil, gas, and mineral riches.”<sup>89</sup>

Despite all these advantages Turkish investors, who enter the region with great enthusiasm, should question and calculate how the new republics would make payments to fund the projects or to meet the costs of Turkish exports. In the economic sphere, As Hale argues, “Turkish industry can fill some important gaps in the economies of the new republics but it can not directly supply more than a fraction of the capital and advanced technology that is ultimately needed.”<sup>90</sup>

### **3.3 Bilateral Economic Relations between Turkey and the Regional Countries**

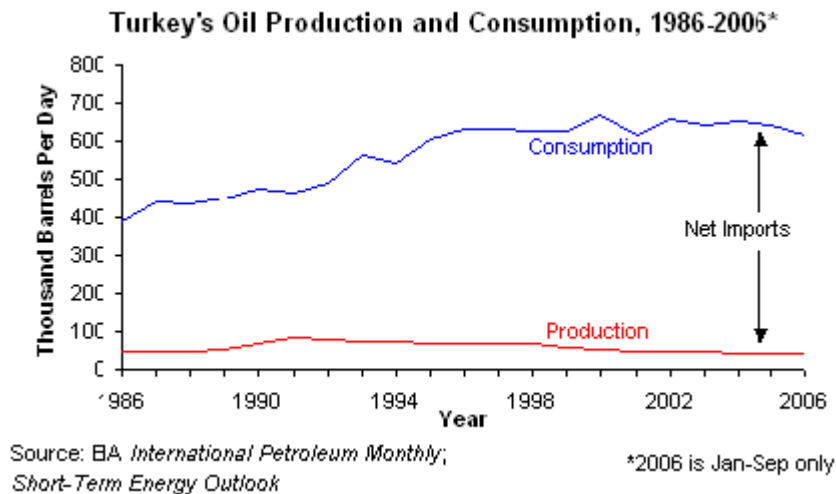
#### **3.3.1 Turkey-Azerbaijan**

##### **3.3.1.1 Turkey's Oil Demand**

Turkey forms a strategic energy bridge between the major oil and gas producing

areas in the Caspian Sea Basin and the consumer markets of the West. This feature of Turkey makes it increasingly important to world oil markets. However Turkey lacks significant domestic energy resources.

Turkey needs oil for its growing industry. It has been estimated that to maintain the present course of its economic development Turkey will require the importation of vast amounts of crude oil in the coming decades roughly 55 million tons annually by the year 2010.<sup>91</sup> Figure 2 below illustrates that Turkey's oil production has declined by half since 1991, when production peaked at 85,300 bbl/d. EIA forecasts that Turkey will consume 618,000 bbl/d of oil in 2006, down about 4 percent from 2005 figures. In general, as Turkey Energy Report indicates Turkish oil demand is mostly dependent on the country's economic performance.



Source: Energy Information Administration

**Figure 2: Turkey’s Oil Production and Consumption between 1986 and 2006**

Turkey’s oil sector includes both state-owned and private oil companies. Turkish Petroleum Corporation (TPAO) accounts for roughly 70 percent of Turkey’s domestic oil output and this corporation is responsible for the oil exploration and production activities. The Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources monitors the oil sector and makes decisions on the new projects.

Turkish Petroleum Refineries Corporation (TUPRAS) is the company that dominates the storage and refining sector in Turkey. TUPRAS controls 85 percent of Turkey’s domestic refining activities. TUPRAS became a semi-private corporation with the Koc-Shell Joint Venture Group’s purchase of a 51 percent stake in TUPRAS for

\$4.14 billion in September 2005<sup>92</sup> The company , which is in charge of the oil transport sector, is Petroleum Pipeline Corporation (Boru Hatlari ile Petrol Tasima A.S/BOTAS) and BOTAS owns the operations of virtually the entire Turkish pipeline network.

In December 2003, Turkish parliament passed a petroleum market reform bill. The aim of this law is to liberalize pricing of oil and oil products, end restrictions on vertical integration, and integrate pipeline, refining, and distribution functions. Parliaments are planning to privatize both TUPRAS and POAS (Petrol Ofisi, Turkey's major petroleum product retailer). Also, as a result of this law, price ceilings and import quotas on petroleum products were raised in early 2005.<sup>93</sup>

### **3.3.1.2 The Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Pipeline Project**

According to Turkey's Energy Report, Turkey had 300 million barrels of proven oil reserves as of January 2006. During the first nine months of 2006, Turkey produced an estimated 43,000 barrels per day (bbl/d) of oil, of which 99 percent was crude oil.<sup>94</sup> However Turkey's growing industry needs more oil.



Source: A to Z of Azerbaijan. <http://www.azerb.com/az-ceyhan-map.gif>

**Figure 3: The Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Pipeline**

As mentioned above, Turkey is an important transit country. It lies between the energy-rich countries of the Caspian Sea and Persian Gulf regions and energy importing countries in continental Europe. Turkish officials evaluated a number of projects that would transport oil into Turkey without the use of Bosphorus Straits which already has a heavy traffic. Numerous Bosphorus pipelines have been planned. The Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Pipeline (BTC), which bypasses the Bosphorus Straits oil transit chokepoint, is the first one that has been constructed.

The main economic goal behind this project, at the stage of feasibility studies, was that it would create economic wealth for the three nations, Azerbaijan, Turkey and Georgia, through which it passes. It is the first direct pipeline to deliver crude oil from the Caspian Sea to the Mediterranean without crossing Russian soil or passing through the Bosphorus or Turkish Straits. The 1,100-mile pipeline costs nearly \$4 billion to build,



and is operated by a BP-led consortium of 11 national and international oil companies.<sup>95</sup> The Turkish section is 1,070 kilometres long. It includes 4 pump stations, two metering stations and the Ceyhan marine export terminal<sup>96</sup> This is such a large project that through the Community Investment Program (CIP), the BTC and the South Caucasus Pipeline (SCP) projects are working with 120 communities in Azerbaijan, 72 communities in Georgia and 300 communities in Turkey.<sup>97</sup>

In May 2005, Azerbaijan began test filling in the Azeri section of the pipeline during the opening ceremony of the pipeline.<sup>98</sup> On 10 August 2005 the first volumes reached the Azeri-Georgian border and a year after the opening ceremony the first tanker at the Turkish port of Ceyhan was filled with oil from BTC.<sup>99</sup> This stage by stage line fill enabled the workers to ensure the integrity and safety of each section prior to introducing oil.

The line is estimated to have a peak capacity of more than one million bbl/d, and Turkey is expected to earn between \$140 and \$200 million per year in transit and operating fees from the project.<sup>100</sup> The team that was leading the BTC project was also leading the construction of the SCP project.

Some national and international environmentalist groups opposed the construction of the BTC pipeline claiming that it has serious environmental and safety risks. They argue that this pipeline construction causes damage to property, drinking water pollution and is non-compliant with Georgian state environmental permit conditions. British Petroleum (BP), the major company responsible for this project, responded to these

claims by stating that Environmental and Social Impact Assessments were being carried out by an international team of independent consultants. BP officials claim that they are very careful not to damage protected ecological, areas or archaeological sites, to require no resettlement of people, and to result in no permanent disruption to the livelihoods of local populations. These assessments were even made available for public comment and consultation in the mid-2002.

### **3.3.1.3 The South Caucasus Gas Pipeline Project**

Turkey possesses limited oil and natural gas resources. Therefore special attention has been paid to exploration and production activities in Turkey and abroad. The southeastern part of the country, particularly Hakkari, and the northwestern part of Turkey are the oil producing regions in the country. The country has oil in the Black, Mediterranean, and Aegean Sea. Two foreign oil companies, which are Royal Dutch Shell and Exxon Mobil, operating in Turkey extract oil from these areas. The production costs for oil reserves are high in Turkey. Therefore the recent exploration activities have focused on Turkey's offshore regions.

In 2005, TPAO and its international partners drilled the country's first exploration wells in the Black Sea. The TPAO-Torreador-Stratic joint venture oversaw the Western Black Sea Exploration and Development Project, while the TPAO-BP-Chevron joint venture ran the Eastern Black Sea Offshore Project.<sup>101</sup>

TPAO is also working for exploration and production projects along with the help of the Turkish Petroleum Overseas Company (TPOC). One of the company's most significant overseas oil production assets is the Azeri-Chirag-Guneshli (ACG) Project in Azerbaijan, which holds 5.4 billion barrels of proven oil reserves. TPAO has a 6.75 percent interest in the ACG Project, which produced an average 350,000 bbl/d of oil at the end of 2005.<sup>102</sup>

TPAO is also part of the Alov Exploration Project in the Azeri part of the Caspian Sea, which holds an estimated 5 billion barrels of recoverable oil reserves and sizeable natural gas reserves. The Alov exploration bloc formerly called Abikh Trend is located 110 miles (180 km) south-southeast of Baku, the Azeri capital.<sup>103</sup> Exploration activities are expected to be carried out between 2006 and 2008.

Turkey has signed an agreement to import natural gas from Azerbaijan's large Shah Deniz field. This gas pipeline is known as Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum (BTE) or the South Caucasus Pipeline (SCP). This is a 692 km long pipeline designed to bring gas from the Shah Deniz Field in the Azerbaijan sector of the Caspian Sea through Georgia and on to Turkey-Georgian border. As it is mentioned above this line's route is parallel to the BTC pipeline. The last point for the BTE pipeline is near Horasan in Turkey.

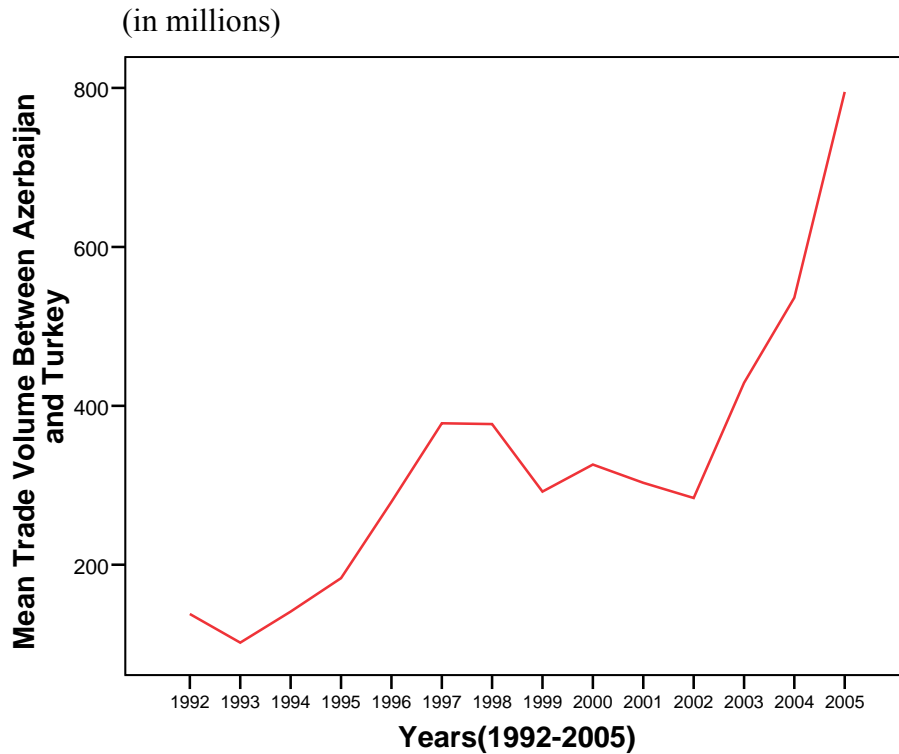
Construction on the \$1.3 billion project began in late 2004, and the pipeline has been active since late 2006 transporting gas to Azerbaijan and Georgia from Shah Deniz Stage 1. This line is initially expected to carry 233 Bcf per year of natural gas to the

Turkish market, and can be increased to 700 Bcf with future additions of compressor stations. BP and Norway's Statoil each hold a 25.5 percent stake in the project and serve as co-operators, with the State Oil Company of Azerbaijan Republic (SOCAR), Russia's Lukoil, Turkey's TPAO, France's Total, and Iran's NICO holding around 10 percent each.<sup>104</sup>

According to information given on the BP website, “BP and Stat Oil, as the operators of the Shah Deniz gas condensate development project and Azerbaijan Gas Supply Company (AGSC) respectively announced that the first gas started to flow into BOTAS’s gas transportation system on July 3, 2007.”<sup>105</sup> Azerbaijan Gas Supply Company (AGSC), which is responsible for the gas sales, sold the gas from Shah Deniz Stage 1 to Azerbaijan, Georgian Oil and Gas Corporation (GOGC), BOTAS and the BTC Company.

This gas is transported to BOTAS’s gas transportation system through SCP. The pipeline was successfully tied to the Turkish pipeline system at the Georgian – Turkish border.

#### **3.3.1.4 Trade with Azerbaijan**



Source: DEIK ( Foreign Economic Relations Board )

**Figure 4: Trade Volume between Azerbaijan and Turkey between 1992 and 2005**

Turkish businessmen are ranked top among the businessmen who make investments in sectors, excluding oil sector, in Azerbaijan. Companies, which were established solely by those Turkish businessmen or by partnership between Azerbaijani and Turkish businessmen, have provided thousands of people with jobs.

As it is apparent from Graph 2, prepared by Foreign Economic Relations Board (DEIK), Azerbaijan's foreign trade volume reached 4 billion 37 million U.S. dollars between January 2003 and October 2003. Turkey has 4.32 percent of share in exports and

7.68 percent of share in imports of Azerbaijan and Azerbaijan has around 3 percent of share in foreign trade volume of Turkey. Turkey's trade volume in Azerbaijan reached \$800million in 2005. Variety of goods from electronic devices to automotive industry tools are being exported to Azerbaijan. As it is apparent in Graph 2 trade between Turkey and Azerbaijan shows an increasing trend starting from 2002. More than half of the Turkish imports from Azerbaijan are based on mineral oil. Recently many Turkish and Azerbaijani companies joined 'The Seventh Turkish Exports Goods Fair', which was held in Baku in September 2003, to further improve economic relations.<sup>106</sup>

### **3.3.1.5 Eximbank Credits from Turkey**

Upon the break up of the Soviet Empire the Turkish Foreign Ministry signed "Agreed Minutes" agreements with the Turkic Republics to contribute to their development projects to increase economic cooperation between Turkey and the post-Soviet Turkic Republics. These agreements included articles about opening credit accounts in the related republics' state banks to finance some of their national development plans.

**Table 1: Eximbank Credits**

COUNTRIES	TOTAL CREDITS	USED CREDITS
Azerbaijan	\$250 million	\$91.74 million
Kirghizstan	\$240 million	\$213 million
Kyrgyzstan	\$75 million	\$75 million
Turkmenistan	\$134.76 million	\$133 million
Uzbekistan	\$375 million	\$369 million

Source: DEIK ( Foreign Economic Relations Board )

Turk Eximbank opened a \$250 million credit account in 1992 with an agreement signed between Turkish and Azeri states. This account was specified as buyers' credit guaranteed by the Turkish state. Initially Turk Eximbank credits were used for Turkish exportation projects and for emergent needs like medicine and nutrition. Azerbaijan has spent \$91.74 million of the credit till now.<sup>107</sup>

Turk Eximbank only meets the costs of goods and services which are provided from Turkey to use for projects which are carried out by Turkish building contractors. In addition to this Turk Eximbank pays for the articles that are exported from Turkey. The only country that opened credit accounts for the Turkic Republics at the initial stages of their independence was Turkey. Other organizations attempted to enter this market only after they witnessed successful business experiences of Turkey.

### **3.3.2 Turkey-Kazakhstan**

#### **3.3.2.1 Turkish Investment in Kazakhstan**

Business relations between Turkey and Kazakhstan started immediately after Kazakhstan's independence. Turkey soon became active in all sectors of the Kazakh economy from agriculture to hotel management.

Kazakhstan hosts a big part of Turkey's investments in Central Asia. It is estimated that Turkey's investment is worth \$1.5 billion.<sup>108</sup> Turkey is the fourth biggest investor in the country following the US, South Korea and England. The investment areas that the US and England mostly focus on are the petrol and gas industry, electricity and mining sectors. Turkish businesspersons mostly invest in the areas of telecommunication, hotel management, agriculture, supermarket management, nutrition, products made from iron, steel and copper, and services.

During the first few years of the Kazakh Republic Turkish companies mostly started business in building construction. Recently Turkish companies turned their attention to the production of goods and services. Turkey also achieved considerable success in renewing the infrastructure of Kazakhstan's industry and transportation.

There are 129 Turkish funded companies in the country and the capital of these companies is worth \$1.3 billion.<sup>109</sup> Petrol, hotel management and construction, education



and banking sectors constitute %80-90 of Turkish investments in the country. According to the Foreign Trade Secretariat in Turkey, 54 Turkish companies working in the area of building construction have taken the responsibility of 147 projects that are worth \$3.2 billion.<sup>110</sup> After Astana became the capital of the country, many state buildings and hotels in this city have been constructed by Turkish businessmen. The major Turkish companies operating in Kazakhstan are Alarko, Ahsel, Aysel, Emsaş, Enka, İdil, İсот, Koray, Mensel, Tekfen, Üçgen and Zafer.

Among the important projects that Turkish companies have completed are Astana International Airport, General Assembly Building, Presidential Residence, Regent Ankara Hotel, Okan Intercontinental Astana, Children Rehabilitation Center, National Museum, Ahmet Yesevi University, Astana Towers, GSM Telecommunication Infrastructure, Kazakh section of Tengiz-Novorossisk pipeline, shopping centers, highways and factories.

Turkish businesspersons also contribute to Kazakh peoples' income by employing them in foreign direct investment (FDI) and building construction projects. Turkish investors have employed over 10.000 people. %85 of this labor force is composed of Kazakh people.

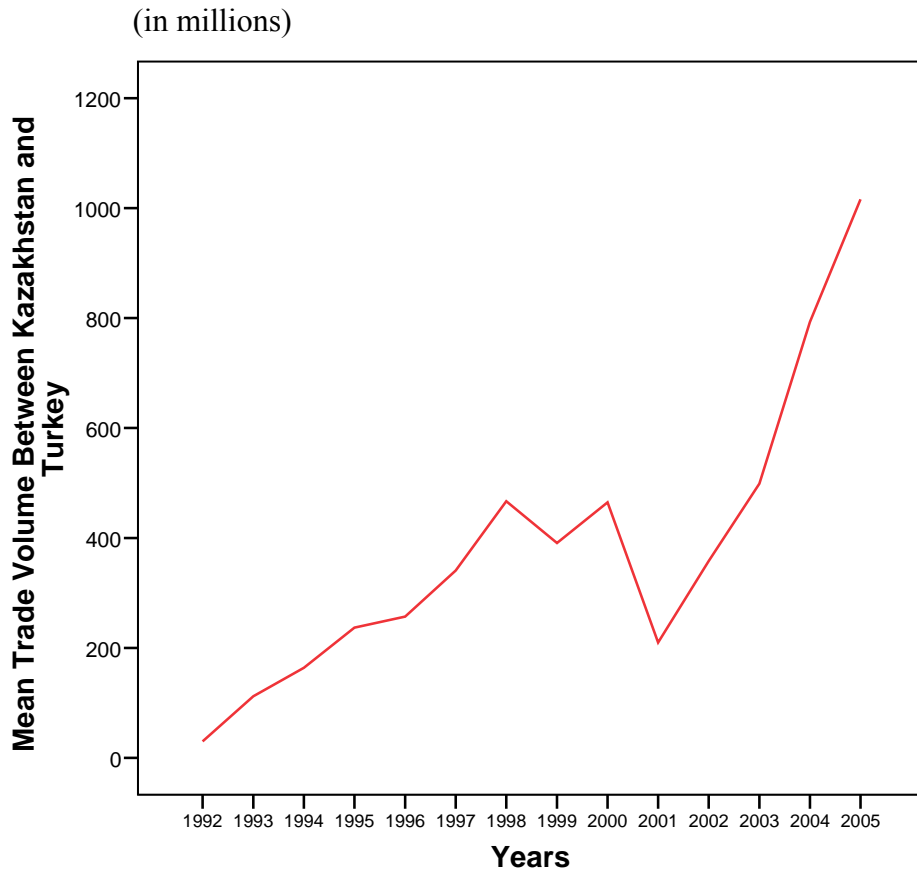
Apart from these projects TPAO made considerable investments in Kazakhstan in the area of energy. TPAO is a state-owned company that has the largest share in Turkish investment in Kazakhstan. TPAO has established a joint venture with Kazakh Oil

Company and created 'Kazakturkmunay' (KTM) Company. TPAO's investment between 1994 and 1999, in this country is worth \$272.9 million KTM is a company that produces 5000 barrels of crude oil daily.<sup>111</sup>

A recent deal that TPAO has signed with Kazakhstan is worth \$750 million. This agreement was signed to develop oil reserves in the northwestern Aktyubinsk region near the Caspian Sea. The contract is expected to last at least 29 years, and Kazakhstan could earn \$1.8 billion in revenues. TPOA and Amoco will set up a 50-50 joint venture to finance and implement the project. The first four years of the contract are set aside for exploration and the following 25 years for production. Turkish officials estimate that the region contains about 327 million barrels of oil.<sup>112</sup> These are the courageous attempts of Turkey to have a say in the energy game in the region.

Kazakhstan has more economic projects to accomplish on its agenda. However Turkey does not have much to offer Kazakhstan about their new projects because these projects require high technology and capital which is beyond the limits of Turkey's economic capacity.

### 3.3.2.2 Trade with Kazakhstan



Source: DEIK (Foreign Economic Relations Board)

**Figure 5: Trade Volume between Kazakhstan and Turkey between 1992 and 2005**

According to the 2006 report of DEIK on Turkish-Kazakh Commercial and Economic Relations, in the last 12 years trade relations between Turkey and Kazakhstan have followed an increasing trend and trade volume, which was \$30 million in 1992 and reached \$465 million in 2000. In 2001, however, trade volume was amounted to \$210.1

million resulting from the situation that Turkey did not import mineral oil, which takes a significant place in Turkey's importation products from Kazakhstan. Trade volume increased again starting from 2002 and in 2005 it increased by 28% by exceeding \$1billion.

Among the products Turkey exports to Kazakhstan are industrial machines, plastic tools, carpets, products made from steel, iron, aluminum and plastic, furniture, detergents, sugar and motor vehicles. In the future Turkey's export is expected to be on textile, ready-made clothing, home products, agricultural and construction machines and food.

Turkey's export to Kazakhstan has shown a stable increase between 1995 and 1998. In 1999 Turkey's export rate decreased by 55 % when compared to the previous year due to the financial crisis in Russia. Kazakh foreign trade was dependent on the Russian economic situation and the 1998 Russian economic crisis affected Kazakh economy negatively. People preferred to buy Russian products, which were cheap at that time, to Turkish products. This crisis also affected Turkish business in the country. According to Kazakhstan Country Report, which was prepared by KOSGEB in 2004, indicates that prior to the crisis there were 250 active Turkish companies; today only half of these companies are able to continue operating in the country. After the Russian financial crisis was over Turkish-Kazakh relations were recovered. In 2000 Turkey's exports volume increased by 22.8% again. In 2001 exportation rate showed only a slight change with a 1% percentage increase and in 2002 Turkey showed a 32% percentage

increase in its exportation to Kazakhstan. However Turkey's export rate for Kazakhstan was still behind the level of export rate in 1998 considering that Turkey's general export rate was 12 % in 2002. Kazakhstan's share was % 0.4 in Turkey's total exports.

According to KOSGEB's report, Kazakhstan's 72 % of exported commodity to Turkey is related with mining sector. Nearly half of Turkey's import from Kazakhstan is composed of copper and copper-made products. Other than copper Turkey import cereals, leather, inorganic chemical materials, lead and products made from lead and zinc.

Turkey's import rate increased steadily until 2001. However due to the severe economic crisis in Turkey Turkey's imports rate decreased by 74 % in 2001. Turkey experienced a strong financial crisis in 2001 and this led to the contraction of the economy. Chronic inflation undermined Turkish economic performance. Nominal and real interest rates were high, and unstable. The public debt burden was high and rising. Because of all these negative signs Turkey's growth record was weak and volatile. Eventually Turkey's imports indicators started to reach its previous levels starting from 2002. Despite these developments in Turkish exports to Kazakhstan the level of Turkish exports rate was still behind 1998 rates. This was because of the situation that Kazakhstan's share in Turkey's total exports was little with only a 4 percentage of total share.<sup>113</sup>

### **3.3.2.3 Eximbank Credits**

Turk Eximbank has opened a \$240 million credit account for Kazakhstan. \$55.7 million, \$40 million of which has already been spent, is left for funding trade projects and \$184 million, \$173 million has already been spent, is left for investment projects.<sup>114</sup>

Decisions to fund new projects are made by Turk Eximbank officials after a critical evaluation process. Turkey is willing to support all kinds of development projects which will bring mutual benefits to Turkey and Kazakhstan.

### **3.3.3 Turkey-Kyrgyzstan**

#### **3.3.3.1 Turkish Investment in Kyrgyzstan**

Kyrgyzstan is distinct from other Turkic Republics due to its membership in the WTO. Although this membership gives Kyrgyzstan the opportunity to be a partner of the global economy, Kyrgyzstan's institutional and structural problems plague the development of its trade. The Kyrgyzstan Report, prepared by TICA in 2004, states that the Turkish-Kazakh trade was worth \$100 million in 2005, four times the 2001 figures. Turkish exports constitute 90 percent of the bilateral trade volume, making it a key trade partner for Kyrgyzstan.<sup>115</sup>

Turkish entrepreneurs were among the first foreign investors to bring technology and investment to the newly developing Kyrgyz economy and Kyrgyzstan was quick to instigate its liberal and democratic transition policies to reach macroeconomic

stabilization. Kyrgyzstan has one of the most open trade policies among former Soviet Union countries.<sup>116</sup> That 90.7 percent of Kirghiz national income came from its foreign trade in 1991 may be appreciated as a sign of its openness to the outside world.<sup>117</sup>

Turkish investments intensify in the areas of tourism, nutrition, beverage production, banking, furniture, tea packaging, plastic, education and production of building construction equipments. We learn from Dikkaya and Keles that one of the important business groups operating in Kyrgyzstan is the ATA Group, which was established in 1990. This group has three main business branches which are Detergent (Detas Co.), Food (Nobel Co.) and Furniture (Nobel Co.). This group, like any other business group, first made a feasibility study in Kyrgyzstan through personal acquaintances. When they saw that there is not much competition in the Kirghiz market they didn't want to miss this opportunity. They sought out the best investment fields and soon they took a leading role in the market. There are two more major foreign direct investment motives in the region. One of them is the low labor costs and the other one is Kyrgyzstan's proximity to other countries in the region, such as Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.

The ATA group has two factories and 300 workers in Kyrgyzstan. The group has a market share of 80 percent in detergent and is also well placed in the market for its chocolate products. This group also sells furniture from Turkey. They have a well placed market in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan as well as in Kyrgyzstan. This kind of foreign trade has an important place in this group's revenue.<sup>118</sup>

Ucko Plastik Co. is another company that has been operating in Kyrgyzstan since 1996. It has three separate business branches which are Bishkek Plastic Co. (plastic), Yukselen Ortaklar Co. (candy) and Hedef Co. (sugar and salt). Primary products, which are produced in Kirgizstan, of the company are plastic products, sugar and salt. This company is also exporting candies from Turkey. This company exports its products from Turkey to Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan as well. A big part of the company's revenue comes from these four foreign markets.<sup>119</sup> Beta Group is another Turkish company that operates in the area of tea production and packaging and has a significant market share in Central Asia. Beta Group diversified its investment areas by opening a shopping center called Beta Store and a restaurant called Beta Gourmet. Plaskap is another Turkish company that produces plastic lids for beverages in its factory which was opened in 1998 in Biskek.<sup>120</sup>

In the area of building construction Turkish entrepreneurs have undertaken a smaller number of projects in Kyrgyzstan when compared to other Turkic Republics. Turkish contractors have completed 18 projects starting from 2002. System Engineering completed the construction of Hotel Biskek and undertook the responsibility of this hotel's management with its Kirghiz partner. Some of the major projects that have been completed are Manas International Airport, Biskek Coca-Cola Factory, Hotel Biskek Pinara and Biskek-Os Highway Rehabilitation Project. Anadolu Group owns Coca Cola Biskek, 90 % of which belongs to the Turkish side, in association with Coca Cola Company. This company has 233 sale centers and has a 39 million tone production capacity.



Turkey has an important place in banking and flight sector. Demir Kirghiz International Bank is one of the three big banks and the first international bank in Kyrgyzstan. The Turkish partner of this bank owns 70 % of this bank. Kyrgyzstan has only two airways operating in the country. One of them is Turkish Airways and the other one is British Airways.

Additionally; six Kyrgyz companies have been operating in Turkey since 2003. Their total investment is worth 393 billion in Turkish Liras.<sup>121</sup>

### **3.3.3.2 Advantages and Disadvantages of Investing in Kyrgyzstan**

There are some disadvantages as well as advantages of investing in Kyrgyzstan. Some of these disadvantages are lack of regulatory rules, an unstable tariff system and unsatisfactory banking services resulting from the transformation of Kirghiz economy from Soviet style to a liberal one. There is no deposit insurance and the transaction fees are very high within the banks. One governmental regulation that makes things difficult is that acts which are passed on a particular date can affect transactions before the date these acts are approved. For this reason, the companies are forced to make some extra payments and edit their documents to make them in accordance with the laws. Apart from these the biggest problem is to get money from the Kirghiz creditors.<sup>122</sup>

Investors in food business are not concerned about the quality of personnel. This situation directly affects the quality of products. The country offers cheap labor but

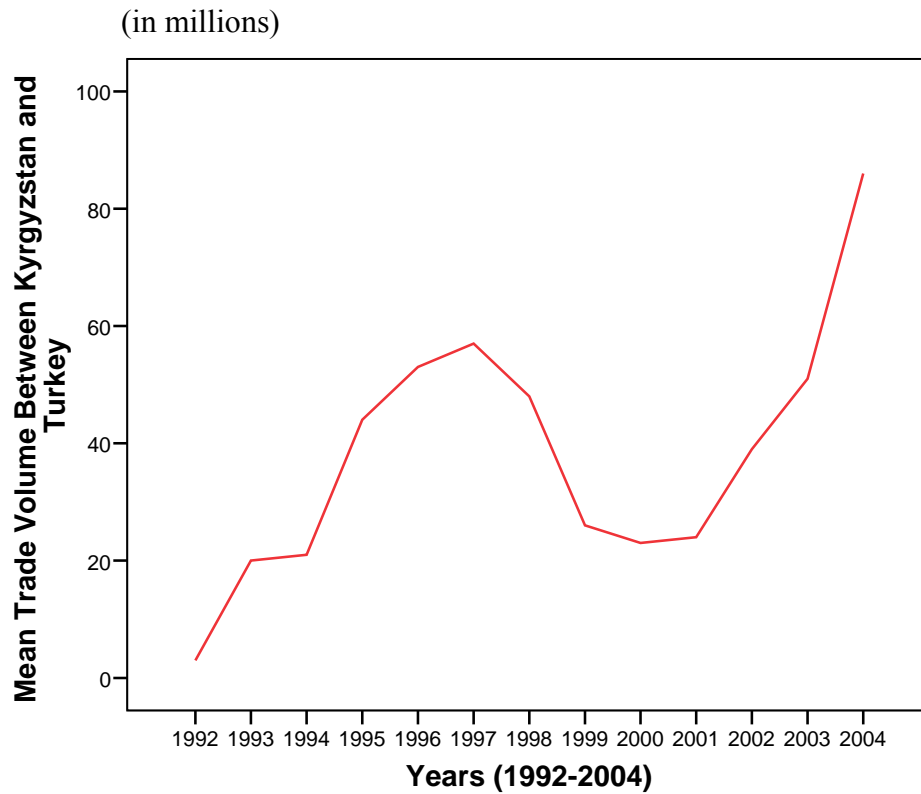
employees are not working as they are expected to work.<sup>123</sup> Actually the problem with this country is that the communist work ethic is still pervasive. Thus employees can not adopt themselves to capitalist work practices overnight.

One of the main obstacles that businesspersons have to deal with is a working infrastructure. There are no serious infrastructure problems in the capital city, Bishkek but the case is different for the other cities. Some cities experience irregular electricity cutoffs, tax, bribery, high turnover rate and difficulty in finding qualified employees. Red tape and the insufficiency of infrastructure affect small businesses negatively. However these companies seem to be content with cooperating in the region. They are in a leadership position in Kyrgyzstan. Moreover they wish to expand their businesses to the neighboring countries of Kyrgyzstan.

The Turkish business groups are still satisfied with the current performance in spite of these drawbacks. They are making profits out of low competition in all sectors. FDI motives of the companies are mostly driven by Turkey's economic conditions. Many groups decided to exploit economic opportunities when they faced the 2001 economic crisis. The company chose Kyrgyzstan to start a business mostly by their close contacts in the Kirghiz market. Lack of competition smoothed the progress of the company in the market. The other FDI motives in Kyrgyzstan were that cheap labor costs and Kyrgyzstan's proximity to other countries in the region such as Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.

In fact companies can make even more profits if they form partnerships in the region. This choice is not risk-free either; the problem with joint ventures is that the partner, who is expected to handle the drawbacks of the region, should be carefully chosen.

### **3.3.3.3 Trade with Kyrgyzstan**



Source: Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency

**Figure 6: Trade Volume between Kyrgyzstan and Turkey between 1992 and 2004**

According to the Kyrgyzstan Country Report prepared by TIKA, trade volume, which was amounted to \$3.2million in 1992 in Kyrgyzstan, reached \$57.1 million in 1997. Turkey's trade volume in Kyrgyzstan increased starting from 2001 resulting from the fact that Russia's financial crisis of 1998 and Turkey's financial crisis in 2001 was over.

Turkey's exports to Kyrgyzstan are composed of woven textile goods, carpets,

electronic machines, plastics and plastic made products, cauldrons, soup, furniture, aluminum and aluminum made products.

According to Kyrgyzstan Country Report prepared by Small and Medium Sized Industry Development Organization (KOSGEB), Turkey's export rate increased by 5.2 % in 1997 and the trade volume was amounted to \$29.6 million. In 1998 Turkey's export rate decreased by 16.3 % and this decreasing trend in exports continued in 1999 and 2000. In 1999 Turkey's export volume to Kyrgyzstan declined by 44 % and in 2000 Turkey's export rate decreased even more than it was in 1999. However in 2002 Turkish export rate reached its level of 1999 with a 37 percentage increase. However Turkey's export volume to this country has not yet reached its level which was reached before the Russian financial crisis.

Product groupings such as fruits and vegetables, cotton, electronic machines and silk have an important place in Turkish imports from Kyrgyzstan. Turkey's imports volume from Kyrgyzstan increased by 28.5 percentage in 1997 when compared to the previous year. In 1998 Turkey's import rate decreased by 20.4 %. One year later Turkey's import from Kazakhstan declined even more than 1998 with a 59 percentage decrease. This decreasing trend in the imports rate continued in 2000 as well with a 15.5 percentage. In 2001 Turkey's import rate increased by 156 %. The following year increasing trend in imports continued and imports from Kyrgyzstan increased by 150 % reaching a \$15.7 million worth budget. Nearly 55 % of import is composed of eatable fruits and vegetables.

#### **3.3.3.4 Eximbank Credits**

Credits from the Turkish Eximbank have done much to stimulate trade and business links between the two countries. Turk Eximbank opened a \$75million credit account for Kyrgyzstan.<sup>124</sup> Half of this credit would be used for national development projects and the second half was for financing trade in Kyrgyzstan. Kyrgyz business groups used only \$12.4 for development projects while they used all the money given for commercial projects.

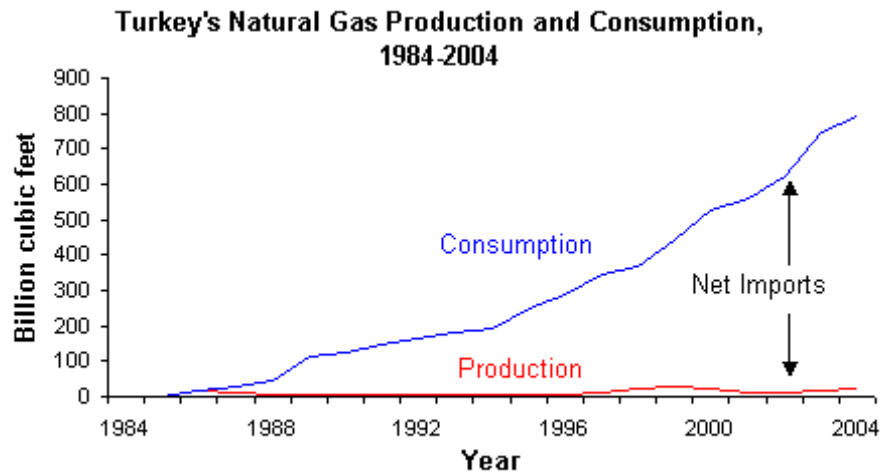
### **3.3.4 Turkey-Turkmenistan**

#### **3.3.4.1 Turkey's Need for Natural Gas**

Turkey's need for natural gas has increased recently. According to Turkey's Energy Profile Report, Turkey had 300 billion cubic feet (Bcf) of proven natural gas reserves as of January 2006.<sup>125</sup> In 2004, Turkey consumed 793 Bcf of natural gas while only producing 24 Bcf of natural gas.

The share of natural gas in primary energy consumption has been suggested to increase to 27 % in 2010. Natural gas consumption which is now 10 bcm, will reach 54 bcm by 2010, increasing five times.<sup>126</sup> Domestic natural gas production is expected to increase 250 million m<sup>3</sup> in 1997 to 620 million m<sup>3</sup> in 2000 and then the gas production will be decreased to 130 million m<sup>3</sup> in 2005 and around 90 million m<sup>3</sup> in 2010. These

figures show us the importance of natural gas imports for Turkey.<sup>127</sup>



Source: EIA International Energy Annual

Source: Energy Information Administration

**Figure 7: Turkey's Natural Gas Consumption**

To meet the natural gas demand Turkey has been in pursuit of multiple international pipeline connections.

Turkey wants to be a part of international pipeline construction business primarily because it needs natural gas for domestic consumption. Turkey's gas demand is increasing rapidly and the prime consumers are industrial users and natural gas-fired electric power plants. Because of the severe economic problems the natural gas demand decreased from about 1.6 Tcf in 2005 to under 0.9 Tcf in that year, a 45 percent decrease according to Botas's estimates.<sup>128</sup> Another issue that these numbers indicate is that Turkey has more natural gas coming from different contracts than it is expected to



consume. To date, Turkey has signed deals for around 1.8 Tcf per year of natural gas imports in 2010, more than 25 percent above the Botas forecast for Turkish natural gas consumption (1.4 Tcf) in that year.<sup>129</sup>

#### **3.3.4.2 Turkmen-Turkey-Europe Gas Pipeline**

Turkey has rather debatable gas pipeline links with Russia and Iran. Turkey wants to further diversify its natural gas sources. To this end, Turkey has looked to other natural gas-rich countries in the region. There are a number of projects under construction or in the stage of planning. The question is whether or not Turkey is able to provide the sufficient funding for pipeline construction projects. The strongest motivation for Turkey to buy natural gas is the industrialized West and the newly industrializing central and eastern Anatolian regions.

Turkish foreign policy makers are especially interested in bringing Turkmen natural gas to Turkey. The representatives from Botas and Turkmen Oil and Gas Ministry got together in a meeting in February 1996 to reach a decision on the gas pipeline options. According to Memorandum of Understanding signed between the two countries on 14 February 1996 Turkey would purchase two billion cubic meters of natural gas in 1998, 5 billion cubic meters between 1999-2004 10 billion cubic meters between 2005-2009 and 15 billion between 2010-2020.<sup>130</sup>

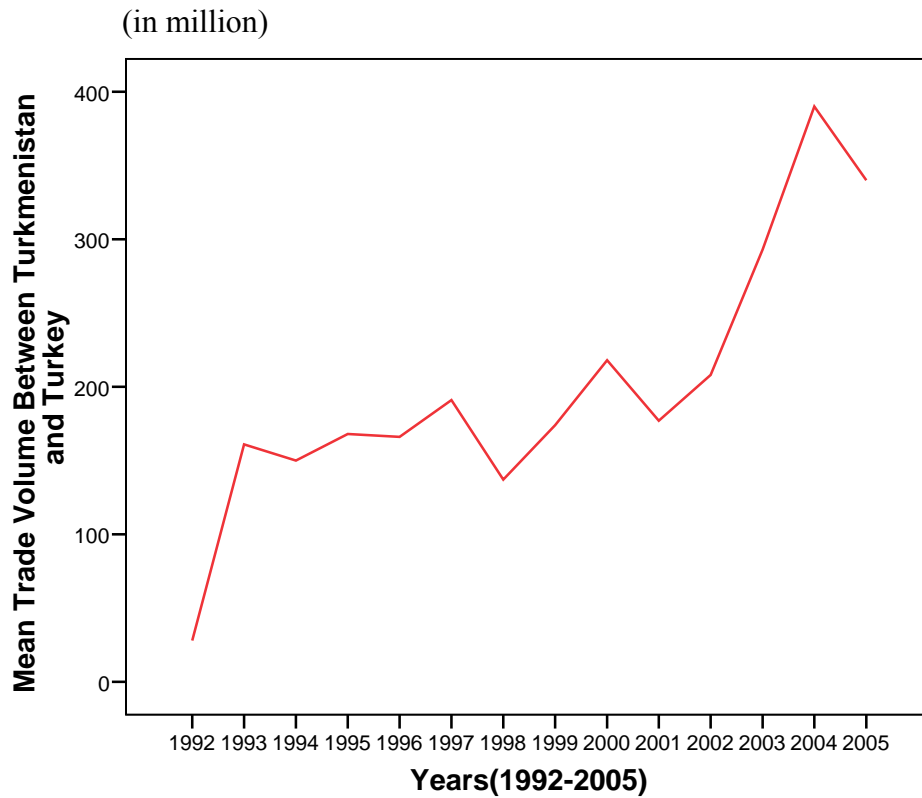
A number of routes have been discussed for the Turkmenistan-Turkey-Europe gas

pipeline. The French Sofregaz Company offered a few possible routes and several options for the gas transportation to the Turkmen government in January 1998.<sup>131</sup> One of these plans located the starting point as Shatlyk gas deposit in Turkmenistan. The road would go from the east to the west of Turkmenistan and parallel to the operating Turkmen Iranian Korpeje Kord Kuy gas pipeline.

Eventually in May 1999, BOTAS signed an agreement in Ashgabat to build a 1,050-mile natural gas pipeline from Turkmenistan that would travel underneath the Caspian Sea, across Azerbaijan and Georgia, and on to Turkey.<sup>132</sup> When it reached Baku it would be connected with the SCP, which is also known as “Trans-Caspian Pipeline”. The Turkmen option would carry between 16 and 28 billion cubic meters of gas annually to Turkey and then to Europe.

Within a few months major oil companies, General Electric, Bechtel, Royal Dutch Shell, established a joint venture to work on this project. In spring 2000 this group had to stop the construction process due to the arguments that arose from among the Trans-Caspian participant nations over allocating quotas for Azerbaijan's use of the pipeline. Furthermore upon the discovery of the Shah Deniz natural gas field in Azerbaijan this gas pipeline lost its importance.

### **3.3.4.3 Trade with Turkmenistan**



Source: KOSGEB (Small and Medium Sized Industry Development Organization)

**Figure 8: Trade Volume between Turkmenistan and Turkey between 1992 and 2005**

Turkmenistan is the region's third largest Turkish trade partner after Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. As Figure 6 shows the volume of bilateral trade nearly doubled between 2001 and 2005, increasing from \$175 million to \$345 million. Turkish trade makes up about 5 percent of Turkmenistan's total trade.

Some of the major products that Turkey exports to Turkmenistan are electronic devices, both whole and individual parts in addition to products made from iron and steel, and soap.

KOSGEB's report on Turkish-Turkmen economic relations explain that Turkey's trade volume with Turkmenistan was amounted to \$28.5 million in 1992 but it showed a continuous increase and reached \$191 million in 1997. However the 1998 financial crisis in Russia affected regional countries and Turkey's export rate showed a decreasing trend but increased by 11% in 1999.

The trend of Turkey's increasing export to Turkmenistan continued in 2000 as well and the export rate increased by 13,6 % when compared to 1999. The export rate reached a high point in 2000 and remained same as it was in 1999 in 2000.

Cotton is the main raw material source for the Turkish textile industry. Therefore Turkey imports cotton in large amounts from Turkmenistan. For example, Turkey spent \$91 million on its cotton imports, which was worth \$97 million in 2000. Among the other products that Turkey imports from Turkmenistan are knitting wool and raw leather. Turkey's decreasing trend of imports from Turkmenistan between 1995 and 1998 has changed starting in 1999 when Turkey's import rate increased by 60 %. In 2000 it increased by 52,8 %.<sup>133</sup>

#### **3.3.4.4 Problems that Businesspersons Face In Turkmenistan**

Like the other NIS of Central Asia, Turkmenistan poses some challenges for foreigners. Turkish entrepreneurs face some problems in Turkmenistan. One of the biggest problems of trade relations between Turkey and Turkmenistan is about transportation. There is no direct transportation link between Turkey and Turkmenistan and this causes difficulties in transmitting goods and services to Turkmenistan. People need to pass through Iranian territory to reach Turkmenistan and they need to pay transaction fees to the Iranian government. The telecommunication network is also insufficient in Turkmenistan. The Turkmen government is aware that these kinds of problems are making investment in the country unattractive for foreigners. Therefore among the plans of the Turkmen government is to implement communication and transportation development projects in cooperation with foreign investors until 2010. An underdeveloped banking system, insufficient tariff system and lack of legislation in Turkmenistan are among other reasons that make trade difficult.

Additionally most of the time people in Turkmenistan use a barter system instead of using cash.<sup>134</sup> In Turkmenistan one dollar equals 5.200 manats and in Turkey one dollar equals 21.000 manats. This difference in Turkey's exchange rate and Turkmenistan's exchange rate makes it difficult for Turkish tradesmen to make profits for their businesses.

### **3.3.4.5 Eximbank Credits**

Agreed Minutes, which was signed between Turkey and Turkmenistan on 2 May 1992, included an article stating that Turk Eximbank would open a \$75 million worth credit account for State Bank for Foreign Economic Affairs of Turkmenistan (Vnesheconombank of Turkmenistan).<sup>135</sup> Within this context Turk Eximbank and State Bank for Foreign Economic Affairs of Turkmenistan signed a Financing Trade Agreement. This credit was specified as buyers' credit. According to the Turkmen officials' list that they submitted to Turk Eximbank this credit was used for medicine, purchase of veterinary medicine, climatic devices and equipments for hotel construction.

In January 1993 a \$16 million credit account was opened due to the Turkmen demands for a hotel construction in Ashgabat.<sup>136</sup> With this project Turkmenistan's credit limit reached \$91 million. Turk Eximbank credits also helped Turkmen finance their \$43.76 million refinery projects which are Turkmenbashi Refinery CCR Unit and Turkmenbashi Refinery MSCC Unit. However Turkmenistan had some difficulties in making payments back to Turkey and so signed 'The Delaying Debt Agreement' in August 2000. Turkey worked as a co-financer for these projects.<sup>137</sup> In these projects Turkey worked in cooperation with COFACE (France), ONDD (Belgium) Eximbank.

All these credits have been guaranteed under the state guarantee letter, which ensure the payment of debt in a certain period. Additionally Turkey launched assurance mechanisms which are called escrow accounts. Recently all debt that Turkmenistan owes

to Turkey has been paid.

Totally Turkmenistan used \$133 million out of Turk Eximbank credit which is worth \$135 million.<sup>138</sup> Turkey is willing to work in Turkmenistan as long as Turkish companies undertake new projects in Turkmenistan and new guarantee mechanisms, which are approved by Turk Eximbank, are established. Furthermore Turk Eximbank supports Turkish exporters with short term credit and insurance programs.

### **3.3.5 Turkey-Uzbekistan**

#### **3.3.5.1 Turkish Investment in Uzbekistan**

Chufrin notes that “Uzbekistan maintained the most integrated economy of the Central Asian region through its effective use of its resources.”<sup>139</sup> Upon gaining their independence Uzbeks tried to maximize competition rather than cooperation as a national strategy to strengthen the Uzbek economy. Olcott states that “Uzbekistan has the capability to become a regional producer of textiles, processed foods, and clothing.”<sup>140</sup>

Turkish investors mostly focused in the sectors of textile, automotive, tourism, banking and foodstuff. For example, Bursel Holding is the biggest investor in Uzbek textile industry. The partners of this holding are the Uzbek government and Japan Mitsubishi Company. They produce shirts, underwear, socks and fabric. The cotton used for production comes from the local cotton fields. Also Tekfen opened a thread factory,

which is “Papfen”, in Uzbekistan in 1998.<sup>141</sup> Tekfen manages this factory and is also responsible for marketing activities. These are the big Turkish companies. Although small and medium sized companies were investing at the initial stages of the Republic, big industrialists also started to enter the Uzbek market starting from 1995.

As in other Central Asian states, Turkish construction companies are very active in Uzbekistan, with over 50 projects.<sup>142</sup> Koc Holding operates in the automotive industry. Koc Holding established a joint venture called Tashkochavto in collaboration with the Uzbek company, Uzatozlash. This company offers service in providing the necessary pieces for automobiles. Another Koc investment is Samkoçauto which started operating in Semerkand in 1998. Samkoçauto’s business focuses on the production of automobile and vans and exports them to Russia, Kazakhstan and Ukraine. Additionally, Arcelik, which is the branch company of Koc Holding, started business in the area of home appliance in Uzbekistan.

Turkish companies working as building contractors are highly active in Uzbekistan. According to the data by the Foreign Trade Undersecretariat gives us Turkish building contractors have undertaken the operation of 63 projects the total cost of which is \$1.589 billion. The major companies are Alarko, Ekpar, Gama, Makimsan, Mensel JV, Tekfen, Yapı Üretim, Yüksel and Zafer and the major projects that these companies have completed are Taskent International Hotel, Radisson SAS Hotel, Tashkent International Trade and Exhibit Center, Aquapark, Tashkent Airport Tower, Central Bank Building, Coca-Cola Factory, British American Tobacco Factory, Papfen



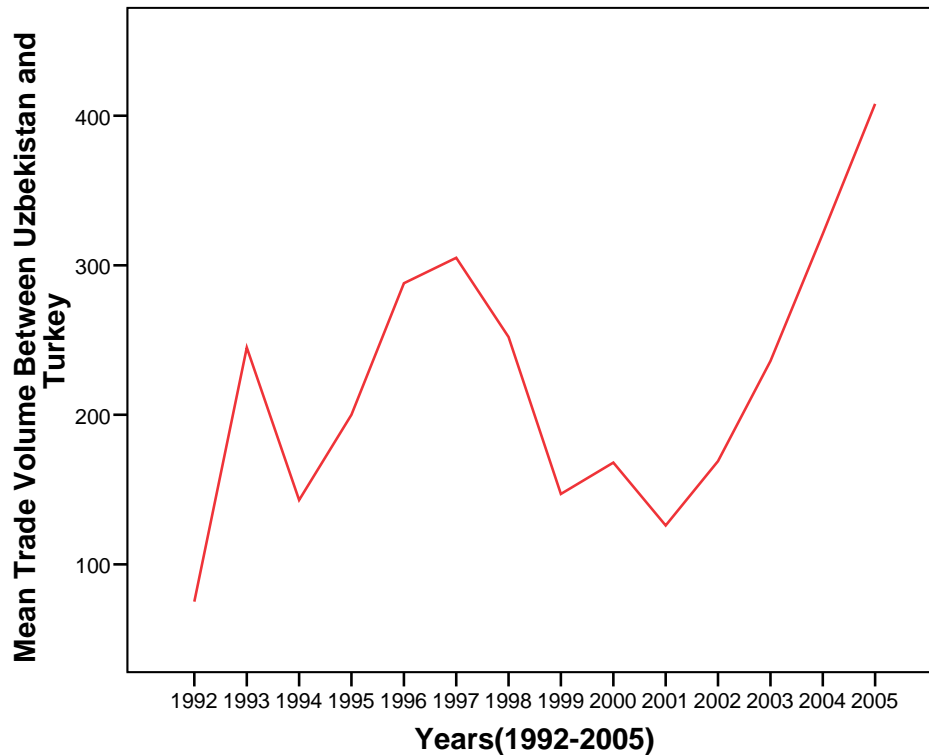
Thread Factory, Horezm Sugar Factory, renovation of American Ambassadorship and the terminal buildings of Semerkand, Buhara and Urgenç Airports.

Turkish companies, which are Dedeman Holding and Aysel Construction Company, are active in the area of hotel management as well. Dedeman opened a hotel in Tashkent in 2006. Turkish business groups also serve in banking sector. Ziraat Bank of Turkey manages Utbank, which has a \$5 million capital, in collaboration with Pahtabank of Uzbekistan.<sup>143</sup>

Apart from the investment areas that have been mentioned above, it is also possible for Turkish entrepreneurs to invest in the areas of medicine, health, foodstuff and the stock market in the future.

### **3.3.5.2 Trade with Uzbekistan**

(in millions)



Source: Turkey Statistics Institute

**Figure 9: Trade Volume between Turkey and Uzbekistan between 1992 and 2005**

As Figure 9 illustrates, trade volume, which was amounted to \$75.5 million in 1992, showing an increasing trend, exceeded \$300 million in 1997. It has been observed that Turkey's trade volume declined resulting from the decrease in Turkey's general exportation volume starting from 1997. Turkey's main exportation to Uzbekistan occurs in the areas of technology, copper and energy. Trade volume decreased to its lowest level in 2001 and started to increase again from then on. In 2003 it increased by 40 % when

compared to 2002. In 2004 and 2005 Turkey's exportation volume did not change much but due to the increase in imports from Uzbekistan trade surplus started to decrease in 2004 and 2005. This was because of the heavy purchase of copper and copper-made products as well.

One of the major problems that foreign investors face in this country is that Som, which is the Uzbek monetary unit, is not convertible. Luckily banks have been allowed to sell foreign currency starting from 16 June, 2003 and so Som has been convertible. However there are still some limitations in practice.<sup>144</sup> The banking sector in Uzbekistan is not developed enough and companies sometimes face unpredictable problems. It takes a long time to transfer money. Companies, particularly the ones operating outside Tashkent, are experiencing important problems because of the insufficient banking system. Also the high level of state intervention in the economy slows down the foreign investments in the country.

### **3.3.5.3 Eximbank Credits**

Uzbekistan is the only country that pays its credit debts on a regular basis among the Turkic Republics. Turkey and Turkmenistan signed a Goodwill Agreement stating that Turk Eximbank would give credits to Uzbekistan.

It was estimated in 1999 that Turk Eximbank had given credits worth \$375 million, of which \$125 million would be used for funding exportation and \$250 million

of which would be used for development projects. Uzbekistan spent a significant portion of this credit. Uzbekistan used \$124.6 million of exports credits and \$244.5 million of project credits.<sup>145</sup>

Uzbekistan tries to reform its industrial sector. It is important to watch for the latest improvements in the industrial sector and let the Turkish investors benefit the new opportunities in the sector.

### **3.4 Conclusion**

Trade analysis, in this chapter, reveals that Turkey's trade volume with each of the five countries shows an increasing trend only after 2001. This is the result of two economic crises: the 1998 financial crisis of Russia and the 2000 and 2001 economic crises of Turkey. Foreign trade of the ex-Soviet states was dependent on the Russian economic situation. During the 1998 economic crises in Russia, people of the region preferred to buy Russian products, which were cheaper than Turkish products. Turkey also experienced a strong financial crisis in 2001 and this led to the contraction of the economy. Interest rates and public debt increased and economic growth became unstable. This economic weakness was inevitably reflected in Turkey's foreign trade and investment.

One common theme, which attracts attention when Turkey's investment capacity in the region is considered, is that Turkey enjoyed the privilege of exploiting the Central

Asian Market in the absence of serious competitors. Post-Soviet countries are still in a challenging transition from Moscow's command economy to a liberal economy. There are unstable tariff systems and unsatisfactory banking services and they lack regulatory laws. Some of them have long conducted business by using their local monetary units, which do not exactly match the value of Turkish lira and this has resulted in a loss of money for Turkish businesspersons. These types of structural problems prevent big companies from doing business there and small and medium sized Turkish companies enjoy the privilege of being monopoly companies in their sectors.

During the Soviet rule, the regional economies were agricultural based. Farmers, who produced raw materials for Russia, fell behind the technological developments in the world. As a result of this situation, one of the major product groups that Turkey exports to these countries are electronic devices both partial and as a whole. Another major product of Turkey's exports is automobiles because post-Soviet governments have been unable to develop an automobile industry and to the demand for passenger automobiles. Many new cars are foreign, exclusively Audi, Mercedes or Volvo. On the other hand, Turkey mostly imports commodities like copper, leather, silk, mineral oil and cotton from the Turkic countries. Turkey uses cotton, leather and silk for its textile industry which has an important place in the Turkish economy.

One of the findings of this chapter is that the Turk Eximbank has done much to stimulate trade and business links in the region. One point that is common to all five republics is that they received Eximbank credits from Turkey for their national

development projects and financing trade.

One crucial area where Turkey's economic interests lie is energy. It is important for Turkey's domestic energy consumption to supply oil and gas from the region's energy reserves. The two profound projects that Turkey was able to realize are the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Oil Pipeline Project and the Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum Gas Pipeline Project.

The BTC Project serves to interests of Turkey in two ways: It is the first constructed pipeline which bypasses the Bosphorus Straits, and Turkey has the privilege of earning transit and operating fees from this project since the pipeline passes through Turkish territory.

The Bosphorus connects the Black Sea with the Sea of Marmara, and the Dardanelles link the Sea of Marmara with the Aegean and Mediterranean Seas. However this Turkish waterway is no longer an appropriate energy transit route because an increasing volume of tanker traffic from the Black Sea can lead to accidents in the narrow straits and it is quite busy because it supplies Europe with oil from the Caspian Sea Region. The BTC pipeline was the best option for Turkey because Turkey does not want to take the risk of heavy traffic in the straits.

## **CHAPTER 4: POLITICAL RELATIONS BETWEEN TURKEY AND THE REGIONAL COUNTRIES**

This chapter aims to explain Turkey's engagement in the Caspian Sea Region from a policy perspective since we are now acquainted with Turkey's economic position in the region. The time period that will be analyzed is from 1991 to the present. The methodology used in this chapter is to analyze the five countries according to their alphabetical order.

It is significant to examine the initial interactions between Turkey and the five Turkic countries following the break up of the Soviet Union since this initial stage reveals how enthusiastic the involved sides were to develop their traditional friendship into future cooperation.

Following the initial relations of the early 1990s, I will continue with Turkey's constructive policies that contribute to these countries' national development. Fields that give Turkey and the regional countries the opportunity to establish close relations are culture, education and communication which are analyzed in this chapter. I also looked at Turkish military aid in support of the US security policies in the region. Also this chapter explains Turkey's attempts in the complex energy game which gathers worldwide attention and which is quite complex.

## **4.1 Political Relations between Turkey and Azerbaijan**

### **4.1.1 Initial Interactions between Turkey and Azerbaijan**

Since the establishment of the republic in 1923, Turkey has avoided pan-Turkic policies and has not shown special interest in the Turks living outside Turkey. Turkish politicians have considered supra-nationalist policies as adventurous and have been aware of the dangers of such policies since the last days of the Ottoman Empire. Thus “when faced with the opportunity to establish close relations with the Soviet Republics after Gorbachev's *glasnost* and *perestroika* policies”, as Aydin argues, Turkey still preferred to keep some distance not to give the impression that it was seeking to undermine the USSR.<sup>146</sup> Foreign private companies and individuals were trying to create contacts with these countries but Turkey avoided establishing official relations with the Soviet Republics until the mid 1990s.

However Azerbaijan was an exception and the earliest governmental connection with Azerbaijan occurred when the Azerbaijani president, Ilham Aliyev, visited Turkey in January 1990. We can say that Turkey has a special relationship with Azerbaijan among all the Turkic Republics in the Caspian Sea Basin. Azeris, who live in Azerbaijan and in some adjacent areas and whose dialect is closest to the Turkish spoken in contemporary Asia, acknowledge the Turks living in Turkey as their brothers. They often refer to the phrase, “We are two states and one nation” to express their sympathy for Turks in Anatolia. In the northeastern corner of Turkey there are still families or their descendants who have migrated from Azerbaijani lands. The Turks and Azeris have



always been conscious of this kinship. The two countries are linked by strong historical, cultural, and linguistic ties.

Aliyev's first visit to Turkey was in 1990. During this visit Turkish politicians were very cautious in their speeches knowing that Azerbaijan was still not an independent state and was part of the Soviet Union. For example, when asked about Turkey's view of events in Soviet Azerbaijan in 1990, then President Turgut Özal was very careful, arguing that Turkey was concerned solely with its own internal problems, and that the Azerbaijan crisis was an internal affair of the Soviet Union. Additionally he emphasized that "Turkey was not nurturing aspirations of a Turkish empire that would encompass the Turkic peoples of the Soviet Union; rather it would continue to follow Atatürk's policy of non-entanglement in foreign disputes, and the principle of 'peace at home, peace in the world'."<sup>147</sup>

Azerbaijan has remained as part of the Soviet Union as the Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic from 1920 to 1991. Azerbaijan participated in the referendum about the preservation of the USSR which took place in March 1991. The idea that came out of this referendum was that people were supporting the preservation of the USSR. However Azerbaijan declared its independence on 18 October 1991 and prepared a new constitution and with this action Azerbaijan had declared itself as a presidential Republic.<sup>148</sup>

Turkey became the first country to recognize Azerbaijan and Azerbaijan reacted

warmly to Turkey's interest. As an example of this closeness, in January 1992, Ayaz Mutalibov visited Turkey. "We want Turkey to represent us to the outside world" said Hasan Hasanov, the Prime Minister of Azerbaijan.<sup>149</sup> Furthermore Salih Mehmedov advisor to the Azeri Parliament and an academician at Baku University said, "If the Turkish world is a body Turkey is its eyes and brain."<sup>150</sup>

Ebulfez Elchibey got elected as the president in June 1992. Turkish politicians increased their hopes to realize their policy goals in Azerbaijan especially after Elchibey, who was a strong advocate of Turkey, became the president of the country. Following Elchibey's death, as letters of condolences emphasized, Elchibey was a strong Turkish nationalist and during his life he had served to advance the position of the Azeri Turks in the Turkish world.<sup>151</sup>

The Azeri leader attended the 1992 Ankara meeting, which took place among the presidents of Turkey, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.<sup>152</sup> A declaration emphasizing common cultural values and the intention to recreate common cultural elements including language was announced after this meeting.

At this summit Ozal delivered a message by saying that "if Turkey had used the opportunity that was born after the break-down of the Soviet Union appropriately the twenty first century would be the Turks' century."<sup>153</sup> After explaining the brotherhood among the Turkic world and pointing out the strength of solidarity and cooperation among the Turkic people he added, "Our peoples are expecting this kind of cooperation

because we are from the same origin; we are branches of the same great tree and we are a big family”.<sup>154</sup>

Azerbaijan, in response, put Turkey in its foreign policy priority list. Azerbaijan adopted the secular and multiparty system of the Turkish model. For example, twenty two parties were registered following the 1992 election. Because of their secular education during the Soviet era Azeri politicians and intellectuals felt close to secularism. Zakir Hasimov, the Undersecretary in the Embassy of Azerbaijan in Ankara, underlined that “they approved of the secularism of the Turkish model and had established their new state according to this principle.”<sup>155</sup>

When Azerbaijan won its independence, the new nationalist president of Azerbaijan, Ebulfez Elchibey, pursued an openly pan-Turkist policy. “He championed close ties with Turkey and the adoption of the Latin alphabet for Azerbaijani Turkish.”<sup>156</sup> He was an admirer of Ataturk and a friend of Turkey. However he did not stay long in office. He was dismissed in a coup, which attempted to disarm mutinous paramilitary forces, in June 1993.<sup>157</sup> This coup provided the opportunity for Aliyev’s return to power. Elchibey’s dismissal seemed to underline Turkey’s plans to see Azerbaijan as a main base to expand its influence in the Caspian Sea Area.

In the opposite direction to what the Turkish leadership was thinking Elchibey’s replacement with Aliyev was not a situation against Turkey’s interests. Many political analysts say that Aliyev was a more independent- minded leader than people had

expected. Like Elchibey, Aliyev, a member of the Soviet Politburo in the Brezhnev era, also tried to strengthen ties with Russia. At the same time Aliyev pursued a pro-Western policy. As Larabbe and Lesser point out “the success of Turkey’s policy in the Caucasus depends to a large degree on a continuation of the westward-leaning policies pursued by President Aliyev in Azerbaijan and President Shevardnadze in Georgia.”<sup>158</sup> Therefore Aliyev’s pro-western approach complemented Turkish foreign policy goals. On the other hand, Aliyev’s moderate policy towards Russia was mainly because he regarded Russia as the main power of the region. This development did not mean that Turkey was no longer important for Azerbaijan but that Azerbaijan had started to follow a more pragmatic and realistic policy by balancing relations with Russia Turkey and Iran.

#### **4.1.2 Turkey’s Reaction towards the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict**

A conflict has been going on between the South Caucasian nations of Azerbaijan and Armenia over the disputed area of Nagorno Karabakh since the beginning of 1988. As Cornell notes, “the conflict has led to over twenty thousand casualties and almost one and a half million refugees, a refugee flow which has resulted in a considerable crisis especially in Azerbaijan, with the number of displaced persons numbering close to one million.”<sup>159</sup> The occupied territory of Azerbaijan has been cleansed ethnically of its Azeri population by Armenian forces within the course of warfare.

During the course of warfare some clashes between Armenian and Azerbaijani forces increased public tension in Turkey from time to time and this led Turkish policy

decision makers to feel pressured to take military action against Armenia. One particular event that caused Turkey's concern for the peace of Transcaucasia was when Soviet forces entered Baku following attacks on the Armenian minority in January 1990 and several hundred Azeri demonstrators were killed.<sup>160</sup> There was widespread sympathy for the Azeris in Turkey resulting from the close historical and cultural ties. Turkish people organized mass meetings to demand the Turkish government action against Armenian forces. However the Turkish government adopted a very cautious approach insisting that the events in Azerbaijan were purely an internal Soviet affair.

Another clash that renewed Turkey's concern for the Azeris was the events of 26 February 1992. Armenian forces captured the suburb of Khojali next to Stepanakert and massacred some 500 civilian on 26 February 1992.<sup>161</sup> This event ended the détente between Azeri and Armenian forces. The Khojali tragedy reignited widespread public protests in Turkey and provoked President Turgut Ozal to suggest that "we should frighten the Armenians a little."<sup>162</sup> However Turkish Prime Minister Demirel again did not share Ozal's view. Demirel criticized the President's remarks as very mistaken since they would prejudice the chances of a settlement between Azerbaijan and Armenia.<sup>163</sup>

Historically Azerbaijan has remained weak in the face of Armenian military superiority. It has been suggested that a part of the responsibility in this weakness belongs to Turkey for Turkey has been reluctant to help Elchibey. Turkey, on the other hand, preferred to rely on international institutions for the resolution of this case.

Turkey raised the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict before the Conference on Security and Cooperation (CSCE) in Europe and the Atlantic Cooperation Council (ACC) condemning the alteration of frontiers by force. United Nations had stayed in the periphery of the conflict but, as Cornell says, “the CSCE was the only institution to have made significant efforts to achieve a lasting solution.”<sup>164</sup> Turkey confirmed that Nagorno Karabakh was part of Azerbaijan. This had little effect on the Armenians who captured the town of Shusha, the last Azeris stronghold in Nagorno Karabakh, in May 1992. This marked the first significant military victory of Armenia in the Nagorno-Karabakh enclave during the Nagorno-Karabakh War. Turkey found it threatening when Armenian forces also attacked the western end of the Azeri enclave of Nakhichevan close to the frontier with Turkey. The Turkish military was worried about the possible Russian advance in the Trans-Caucasus. Even in the face of this critical event, the Turkish Prime Minister Demirel avoided applying military means.

Demirel decided to resolve the crisis by diplomatic rather than military action. According to some scholars’ interpretation Demirel could have acted with the assurance he got from the United States because the United States expressed that “it would act against any change in the status of Nagorno Karabakh or Nakhichevan on the basis of force.”<sup>165</sup> Moreover Russian military officials’ explanation also affected Turkey’s decisions, which were on the side of diplomatic rather than military action. For example, at the time of the crisis, which occurred in May 1992, Russian commander Marshal Yevgeny Shaposhnikov declared that “Turkish military intervention could result in the outbreak of a third world war.”<sup>166</sup>

Although the Turkish government avoided intervening militarily in the region, news alleging that Turkey had sent equipment and military personnel to help the Chechens and Azeris have frequently appeared in the Russian and Armenian media. Turkish officials denied these statements, declaring that, “in addition to some bilateral agreements (that is, modernization projects) only a limited number of military officers from the new republics were in Turkey for training.”<sup>167</sup> Moreover Chief of Staff Mattei Dogan Gures stated frankly that “the Kurdish threat to Turkey’s territorial integrity rather than Transcaucasia was the military’s first priority.”<sup>168</sup> This attitude of politicians and military men certainly excluded serious military action for Azerbaijan in its crisis.

Turkish officials most of the time took action in accordance with NATO decisions and peace programs. Azerbaijani officials, on the other hand, have never concealed their desire to integrate themselves into NATO's military structure. The Partners for Peace program was seen as a link in this regard by military commanders in Baku. Turkey was perceived as a unique bridge that would allow Azerbaijan to get closer to the zone of interests of the north Atlantic bloc.

Scholars and academicians agree on the issue that Turkey’s policy toward Azerbaijan is mostly shaped by Turkey’s relations with Armenia. Any kind of action that eases Ankara’s position on Nagorno-Karabakh put relations with Baku into trouble. The events of September 11 have also affected the Caspian Basin region. With Russia seeking better ties with the United States and NATO, Ankara and Yerevan have begun quietly to explore ways to improve relations.<sup>169</sup> Actually the only way to improve relations is to

settle the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute. The common approach of Turkish officials is that it is unlikely to improve diplomatic relations with Armenia without settling down the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

### **4.1.3 Turkey's Energy Politics towards Azerbaijan**

#### **4.1.3.1 Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Pipeline Project**

Azerbaijan is an oil-rich country. However new pipelines need to be built to transfer the energy to international markets since the Caspian resources are landlocked. The issue of Caspian energy pipelines has assumed increasing importance resulting from the fact that the way through which the oil will be transported is geopolitically very important. Furthermore as Larabee and Lesser say “a modern version of the 19th century Great Game has emerged in recent years with pipelines replacing the railroads as the main means for exerting political influence.”<sup>170</sup>

The EU and the US are interested in the proliferation of pipelines in exploiting the crude oil and natural gas reserves of the Caspian region. The European Union (EU) Member States and the US have promoted the development of east-west transportation corridors to deliver energy to European markets. Turkey, on the other hand, is not a significant energy producer but it might be a key transit state due to its geographical location. Consequently, Turkish policymakers can use this energy card to influence the West by emphasizing its strategic value.



Turkey has been seeking for the best option to bring the Azeri oil to the country. Although the shortest route for a pipeline from Azerbaijan to the Mediterranean can be constructed by passing through the Armenian territory, the Karabakh conflict makes this route unachievable.<sup>171</sup> Aydin argues that “this, coupled with the US opposition to passing the pipeline through Iran, left Georgia as the only possible route for the western line; however, Georgia, too, has been struggling with a number of internal conflicts, a situation that has obviously been in Russia's interest.”<sup>172</sup> On the other hand, the US has supported the BTC project politically from the beginning. Furthermore, as Aydin points out, “the arrival of the US advisers in Georgia after the September 11 attacks, among other things, has given a boost to the BTC project.”<sup>173</sup>

In March 1999 Richard Morningstar, the Secretary of State for Caspian Basin Energy Diplomacy, explained why the US backed multiple pipelines and energy corridors. Morningstar noted that “such a proliferation would strengthen the independence and prosperity of the former Soviet republics as well as encourage economic and political reforms; regional cooperation would be enhanced, and US companies would benefit from commercial opportunities.”<sup>174</sup>

Turkey initially proposed to finance the Baku-Batumi pipeline project, which offered very advantageous conditions, to Azerbaijan International Operating Company (AIOC) before proposing the BTC project. This project would allow Turkey the opportunity to control the flow of Azeri oil however AIOC did not approve this proposal. According to the analysis of Aras and Foster, “before it fully realized the politically

charged nature of the debate and the complexity of the factors involved, the AIOC consortium decided to transport its oil to Western markets via an existing pipeline to the Russian port of Novorossisk.”<sup>175</sup> Then the consortium changed its course and decided to transport its oil by tanker through the Black Sea and into the Mediterranean via Turkey's Bosphorus Straits. Oil from the Chirag offshore field in Azerbaijan reached to the port of Novorossisk in November 1997.<sup>176</sup>

Transporting oil through the Bosphorus Straits raised objections from Turkey due to the great environmental threat posed by the increased shipping volume. Aras notes that “The Bosphorus is one of the most difficult and busiest waterways in the world to navigate.”<sup>177</sup> Aras adds that, “nearly 45,000 vessels pass through the Straits each year, and there are frequent accidents.”<sup>178</sup> The Azeri officials were aware of the situation that the Turkish government would not want to allow the massive increase in the Bosphorus traffic that would result from the usage of the Black Sea route for Azerbaijani oil. Therefore the AIOC began to look for various alternative routes. One such route would involve the transport of oil from Baku to the Turkish port of Ceyhan on the Mediterranean. Ankara highlighted that Ceyhan has a greater capacity to handle shipping volume than Novorossisk, the Russian port. Moreover due to the smooth climate conditions of the Mediterranean, Ceyhan is rarely shut down in a year. As expressed by Ahat Andican, a former government minister and an influential figure in shaping Turkish policy toward the Turkic republics of the FSU, “the total output from the Caspian and Central Asia will eventually be 50 to 60 million tons a year, but the Baku-Novorossisk and Baku-Supsa routes have a combined capacity of 16 million tons [a year]”.<sup>179</sup>

Therefore the Baku-Ceyhan pipeline was seen as the most inevitable and stable option. Some critics of the Baku-Ceyhan route had attempted to bring the Kurdish insurrection in eastern Turkey to the forefront of the debate, portraying that it was a potential threat to the pipeline's security. But, by the end of 1997, this argument seemed to lose its force, given that the Turkish army began to have considerable success in suppressing Kurdish military activity.

Turkey was far from being alone in advocating the Baku-Ceyhan route. Jim Norosky, vice-president of U.S. oil giant Amoco (which holds a 17.01 percent stake in the AIOC), also suggested that “the Baku-Ceyhan route was preferable, despite the extra cost imposed by its greater length” and he suggested that, “such extra cost should be offset by tax breaks or other measures.”<sup>180</sup> Turkey had also succeeded in gaining the support of Azerbaijani president Heydar Aliyev, who was in favor of giving priority to the direct Baku-Ceyhan line.

In March 1998, the foreign ministers of Azerbaijan, Turkey, Georgia, Kazakhstan, and Turkmenistan met the president of the AIOC in Turkey.<sup>181</sup> The primary purpose of the meeting was to brief the four other countries about the feasibility of the Baku-Ceyhan pipeline. These states confirmed their support for the project. Turkish and U.S. officials went to great lengths to influence the decision. In Ankara, John Wolf, the U.S. government's Caspian representative, said that the Azerbaijan International Operating Company “must stop using the process of negotiations to block the solid test of Baku-Ceyhan in the marketplace.”<sup>182</sup> Eventually on 18 November 1999, leaders of the involved

parts signed an agreement to construct the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline. The US President Bill Clinton was also present at the meeting as a witness to the parties' commitment.

In May 2005, Azerbaijan began test filling in the Azeri section of the pipeline during the opening ceremony of the pipeline.<sup>183</sup> On 10 August 2005 the first volumes reached the Azeri-Georgian border and a year after the opening ceremony the first tanker at the Turkish port of Ceyhan was filled with oil from BTC.<sup>184</sup>

Pipeline projects through Turkey such as the Baku Ceyhan or the Trans-Caspian pipelines are political issues. Therefore the Western support for the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Pipeline, when regarded from a policy perspective, was especially important for the US to boost Western influence in the region at that time. These pipelines are equally important for competing Russian influence in the region as well as to maintaining the US containment policy towards Iran. Iran could provide an existing network of pipelines easily expandable to transport oil and gas from Central Asia to Europe and South Asia. International oil companies are advocating this cheap pipeline solution however this case has developed into grand geo-strategic competitions.

#### **4.1.4 Turkey's Constructive Policies in Azerbaijan**

##### **4.1.4.1 Turkey's Contributions to Azeri Education**

Education, which is expected to build bridges between Turkey and the Turkic

Republics, is an important tool of Turkish foreign policy. There are some organizations working to increase the educational standards of the Central Asian countries.

TICA is one of the most involved organizations of the Turkish Foreign Ministry, to develop relations between the Turkic Republics and Turkey. This relationship between Turkey and the Turkic Republics is exercised in the following areas; the agreement for cooperation in economy, trade, transportation, communication, tourism and sports, the search for Turkish investment, the opening of Turkish cultural centers, student and teacher exchange programs, academic conferences, providing scholarships for university students, opening Turkish language schools, offering training for banks, the foundation of Turkish banks, broadcasting to Eurasia and providing of help in the training of public administrators and bureaucrats.<sup>185</sup> TICA has a coordination office in Azerbaijan operating since 1992.

TICA is working actively in the area of education. TICA's projects within the context of 'Support for the Education System in Azerbaijan' aims to help the education system in various regions of Azerbaijan reach international standards and operate in modern facilities.

TICA's Baku Program Coordination Office obtained materials including reading books, student desks and chairs, teachers' desk and chairs, bookshelves, blackboard, computer, printer, cassette player, satellite dish and DVD players. According to the announcements made on TICA's official website, School Number 149, which is part of

the Ağdam Rayon Tahsil Branch, is one example, the needs of which were met by TICA. Migrant children having migrated from upper Karabakh as a result of political discord are receiving education at this school.

TICA carried out repair and maintenance work within the framework of the request by the school's management for the establishment and fit out of a Turkish education classroom.<sup>186</sup>

**Table 2: Number of Turkish Schools in the Region**

COUNTRY	Turkish Ministry* of Education  Number of High Schools	The Community of Gulen		Turkish World Research Institute	
		Number of High Schools	Number of Universities	Number of High Schools	Number of Universities
Azerbaijan	1	11	1	1	2
Kazakhstan		27	1	3	2**
Kyrgyzstan	2	11	1		1
Turkmenistan	4	16	1		1**
Uzbekistan	7	18	1		

Source: Aras, Bülent (2000) 'Turkey's policy in the former Soviet south: Assets and options', Turkish Studies, 1:1, 36 – 58

\* Turkish Ministry of Education, Educational Statistics,  
<http://www.meb.gov.tr/Stats/ist97/MYHTML45.htm>, (accessed 01.18.2008)

\*\*These are departments located in different universities of countries mentioned

Other than TICA, there are more Turkish communities working in the area of education in Azerbaijan. One strong example is the Gulen Community which displays

special interest in education. Since the disintegration of the Soviet Union, followers of the Gulen Movement have been vigorously involved with the new Turkic Republics. They have founded nearly eighty high schools in the Central Asian countries.<sup>187</sup> In Azerbaijan they opened eleven high schools and also the Caucasian University. (see Table 2) M.F.Gulen, who is a moderate Islamic scholar, encourages ties to the newly independent Turkic states.

Members of the Gulen Movement see Central Asia as the cradle of Turkish Sufism and historical homeland of the Turkish people.<sup>188</sup> It is not only a matter of making profits out of their businesses but also a mission to introduce the Turkish Islamic culture and help them in their struggle to open up to the outside world. Human resource of this community is composed of entrepreneurs, students, teachers and journalists.

Teachers and administrators working in Turkish schools see themselves indebted to Central Asia and they want to make contributions to this region's development in order to pay back to the Sufis who provided great historical service to Anatolia and the Balkans to bring peace. As Sen says, "having had a close relationship with the Seljuk and Ottoman Beys, many dervishes and sheiks inculcated Islam throughout the countryside and spread the new devotional life towards the frontiers."<sup>189</sup> Sen notes that "for Gulen they were the so called colonizer dervishes and ghazis who devoted themselves to God's service and who played a decisive role in the Islamization of Anatolia and the Balkans."<sup>190</sup>



Gulen's community separates itself from other groups with its Turkish identity along with its Islamic identity. Currently Turkish schools continue their educational activities successfully with a sufficient educational infrastructure. Islamic circles, on the other hand, generally work to spread Islamic identity rather than Turkish identity. To this end Islamic groups heavily opened Quranic schools and built mosques and neighborhood centers to increase Islamic awareness.<sup>191</sup> These institutions play a crucial role in teaching and disseminating religious values and practices.

These efforts of Turkish groups have been fruitful. The Turkish schools are people's favorite schools in Azerbaijan. Students affiliated with these schools return to their countries with awards from science Olympiads. Moreover teachers offer classes in official Turkish as an elective subject by the Azerbaijan Department of Education in some schools based on an application by the school administration due to student requests to learn Turkish.

#### **4.1.4.2 Turkish Policy in Culture**

One of the Turkey's policy goals was to promote Latin the alphabet and Turkish language in Azerbaijan in the last decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It would be easy to communicate once Azeris started to use the Latin alphabet. The use of a common Turkic alphabet within the Turkic world would even be better. In accordance with Turkey's goals, Azeri academician Kamil Veliyev also argued that "without a common language and a common alphabet it would be impossible to solve major problems" and he

advocated that “Anatolian Turkish should be the common language for Turkic peoples.”<sup>192</sup> At the beginning of February 1992 the Azerbaijani government decided to abandon the Cyrillic alphabet and revert to the Latin alphabet.<sup>193</sup> Azerbaijan’s adoption of the Latin alphabet was regarded as a success, by some sources, for Turkey’s and the Turkish model by some sources.

Turkey has tried to be active in the religious field as well. A revival of Islam had occurred in the Turkic Republics following independence. However there were some deficiencies to truly practice Islam. They needed books on religion and their mosques needed repairing. Although their aims were different, Turkey, Iran and Saudi Arabia began to send Korans and other religious books to the republics and experts were sent to teach Islam. Considering that the majority of the population is Shiite in Azerbaijan, Iran’s eager help was quite considerable. Iran distributed tens of thousands of copies of Koran. Turkey sent thousands of books to the Muslim Republics. Not only the Turkish state but also the Turkish private sector was involved in this issue. Turkish voluntary organizations also provided books on religion and Turkish culture.

Turkish Presidency of Religious Affairs sent imams to the Azeri community to teach Islam and built mosques to let people practice their daily praying ceremonies.

As a non governmental endeavor TICA also works in the area of culture with the intention to emphasize common values with the Turkic states to move closer to them. TICA explains in its website that it supported the foundation of Turkology Department as

part of the Turkey Research Institute of Azerbaijan Slavian University and supplied the needs of this department such as desks, computers, curtains and air conditioners.<sup>194</sup>

#### **4.1.4.3 Technical Cooperation between Turkey and Azerbaijan**

Turkey has devoted great attention in the field of telecommunications and transport since 1991. Ankara has been able to create a dependent relationship for access to international lines. The Turkish Communications and Transport Minister Yasar Topcu went to the Turkic Republics accompanied by fifteen deputies and a large number of bureaucrats and journalists and inaugurated a 2500-line capacity digital telephone exchange established by the Turkish PTT in Azerbaijan.<sup>195</sup> Since 1991 Turkish companies such as Netas and Turkcell have assumed an important profile in the strategic sector providing the infrastructure for telecommunications. In 1999 Netas was operating in Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan through its subsidiaries, Ultel and Vesnet, respectively. In the growing sector of mobile telecommunications, Turkcell plays a leading role running GMS services in Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan.<sup>196</sup> Indian and Pakistani companies also helped the Central Asian Republics to modernize and improve the poor telephone system inherited from the USSR.

Important steps were also taken in the field of broadcasting. Turkish Radio and Television Corporation TRT INT Avrasya TV Channel began broadcasting to the Turkic Central Asian states and Azerbaijan on April 27, 1992, the day when the Turkish Prime Minister started his tour to the Turkic Republics.<sup>197</sup> Avrasya TV was supposed to further

the existing cultural and social ties with these countries and to form a solid bridge. As Baharcicek mentions, the Turkish broadcasting “was an important move that could develop closer cultural relations and understanding among the people of the region and contribute to Turkish political influence.”<sup>198</sup>

Upon the demand of Azerbaijan Ministry of Agriculture, TICA started the project for the restoration of Abseron, Guba and Gence Chemistry Research Stations’ infrastructure. TICA contributed to the installation of modern equipment for the laboratories organizing various training programs for the personnel and increased personnel standards in 2004. Moreover TICA has offered technical cooperation to the Azeri Ministry of Tariffs based on the protocol signed on June 7, 2002 between the Turkish Republic Prime Ministry and Ministry of Finance. Within the scope of this project TICA offered consultation services about tariff system in Baku and internship opportunities in Turkey.<sup>199</sup>

Other than TICA, Turkish institutions such as the Turkish Standards Institute, the State Statistics Institute and KOSGEB began to offer technical training and consultancy services for diplomats from Turkic Republics as well.

#### **4.1.4.4 Turkey’s Contributions in Azerbaijani Transportation**

Turkey wanted to develop transportation projects so that Azeris and Turks would not be dependent on land links so that the geographical gap between the two countries

would be lessened. Turkish Airlines had already initiated direct flights to Baku. However it was more difficult to improve land transport than to improve airway transportation.

Turkey focused its attention on Georgia. Georgia bordering Azerbaijan could provide the Anatolian Turks with a land bridge to the Turkic world. For this purpose Turkey adopted a plan to build a highway, which would join the Caucasian region extending from Kars to Baku, along the Black Sea Coast within the EU's transport corridor program between Europe, Caucasus and Asia. Jung and Piccoli explain that Turkey and Azerbaijan signed several agreements for the joint use and restoration of Georgia's Batumi airport. They add that "even more important is the intended construction of a direct rail link between the Turkish and Georgian cities of Kars and Tiflis which once completed would be connected to the railway to Baku."<sup>200</sup> These are planned projects to ease the geographical distance which is still important in this age of fast communication. One project that Turkey has already achieved through TICA is the renovation of highways in Azerbaijan.

## **4.2 Political Relations between Turkey and Kazakhstan**

### **4.2.1 Initial Interactions between Turkey and Kazakhstan**

The Kazak Soviet Socialist Republic became the Republic of Kazakhstan on 10 December 1991. Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev was supporting the unity of the USSR but when the three Slav Republics established the CIS on 8 December 1991

Kazakhstan also declared its independence on 16 December 1991. Kazakhstan became the last of the former Soviet Republics to declare its independence after the Soviet Union had effectively collapsed.

In the last quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Kazakhstan followed a policy line, which encouraged the country to keep equal distance with other countries, including Turkey. There were some reasons for Kazakhstan to keep itself distant from Turkey. As Bal explains, firstly Kazakhstan's territory is the largest among the Turkic Republics and it is also rich in natural resources. Moreover Kazakhstan possesses nuclear weapons inherited from the USSR.<sup>201</sup> Bal notes that "these reasons in general and additionally the Western world's interest in Kazakhstan since the early days of its independence gave Kazakhstan a feeling that it was superior to the other Central Asian Republics."<sup>202</sup> The second factor, affecting Kazakhstan's approach towards Turkey, was related with the ethnic composition of the country.

It has been suggested that Kazakhstan remained impartial towards the Turkish model not to disturb the large Slavic groups in Kazakhstan. Kazakhstan's ethnic composition had been an excuse for Nazarbayev's reluctance to give full support to some aspects of Turkey's foreign policy. For example; Nazarbayev evidently refused to sign a statement implying the recognition of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus as an independent state.<sup>203</sup> It was the Turkish officials' strong wish from the Turkic Republics to recognize North Cyprus. It has been argued that the Kazakh president had some concerns in approving North Cyprus as an independent country because parallels could

be drawn between the position of the Russian minority in Kazakhstan and that of the Turks in Cyprus. Kazakhstan's large Russian minorities put significant pressure on the Kazakh leadership. The third factor may be regarded as valid for all Turkic peoples. Kazakh people were not willing to have another big brother and feared that Turkey might seek to play this role.<sup>204</sup> Kazakhs believe that their country's geo strategic position is sufficient to make it a regional power.<sup>205</sup> Lastly, Turkey's decreasing interest towards Kazakh politics, particularly after President Ozal's period, was an important factor preventing the two countries from moving close to each other.

Despite these factors Kazakh people have shared a desire to develop their relations with Turkey. President Nazarbayev expressed this wish as well. For example when Nazarbayev was asked in an interview by the Washington Times whether he saw Kazakhstan as directed more to the North, to the Russian and European traditions or to the South and Islamic traditions that lay deep in the country's roots his reply was: "As you know Kazaks are Muslims and historically Kazaks belong to a Turkic group of people; the Soviet states have separated us from maintaining a relationship with those cultures and those peoples so naturally we are inclined toward Turkey and the Southern Muslim states."<sup>206</sup>

Nazarbayev, as an expression of his sympathy for Turkey, paid his first official visit to Turkey on 25 September 1991 after the unsuccessful August coup in Moscow.<sup>207</sup> When Kazakhstan declared its independence on 16 December 1991 the Turkish parliament was the first to recognize Kazakhstan only 30 minutes after the declaration of

independence.

The Kazakh President wanted Kazakhstan to be identified as a Turkic Republic and therefore attended the Ankara Summit of the Presidents of the Turkic Republics in October 1992. By doing so the Kazakh president hoped to improve the political relations with Turkey and the Turkic Republics. However at this summit when Ozal proposed a common market Nazarbayev did not welcome this offer enthusiastically. He said, “Now a Turkish common market is a subject of secondary importance. Above all a unity should be achieved among the Republics created by the disintegration of the USSR.”<sup>208</sup>

Actually several conferences regarding the newly emerging Turkic world were held outside Turkey. One of these conferences was organized by Kazakhstan Democratic Party in Alma Ata in January 1992.<sup>209</sup> The participants appealed for the establishment of a Turkic state stretching from Kazan to Alma Ata gathered around the idea of Turkism. However these initiatives did not receive official Turkish support. Ankara, has always kept itself distant from such movements.

Turkish officials have always been aware that any kind of pan-Turkic movements are not popular among Turkic people of the post-Soviet region and are repressed by the Central Asian governments. Therefore Ankara cannot have control over pan-idealistic movements. Additionally extremist pan-Turkic groups are not popular in Central Asia and their activities are closely monitored and sometimes repressed by governments. From an economic perspective of the 1990s the Muslim republics were reluctant to install



Turkish monopolies. They encouraged instead the involvement of Russians and Turks together in economic and trade projects and ventures. Furthermore Kazakhstan has its own agenda independent from Turkey and Russia. For instance, Kazakhstan, as a republic of minorities has been inclined to encourage Kazakhs to return home, in order to alter the demographic balance.

Kazakh leaders favored the Turkish model in economy. Now and then Kazakh leadership expressed that Kazakhstan was attracted by the economic development that Turkey successfully achieved so quickly. At the same time, Kazakh leaders did not preclude other success stories. For example, they looked at Asia for economic models. Strategically Nazarbayev was careful not to leave Turkey out either. He said that “the only state in front of them was Turkey” and he added that “South Korea is close to us” but their historical ties with Turkey and Turkish success in the short term was necessitating to give priority to Turkey.<sup>210</sup>

Kazakhstan perceived Turkey as a representative of the Western style of democracy and of moderate Islam in contrast to Russia or Iran. Turkey was supposed to bring US economic and financial support to Kazakhstan. Actually support for Turkey would be stronger if Western businessmen had shown up immediately following the declaration of independence to make investments in the country with the efforts of Turkey.

In the eyes of Kazakh leaders Kazakhstan and Turkey shared some similar

features. The constitution describes Kazakhstan as a democratic, secular and unitary state and grants full rights to all citizens.<sup>211</sup> Furthermore Kazakhstan makes similar claims as Turkey to being a bridge between Asia and Europe, emphasizing its strategic position in the region.

The Turkish people, affiliated with whether governmental or private organizations, have tried to be very active in attempting to expand their economic and cultural roles but, like other states involved in Kazakhstan, they have not been able to make much impact on a generally problematic environment. Although there is political pluralism to some extent Kazakhstan is not a democratic state. After the collapse of communism the president rigged elections jailed oppositionists and undermined parliamentary power in order to strengthen their executive rule.<sup>212</sup> Islamist groups are present in Kazakhstan leading the country to instability. In contrast to their broader appeal in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan however the Islamist groups in Kazakhstan tend to be concentrated in specific regions and among specific ethnicities namely among Uzbeks living in cities along the borders.

## **4.2.2 Turkey's Constructive Policies in Kazakhstan**

### **4.2.2.1 Economic Relations**

Kazakh leaders had been positive about economic cooperation but their general approach was not to support groups based on religion and ethnicity. The goal of the

Kazakh foreign policy makers was to improve political and economic relations with Turkey but at the same time not to block other options. For example, Kazakhstan signed twelve joint venture projects with foreigners immediately after gaining its independence.<sup>213</sup> Nevertheless Turkey was also important for Kazakhstan. Turkey would connect this country to Europe by recreating the Silk Road. To bring this idea from theory into practice, Kazakhstan organized a meeting in Alma Ata on 22-24 April 1992 at which the opening of a Trans-Asia railway was proposed arguing that the Silk Road had become important again and that this road would belong to the Turks.<sup>214</sup> Also, in reshaping itself, Kazakh leadership expressed that Kazakh people thought of Turkey as a good example with its development and modernization history starting from its independence in 1923 to present time.

Kazakhstan supported Turkey in the operation of the BTC Pipeline. In March 2001 the Kazakh President offered an interesting argument. He said that oil from Kazakhstan's East-Kashagan field would be transported through Baku-Ceyhan.<sup>215</sup> Kazakh oil was worth considering as an alternative. It could back up any deficiencies in the Azeri oil. However, as Larrabee and Lesser say, "industry spokesmen now claim that reserves in Azerbaijan are sufficient to make Baku-Ceyhan commercially viable even without Kazakh oil."<sup>216</sup>

Other than these projects, TICA contributed to Kazakh economic development with its projects at the state level. One of the contributions of TICA is the 'Modernization Project of Kazakh Ministry of Economics.' Within this project TIKa offered consultation

services, expert training courses and provided software for economic development programs. TICA also established an education center for training the labor force in the business fields where foreign investors are heavily making investments.

#### **4.2.2.2 Turkey's Contributions to Kazakh Education**

One of the major educational projects of Turkey is the establishment of Hoca Ahmet Yesevi International Turkish University in cooperation with the Kazakh government. Ahmet Yesevi is the first Sufi mystic who lived in the 12<sup>th</sup> century and a prominent leader for the whole Turkic world. He gathered his poems in his masterpiece, *Hikmet* (Wisdom), in Turkish. He was the first intellectual to use Turkish language in a period when all other intellectuals were writing in Arabic and Persian. This project is important for both countries considering that future policy initiatives are launched not only by governmental circles but also they are planned in universities.

**Table 3: Number of Turkic Students in Turkey in 2001**

COUNTRY	Middle School	Tomer	Pre-College	College	Grad. School	TOTAL
Azerbaijan		64	61	313	212	650
Kazakhstan		93	21	384	127	625
Kyrgyzstan	3	7	82	421	208	721
Turkmenistan			7	877	86	970
Uzbekistan				4	2	6
TOTAL	3	164	171	1999	635	2872

Source: Turkish Ministry of Education

Kazakhstan welcomed the opening of Turkish high schools, the total number of which is 14. (see Table 3). Kazakhstan also responded positively to Turkey's offer and sent 1,109 students for higher education and 169 students for secondary education in the 1992-1993 education term. In 2001, there were totally 625 Kazakh students continuing their education in Turkish schools in Turkey. (See Table 3) These students, whose

countries have fallen behind the world in technology, are taught the knowledge and skills related to recent technological developments. By doing so, these schools contribute to the development of Kazakhstan.

Additionally TICA opened its Program Coordination Office in June 1995 in Alma Ata and TICA's most recent project in the area of education is about Kazakhstan's statistical activities. TICA shared its experiences in compiling and recording statistics in accordance with the Turkish Statistical Institution (Turkstat). With the help of Turkish statisticians the first Agricultural Census was conducted and the preparation of questionnaires, methodology activities etc, has been completed in 2006.<sup>217</sup> This project also offered consultancy services, working visits and on the job training activities. The statistics is an important field in this age of communications and technology and this project will enable Kazakhstan to plan its future.

#### **4.2.2.3 Cultural Relations**

During Nazarbayev's visit to Turkey on 29 September 1992, Turkish and Kazakh officials signed a Cultural Cooperation Agreement.<sup>218</sup> It was decided that the tombs of Seyh Ahmed Yesevi and his teacher Hodja Aslan Baba in the city of Turkestan in South Kazakstan would be repaired by Turkey. Seyh Ahmed Yesevi is an important figure for Turks. Seyh Ahmed Yesevi, who lived in the 12<sup>th</sup> century and who was an influential religious leader of his time, helped the founders of the Ottoman Empire by uniting people around Islam.

Ankara wanted the Latinization of the languages in Central Asia. For this reason, Turkish media circulated its newspapers and publications in the Muslim republics and hoped to make Turkish the dominant language of the area. However, as Bal explains, unlike other Turkic Republics, Kazakhstan did not welcome the quick adoption of a Latin alphabet to replace Cyrillic. Nazarbayev remained neutral on this issue. Although Kazakh leaders believed that using the Latin alphabet would further draw them near to the Western world they never intended to change the alphabet. In addition to economic and practical reasons the large Russian population in Kazakhstan would never allow this change.<sup>219</sup>

TICA also made some cultural contributions to Kazakhstan. TICA chose specific projects that would increase the cultural awareness of the citizens of the two countries on common Turkic-Islamic values. With this aim in mind, TICA has provided financial assistance for printing the books which are, ‘Principles of Turkism’ by Ziya Gokalp and ‘History of Turkish Folklore’.

The TICA Alma Ata Program Coordination Office has also helped Philosophical and Political Sciences of Kazakh Institute organize a conference on Farabi’s Heritage and World Culture. Farabi is an important Muslim scholar who united metaphysics and politics. TIKKA printed the articles presented at this conference. Division of Kazakh-Turkish Traditional Ornaments as part of the Traditional Kazakh-Turk Arts was opened in 2000 following the protocol signed between TIKKA and Kazak Korkut Ata Kizilorda State University Presidency. Moreover ten different carpeting courses are being given in

Kazak-Turk Crafts Center which operates in coordination with Kazakh Turkish Traditional Ornaments Division.<sup>220</sup> Furthermore TICA opened Alma Ata Cultural Center in Kazakhstan in 1997. Some of the activities carried out in this center are organizing educational conferences, exhibits and offering series of courses in arts and sciences.

#### **4.2.2.4 Technical Cooperation between Turkey and Kazakhstan**

After Kazakhstan proclaimed its independence Ankara assisted in rebuilding the telephone, computer, television and satellite communication systems cut by Moscow in 1992. Turkey was willing to renew telecommunications and transportations networks and became quite successful in this area. As Robins says “Turkey’s public sector telecommunications giant was quick off the mark in providing equipment free of charge to the value of some \$25 million to the five republics.”<sup>221</sup> Since then Turkish private and joint venture communication companies Netas, in particular, have strengthened this link with factories opened in Kazakhstan. As Jung and Piccolli mention “Netas was operating in Kazakhstan in 1999 through its subsidiaries Ultel and Vesnet, respectively.”<sup>222</sup>

In the growing sector of mobile telecommunications, Turkcell also plays a leading role running GMS services in Kazakhstan. Other than Turkey, Indian and Pakistani companies also help the Central Asian Republics to modernize and improve the poor telephone system which was left from the Soviet period.

Turkey was enthusiastic to develop cultural links in Kazakhstan, which was seen



as an area of expansion, through broadcasting. TICA's goals in Kazakhstan were to provide 24 hour non-stop and qualified broadcasting, to deliver this service to all parts of country, to encourage media officials to open new channels, and to exchange ideas about TV and radio programs in order to get closer ties between the countries. In this direction TRT-Eurasia Channel started broadcasting in Kazakhstan in 1992.<sup>223</sup> This channel, by emphasizing common values and fostering close relations between the two countries, would serve as an agent of Turkey in the country. However three years later Kazak officials ceased the broadcasting because they couldn't afford to meet the broadcasting costs. In addition to this some republics were cautious about allowing broadcasting directly to their citizens without official oversight.

In addition to these developments a technical cooperation agreement was signed between TSE and the standardization of institutions Azerbaijan, Bashkiria, Chuvashistan, Kazakstan, Kirgizstan, Mongolia, Uzbekistan, Tatarstan, Turkmenistan. Besides the Unity of Standardization between Regions (Bolgelerarasi Standardizasyon Birligi ) was established among Turkey and the Turkic Republics.<sup>224</sup>

### **4.3 Political Relations between Turkey and Kyrgyzstan**

#### **4.3.1 Initial Interactions of Turkey and Kyrgyzstan Following the Independence of Kyrgyzstan**

Kyrgyzstan declared its sovereignty on 12 October 1990 and Askar Akayev was

elected as president unopposed on October 13, 1991 following the August Coup on 31 August 1991. The Communist Party was banned.

Following the declaration of independence the Foreign Minister of Kyrgyzstan Roza Otunbayeva, who has explored the best possible ways to promote friendly political relations, gave importance to Kyrgyzstan's relations with the US, Europe and the regional countries. After the declaration of independence Kirghiz President Akayev paid an official visit to Turkey on 22 December 1991. Akayev, in Turkey, said that their aim was to recreate the ties which were broken during the Communist period with their brother country, Turkey, and to improve their relations in all aspects.<sup>225</sup> When Akayev received the letter proving Turkish recognition of Kyrgyzstan's independence from Demirel, he poetically defined Turkey as "the morning star" that would guide the path of the Turkic Republics.<sup>226</sup> Akayev saw Turkey as an important country providing the model of a secular state which looks more to the West than to the Islamic world. Kyrgyzstan's goal was to establish a state built around the ideals of democracy, secularism, respect for human rights and the rule of law. During his visit to Ankara in December 1991, the Kirghiz President gave emotional speeches emphasizing Turkey's leadership role in the Turkic world. Also Kyrgyzstan opened its first embassy in Turkey.

Turkish political leaders were also satisfied with the Kirghiz President's closeness to Turkey. President of Turkey, Turgut Ozal, visited Kyrgyzstan in 1991. During this visit to Alma Ata, Ozal signed a protocol defining future relations.<sup>227</sup> This protocol addressed issues regarding the expansion of relations in all fields, especially direct

contacts between business firms as well as between governments. Following Kyrgyzstan's Declaration of Independence Foreign Minister Hikmet Cetin also visited Kyrgyzstan officially along with other Turkic Republics. The aim of this visit was to examine the needs and deficiencies of this country and to prepare for future projects. During this visit some agreements to promote relations particularly in the areas of culture and education were signed.

Kyrgyzstan, without committing itself to following the Turkish model, welcomed the main characteristics, in particular secularism and a market economy of that model. Kirghiz leaders see Turkey and the Turkish model as an instrument to understand the West and Western culture. They quite often underline the strong ties between Turkey and Kyrgyzstan in terms of ethnicity, culture, language, religion and history but like other newly independent Turkic republics, Kyrgyzstan wanted equal relations with Turkey while trying to open up to the outside world.

Turkey's successful economic transformation and democratization of its social structure was being closely watched by Kirghiz politicians. Kyrgyzstan was also decisive to change its centralized economy to a market economy. At every opportunity the Kirghiz Prime Minister pronounced Turkey's economic progress as a meaningful goal for the entire Turkic world. At the 3rd Economy Congress, which was held in Izmir between 4-7 June 1992, Deputy President Kulov of Kyrgyzstan said: "We are now studying Turkey's economic system in detail; we will soon change to a free market economy and we want extensive cooperation with Turkish businessmen."<sup>228</sup> Turkey had limited sources to aid

Kyrgyzstan economically. Despite this fact in order to establish better relations with Kyrgyzstan, Turkey volunteered an assistance of 75 million dollars.<sup>229</sup>

A liberal and democratic system appeared to be created out of the break up of the Soviet system in Kyrgyzstan. However the government and elections turned out to be corrupt. After the collapse of communism the Kirghiz president, who is accused of dirty elections, responded severely to criticisms and weakened parliamentary power in order to strengthen the executive rule.<sup>230</sup> There are also Islamist groups, many of them originally extending from Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, in this country. Radical Islamist groups, which are concentrated in specific regions and among specific ethnicities, threaten the political and economic destabilization in the country. In relation with this situation one of the features of Turkey that the Kirghiz leaders appreciate the most was the secular character of the Turkish model. They wanted to maintain a moderate form of Islam in the country and to achieve this they wanted help from Turkey. For example Kyrgyzstan asked Turkey to build a mosque in Bishkek and wanted religious books.

Neither the efforts of Kyrgyzstan nor the efforts of Turkey to get closer in the last years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century can be interpreted as a sign of pan-Turkic policies. However some explanations of Turkish leaders had been interpreted in this direction at that time. For example, Turkish Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel declared in February 1992 that “with the disintegration of the Soviet Union a gigantic Turkish world was currently being formed stretching from the Adriatic Sea to the Great Wall of China.”<sup>231</sup> This declaration was interpreted as sign of Turkey’s pan-Turkic policy intentions. Apparently slogans,

which referred to an enlarged Turkish world, would undermine the trust between Turkey and Russia. To fix the situation Demirel made another speech in Kyrgyzstan emphasizing that, Turkish politicians were considering Turks as a big family but they were not actually pursuing pan-Turkic policies. It was Turkish politicians' approach to refer to Central Asia and Azerbaijan "as a new Eurasian community populated by Turks".<sup>232</sup> It was not the wish of Turkish policy makers to administer Turks in other parts of the world but they wanted to integrate Kirghiz people with the rest of the world.<sup>233</sup>

Although there are some organizations displaying pan-Turkic leanings the regional leaders have always been against any kind of ultra nationalist formations. Kirghiz leaders are of the same view as well. Kirghiz leaders are in favor of nationalism rather than pan-ideals. This is because, as Fawn says, "nationalism provides a critical source of social cohesion for states in the midst of profound transformation."<sup>234</sup> They are opposed to the setting of a supranational mechanism to coordinate the Turkic world such as Turkic Common Market or Turkic Bank. Knowing the sensitivities of the Turkic leaders, the Ankara Declaration, which was published as a result of the First Turkic Summit, made no reference to any organizations based on ethnic grounds. Furthermore the Kirghiz leaders wanted their population to think themselves as a national community distinct from the former Soviet Union. As Huskey suggests, "designed in part to prevent the rise of pan-Turkic sentiment in Central Asia, the formation of separate republics in the 1920s developed pan-Kyrgyz, pan-Uzbek and pan-Kazakh communities in areas where the forces dividing these ethnic groups such as tribalism and regionalism were often as potent as the forces uniting them."<sup>235</sup>

### **4.3.2 Turkey's Constructive Policies in Kyrgyzstan**

#### **4.3.2.1 Turkey's Contributions to Kirghiz Military**

Turkey supports Kyrgyzstan militarily as well. Turkey, which is a NATO member, trains Kirghiz servicemen. Recently Turkey and Kyrgyzstan decided to act together to fight against terrorism. The Turkish and Kyrgyz presidents decided to create an expert group to combat international terrorism in October 2000.<sup>236</sup> The Turkish delegation donated some money for non-lethal military equipment to the Kirghiz armed forces. This was the third Turkish donation since the 1999 incursion of Islamist insurgents into Kyrgyzstan. In 1999 Turkey granted \$210,000 to Kyrgyzstan for the purchase of modern communications equipment and agreed to fund logistical and military technical assistance for over 3000 Kirghiz armed forces personnel.<sup>237</sup> This donation was to support Kyrgyzstan against the Islamic incursions in August 2000.

Another military agreement signed between General Staff Head of Logistic Department Unal Ozsipahioglu and Kyrgyz Deputy Defense Minister and Chief of General Staff Nuredin Comoyev in June 2000 foresees military cooperation in the realm of education, science and technology in Kyrgyzstan's capital Bishkek. This agreement includes training of Kyrgyz military units, increasing defense and assault capacity of these units and financial and technical assistance to Kyrgyz army. According to the agreement, the Turkish General Staff will offer equipment and technical assistance worth

of one billion U.S. dollars to the Kyrgyz army. Ozsipahioglu said at a press briefing that “Turkey's main goal is to help Kyrgyzstan to fight against terrorism and help it maintain security not only in its own land but also in its border regions.”<sup>238</sup>

#### **4.3.2.2 Turkey’s Contributions to Kirghiz Education**

Historically education has been the most effective tool to create a peaceful society. This function of education is also applicable to the NIS of Central Asia and the Caucasus in transforming the society.

Turkish and Kirghiz leaders have started to work for educational projects in 1992. The Ministers of Education of the Turkic Republics and Turkey met at the First Conference of Ministers of Education of Turkish Republics in Ankara in 1992.<sup>239</sup> One of the decisions taken in this meeting was the creation of a common Turkish language apart from emphasizing student exchanges and cultural activities. The Second Conference of Ministers of Education of Turkish Republics took place in Bishkek between 29 September and 3 October 1992.<sup>240</sup> In this conference participants decided to create a ‘Common Program of History and Literature in the Turkish World’. A commission was created to make initial preparations. It was also seen as an important step to begin preparations to adopt the Latin alphabet for the unification of the Turkic world.

Turkey has been cooperating with Kyrgyzstan to establish vocational training schools, high schools and even universities. Many of these activities are coordinated with

the contributions of TICA, the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education.

There are thirteen high schools and also Kyrgyz-Turkish Manas University funded by Turkey in Kyrgyzstan.<sup>241</sup> As Balci, Demir and Akkok explain the curriculum of these schools is the same as in schools in Turkey. Additionally the Turkmen/Kyrgyz language and the Russian language are taught as elective courses. These schools provide one year for teaching a foreign language. The instruction in social studies is in Turkish however the science and math courses are taught in English. Four of these schools were opened by Turkish Ministry of Education. The remaining schools were opened by the Sebat Education Company in Kyrgyzstan.<sup>242</sup>

Kyrgyzstan also welcomed Turkey's offer and sent 384 students for higher education and 344 students for secondary education in the 1992-1993 educational term. Totally there were 721 Kyrgyz students receiving their education in Turkey in 2001.(see Table 3)

Kyrgyz parents mention as one of the reasons for sending their children to Turkish schools, mention the close relationship between the Turkish and Turkmen/Kyrgyz people because of cultural, religious and linguistic affinities. One Turkmen parent said: "Students who finished in these schools will have important positions in Turkmenistan in order to take the country to world standards because they can attend universities in any Western country with the qualifications gained at this school."<sup>243</sup> Moreover the common characteristics of Turkish school students, as



frequently stated by all the participants, are being “well-bred, hard working, honest, goal oriented, self-disciplined and rational individuals who appreciate the modern way of living.”<sup>244</sup> Generally these activities are regarded as a welcome supplement to Turkey’s official endeavors in cultural and educational cooperation with the Turkic states.

#### **4.3.2.3 Cultural Relations**

Turkey and Kyrgyzstan display mutual willingness to get closer in terms of culture as well as education. Kyrgyzstan reacted positively to the Turkish offer of adopting a Latin based alphabet, which was seen as an important instrument for the unification of the Turkic world.

Both Turkish and Kirghiz leadership saw a common alphabet as a significant tool to ease the relations between the two countries in the areas of culture, education and economics.

As a sign of close relations the Ankara meeting on 30-31 October 1992 among the presidents of the Turkic Republics, was held<sup>245</sup> and the idea of using a common Latin based alphabet was raised in the Ankara Meeting, which was held in 1992 among the presidents of the Turkic Republics. The intention of this meeting was to reproduce already existing common values the most important of which was language. The leader of Kyrgyzstan also attended this meeting. The declaration which was announced following this meeting emphasized the common cultural values between Turkey and the Turkic

Republics. Turkish leaders were enthusiastic in exploiting the historical opportunities in the best possible way influenced by the spirit of this meeting. Kirghiz leaders also gave emotional speeches upon this gathering in Ankara.

Tunegun Kasymbegov, advisor to the Kirghiz president and head of the Commission on Culture to the Kirgiz Assembly, said that, “we Turkic peoples used to have one common language” and stressed that the reason why there was currently no common language was because “some Turkic peoples were subject to Russia, China and Iran.”<sup>246</sup> He talked about the will of Kyrgyzstan to adopt the Latin alphabet and reminded the audience that the Kirghiz president had established a commission in the Kirghiz parliament to administer the adoption of the Latin alphabet. In response to these claims Turkish Minister Koksal Toptan promised to publish the necessary books in Turkey and send them to the Turkic Republics.<sup>247</sup> Furthermore Anvarbek Mokeev, who was an undersecretary at the Kirghiz Embassy, even advocated the development of a common written language based on Anatolian Turkish in the long term.<sup>248</sup> Despite this positive exchange of ideas, Kyrgyzstan never implemented the alphabet change. Actually Kyrgyzstan wanted to replace the Cyrillic alphabet with the Latin alphabet but because of economic problems they did not have the opportunity to put theory into practice.

Additionally TICA, which is a unique technical assistance organization affiliated with the Republic of Turkey Prime Ministry, operating in 37 countries across 3 continents including Europe, Asia and Africa, established a new computer library, which would serve 300 students, in the Brigadier, General Aliev Police Academy in Kyrgyzstan. This

lab would enable security personnel to record criminal data to assist in the struggle against crime. TICA's Bishkek Program Coordinator Office has been operating in Kyrgyzstan since 1993, and particularly in 2006, TICA was quite active implementing 51 projects in the country. The educational and social projects include provision of on the Job Training for Teachers, training for Kirghiz Police Radio Media Members, training support for Kyrgyz TV Personnel, Support for Kyrgyz News Agency, Equipment and Expert Support for the Kyrgyzstan KABAR International News Agency. Some of the cultural projects provided Support for the World Folk Epics Festival in Bishkek and Support for the Kyrgyzstan Cultural Week Celebrations.<sup>249</sup>

#### **4.3.2.4 Technical Cooperation between Turkey and Kyrgyzstan**

Turkey established technical cooperation between Turkey and Kyrgyzstan. A technical cooperation agreement was signed between the TSE (Turkish Standardization Institute) and the matching standardization of institution in Kyrgyzstan. Also Unity of Standardization between Turkey and the Turkic Republics was established.<sup>250</sup>

Additionally The Turkish Standards Institute and the State Statistics Institute (TICA) and the Center to Develop and Support Small and Medium Scale Industry (KOSGEB) began to offer training technical and consultancy services in Kyrgyzstan.

Kyrgyzstan was still using the poor telecommunication system inherited from the USSR. In order to modernize the telephone system in Kyrgyzstan, Turkey installed a 2500-line capacity digital telephone exchange established by the Turkish PTT.<sup>251</sup> Turkey

was also enthusiastic to broadcast Turkish programs in Kyrgyzstan. Turkish Radio and Television Corporation (TRT INT), Avrasya TV Channel began broadcasting in Kyrgyzstan on April 27, 1992.<sup>252</sup> Avrasya TV was described as cementing the existing cultural and social ties with these countries and forming a solid bridge between Turkey and Kyrgyzstan.

#### **4.4 Political Relations between Turkey and Turkmenistan**

##### **4.4.1 Initial Interactions of Turkey and Turkmenistan Following the Independence of Turkmenistan**

On October 1991 the Turkmen voters opted for independence in their national referendum and the next day the Supreme Soviet declared the country's independence. Eventually the Republic of Turkmenistan was born.

After Turkmenistan's Declaration of Independence Turkey became the first country to recognize it and to open an embassy in Turkmenistan and Turkmenistan in return opened its first Embassy in Turkey. Saparmurat Turkmenbashi also paid his first visit abroad to Turkey in 1991.<sup>253</sup> Turkmenbashi with his seventy delegates spent four days in Turkey. This visit led to several agreements related with economic, commercial, scientific and technical co-operation communications. Both sides' leaders launched regular flights as a result of this visit.

Saparmurat Niyazov, Turkmenbashi, had very positive thoughts about Turkey. He

welcomed the characteristics of the Turkish model, secularism and market economy in particular. Furthermore Niyazov, personally, was an admirer of Ataturk and he even called himself as Turkmenbashi which has a similar meaning with Ataturk. Ataturk means ‘father of all Turks’ and Turkmenbashi means ‘head of all Turks’. While returning from Turkey to Turkmenistan, Turkmenbashi said:

We are expecting many things from Turkey. Firstly we want to be recognized by Turkey. I explained in Turkey that we would give citizenship and soil to those who want to come to Turkmenistan from Turkey. We not only regard Turkey as a gate open to the West, but with its big potential we regard Turkey as a partner which will show the path to the Turkmen economy. It is possible to establish a Turkic common market.<sup>254</sup>

Turkmen leaders, like other Turkic leaders, attended the 1992 Ankara Summit. Newspapers reported that it was the first time a meeting had taken place among the Turkic states in history and with this meeting the Turkish world was about to be officially born.<sup>255</sup> It should be noted that Turkish politicians were not pursuing pan-Turkic policies but held this meeting to revitalize the common cultural values. Turkish President Turgut Ozal promised to explore the needs of Turkmenistan and to give support to Turkmenistan at all levels.

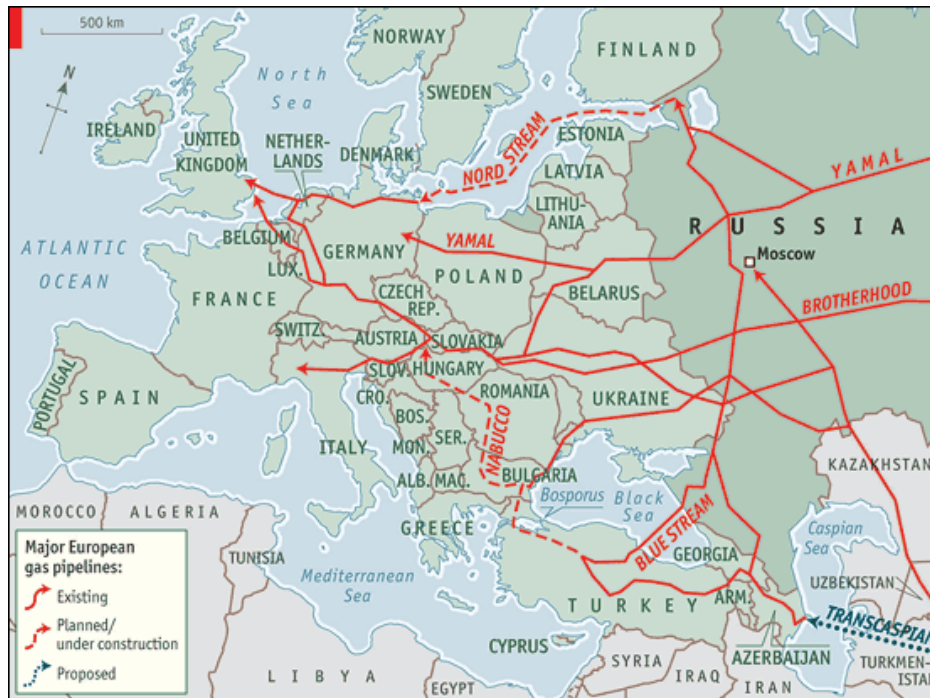
This meeting the first major visit to Turkmenistan took place in March 1992.<sup>256</sup> The Turkish Minister of Education Koksal Toptan, Foreign Minister Hikmet Cetin, State Minister Serif Ercan, officials from the Ministry of Education and Foreign Ministry, and businessmen and members of the Turkish Press participated in the visit, to a total of a hundred and fifty people. Several decisions were taken during this visit for future

cooperation.

Despite these developing relations in the last years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, meetings and contacts between Turkey and Turkmenistan cooled down later on. This is partially related with Turkmenistan's neutral status in its external policy. As London explains "neutralism is somewhat related to isolationism although it does not actually rule out foreign contacts rather it is isolation from political commitments to either the West or the East."<sup>257</sup> Turkey respects Turkmenistan's choice of such a neutral line but this kind of policy does not offer a profitable basis to engage in collective actions in fields such as security or economy. Turkmenistan, on the other hand, sees neutralism as the best option to protect itself. Turkmenistan is among the richest countries in the world in terms of hydrocarbon resources and Turkmen leaders saw neutrality as the best way to protect its raw materials from becoming an object of discord between the regional centers of power. The leadership thought that this neutrality would also ensure the country's territorial integrity and security.

## 4.4.2 Turkey's Energy Politics towards Turkmenistan

### 4.4.2.1 The Blue Stream Project



Source: [www.economist.com/images/20070414/CEU957.gif](http://www.economist.com/images/20070414/CEU957.gif)

**Figure 10: The Blue Stream Project**

The Blue Stream Project was a complex project because it combined the issue of oil pipelines with those of gas pipelines. Turkey used to meet its natural gas demand by deliveries, which reach the country via Bulgaria, from Russia. To increase natural gas delivery to meet rising needs Turkey and Russia decided to build a gas pipeline through the Black Sea to the Turkish port of Samsun. From Samsun the gas would be delivered to

the Anatolia. The Russian Energy giant Gazprom has concluded a joint venture with the Italian ENI to realize the Blue Stream Project. This is a very important project for Turkey's energy politics. Therefore Turkey is careful not to hamper Russia from using the Bosphorus Straits as an energy transit route.<sup>258</sup>

The problem with the Blue Stream was that there were problems between Iran, Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan. They had different claims on the ownership of Caspian resources. Turkmenistan took a position on the side of Iran and against Turkey. Analysts argue that Turkey has a chance to avoid dependence on Russia with the Transcaspian Gas Pipeline (TCGP) project. Opponents of the project also argue that the Blue Stream would damage relations between Turkey and such states as Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan, which would stand to benefit if Turkey buys its gas from the Caucasus and Central Asia instead of Russia. The Turkmen President Niyazov and the Azeri President Aliev were concerned about Turkey's pipeline selections. Aliev said, "Turkey doesn't need Blue Stream."<sup>259</sup>

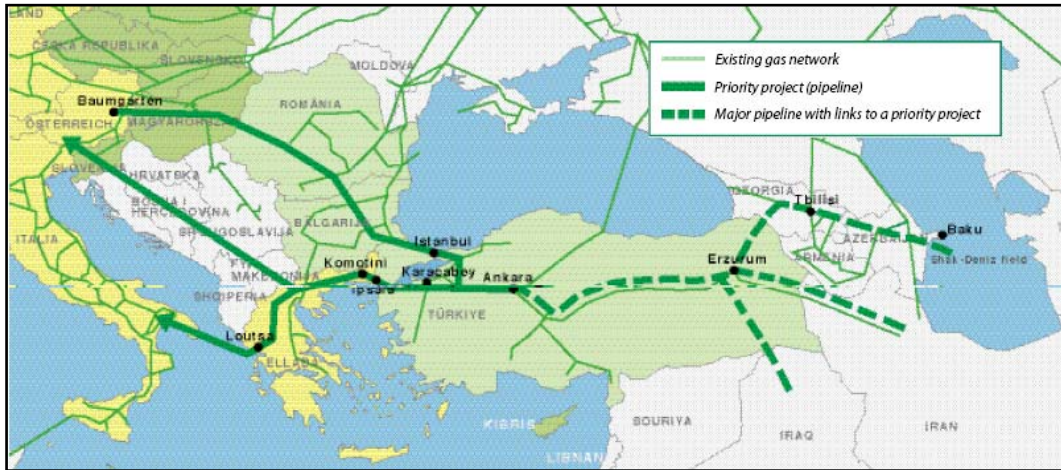
Moreover the technical feasibility of the Blue Stream Project raised some questions. The Black Sea section of the Blue Stream would be the deepest gas pipeline in the world and that the Black Sea is one of the most polluted seas in the world is an important problematic issue to consider. This presents dangers of pipe corrosion from acidity and possible pipe collapse as a result of hydrostatic pressure. The Black Sea is also susceptible to earthquakes, which could not only result in costly repairs but could present environmental hazards.



Despite these discourses Turkey and Russia initiated this pipeline officially in November 2005 with the attendance of Russian President Vladimir Putin, Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi.

#### **4.4.2.2 Trans-Caspian Gas Pipeline Project**

Turkey's foreign policy towards Turkmenistan is mostly shaped by the energy issue. Turkey has been looking for alternative gas supplies to decrease dependence on Russia. Turkey's search for alternative routes is a challenging path, however. For example one gas deal with Iran, planned by Necmettin Erbakan, who was in office as the prime minister of Turkey in 1996, with Iran severely annoyed the US administration because the US administration decided that this gas deal was violating Iran-Libya Sanctions Act. Upon the US's reaction Turkey planned to combine the Iran-Turkey pipeline for a larger project. This project would aim to bring Turkmen natural gas to Europe via Iran and Turkey. Washington finally accepted that Turkey's gas deal with Iran does not violate the Iran-Libya Sanctions Act. Turkish officials were thinking about signing an agreement with Iran to create a competitive environment. Eventually this would lead to a decrease in the cost of natural gas in Turkey. However this project has never been realized and it remained on paper.<sup>260</sup>



Source: [www.transatlanticpolitics.com/category/russia/](http://www.transatlanticpolitics.com/category/russia/)

**Figure 11: Trans-Caspian Pipeline Project**

Turkey's other plan was to bring gas from Turkmenistan to Turkey. The Clinton administration was also advocating that a trans-Caspian gas pipeline from Turkmenistan to Baku and on to Turkey as part of the east-west transportation corridor.

Turkey organized a meeting for foreign ministers of Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan and Georgia to build support for its preferred pipeline route. Some agreements were signed concerning the development of the Trans-Caspian pipeline at the Istanbul Summit Meeting in November 1999 of the Organization for Security and Co-Operation in Europe OCSE. The key document was a multilateral agreement on the construction of the pipeline between Azerbaijan Georgia Turkey and Turkmenistan. This document was a follow up to one already signed on 29 October 1998 between

Turkmenistan and Turkey on the export of Turkmen gas to Turkey. The two countries agreed on 30 bcm per year. Turkey would consume 16 bcm and the rest would be re-exported to European markets.<sup>261</sup> Moreover Niyazov signed an agreement with the Minister of Energy of Turkey. This agreement offered the two companies, Botas and 21. Asir Turkmenin Altin Asri, to sell the Turkmen gas to the Turkish and European markets. Turkmenistan has the greatest gas reserve and potential to create a satisfactory business environment that would encourage major gas projects rather than discourage investors. However any development in the Turkmen-Georgian section has not yet been achieved.

#### **4.4.3 Turkey's Constructive Policies in Turkmenistan**

##### **4.4.3.1 Economic Relations**

Turkmenistan has one of the least developed economies of the former Soviet republics. It has been reflected in the speeches of Turkmen leaders that Turkmenistan welcomed the market economy example of the Turkish model. Turkmenistan, like the other Turkic Republics, has tried to transform its centrally planned economy into a market economy. Turkmenistan saw Turkey as a model in this transformation and wanted to be a friend of Turkey to find its path to success. Turkmenistan and Turkey enjoy good economic relations. Turkey gave Eximbank credits which were worth \$75 million to Turkmenistan. Turkmenistan, on the other hand, is Turkey's largest trade partner in Central Asia. Also Turkmenistan offers a huge regional market for Turkish construction companies.

Some projects towards the goal of promoting Turkmen economy have been implemented by TICA. TICA sent a group of experts in economics to Turkmenistan between 6-12 June 2004 to exchange ideas with administrators in the Turkish Ministry of Economics and Finance working in the area of taxes. The two parts designated areas where Turkmen officials need help and they also made a schedule of proposed events.

During this visit the Turkmen side had been informed about taxing applications and financial politics of Turkey. Turkmen officials prepared a list of topics on which they need training and submitted this list to TICA. TICA announced, in its website, that it would start the necessary training programs upon the signing of Financial Cooperation Protocol directed towards Eurasian Countries between TICA and Turkish Ministry of Finance.

#### **4.4.3.2 Turkey's Contributions to Turkmen Education**

Turkey made some contributions in Turkmen education system as it did in other Turkic Republics. There are 20 Turkish schools established by Turkey in Turkmenistan. Four of them were opened by the Turkish Ministry of Education and sixteen of them were opened by Baskent Education Company<sup>262</sup> (See Table 2). One of these schools is called Turgut Ozal High School and the university's name is International Turkmen-Turkish University. The curriculum of these schools is the same as in schools in Turkey. Additionally the Turkmen/Kyrgyz language and the Russian language are taught as elective courses. These schools leave one year for teaching a foreign language. All

courses are given in English except social sciences classes.

The Turkmen parents provide their reasons for their preferences for the Turkish schools, such as “the opportunity to learn four languages (English, Turkish, Russian and Turkmen/Kyrgyz languages); more discipline, the training of students as well-behaved and hardworking individuals; the high quality of instruction (e.g. education at world standards); and the opportunity to develop computer skills.”<sup>263</sup>

Turkmenistan also positively responded to Turkey’s offer and sent 1,185 students for higher education and 519 students for the secondary education in the 1992-93 education terms. Turkish Ministry of Education gave scholarships to close to one thousand students for their undergraduate and graduate education. (see Table 3)

TICA has opened a coordination office in Ashgabat and has been actively working in Turkmenistan since 1997. The most important project of TICA in terms of culture is the restoration of the mausoleum of Sultan Sancar. Sultan Sancar represents a shared treasure of Turkey and Turkmenistan and TICA’s projects bring the two countries closer by revitalizing this common historical and cultural heritage. TICA has restored the mausoleum of Sultan Sancar and organized a conference on *Sultan Sancar and His Period* following the opening ceremony of the mausoleum on 18 November 2004. Sultan Sancar is the last Seljuk leader who lived in the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries. This story of this project goes back to 2001. Devlet Bahçeli, the leader of the Nationalist Movement Party, has promised to restore the tomb of Sultan Sancar during his visit to Turkmenistan. This

tomb is among the World Heritage List of UNESCO.

TICA also met the modification and installation costs of Turkmen-Turk Library, which is based on a 222m<sup>2</sup> area and has books more than 10.000 books, 8000 of which are Turkish books. This library is a division of World Turkmens Humanitarian Association, the president of which is Saparmurat Turkmenbashi.

Regarding the alphabetical change Turkmenistan welcomed Turkey's offer of Latin alphabet. The Turkmen leader Saparmurat Turkmenbashi said that they would begin to use the Turkish Latin alphabet and the Turkish books donated by Turkey. Turkmenbashi believed that to use the Latin alphabet would bring Turkmen people spiritually closer to the civilized world.<sup>264</sup>

#### **4.4.3.3 Technical Cooperation between Turkey and Turkmenistan**

It was important for Turkey to give technical training and consultancy services to respond to Turkmenistan's demands on its way to development. Staff members are like the wheels of a working industry. Being aware of this Turkish institutions such as Supporting Small and Medium Scale Industry (KOSGEB) began offering courses to train Turkmen staff. Also diplomats from Turkmenistan attended courses organized by the Turkish Foreign Ministry. Turkey and Turkmenistan also signed a technical cooperation agreement between the Turkish Standardization Institute and The Standardization Institute of Turkmenistan.<sup>265</sup>

Turkey also helped Turkmenistan to modernize Turkmenistan's transport and telecommunications system. Turkish companies along with Indian and Pakistani companies helped Turkmenistan to improve the poor telephone system, which remained from the USSR. Turkey launched phone lines for digital telephone exchange in Turkmenistan.

To develop closer cultural relations and understanding among the people of the region and to contribute to Turkish political influence Turkish Radio and Television Corporation TRT INT Avrasya TV Channel began broadcasting in Turkmenistan on the day the Turkish Prime Minister started his visit to the Turkic Republics. This channel was a bridge between Europe and Asia. The TV programs beamed to the Turkic Republics were met with pleasure.

## **4.5 Political Relations between Turkey and Uzbekistan**

### **4.5.1 Initial Interactions between Turkey and Uzbekistan**

Uzbekistan was founded as a Union Republic of the USSR in 1924. This republic declared its sovereignty in 1990 and became independent on 1 September 1991. Islam Kerimov arose as Uzbekistan's leader and the Communist Party was renamed as the People's Democratic Party.

Turkey was an example for the Uzbek Republic in terms of economic reforms, the

balance between religion and state and the experience of overcoming ethnic and cultural difficulties. These features of Turkey made it a useful model for Uzbekistan. The apparent approach of the Uzbek leadership was that, because of the ethnic and linguistic links between the Uzbeks and Turks, Uzbeks were attracted by the Turkish model.

Kerimov visited Turkey between the 22<sup>nd</sup> and the 24<sup>th</sup> of December 1991. In his speeches and declarations he described the path that Uzbekistan would follow:

As the state of Uzbekistan we are taking Turkey as an example in all its aspects. We will establish the state from A to Z by taking Turkey as a model. If Turkey supports us no one else can enslave the Uzbeks.<sup>266</sup>

Uzbek leadership was an admirer of Ataturk and Uzbek leaders hoped to realize what Ataturk had succeeded in Turkey. The principles of Ataturk were parallel to those that Islam Kerimov wanted to install in Uzbekistan. Another important indicator of Uzbekistan's warm welcome to Turkey and the Turkish model was that Kerimov gave the headquarters of his country's Foreign Ministry to Turkey to use as its embassy.<sup>267</sup> These factors suggest that Turkey enjoyed unrivalled prestige in Uzbekistan by the ethnic links with Uzbeks and by its economic success.

One area in which Uzbekistan has been rather reluctant to adopt from Turkey's political system was a multiparty system. The Uzbek political system was not yet ready for plural democracy. One important factor which causes instability and disunity in the country is that Uzbeks are the major diaspora in the region.<sup>268</sup> They form considerable minorities in both Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan and some Kirghiz leaders supported by some Kirghiz people are threatening to intervene in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan to defend



their co-ethnics or drive them towards secession. Moreover some Tajik intellectuals are dreaming to regain Samarkand and Bukhara, the lost Islamic lands of Tajikistan, back. For these reasons stability was obtained at the price of repressing almost all dissent inside and outside Kerimov's administration in Uzbekistan. In other words, President Kerimov's priority is to guarantee a stable political environment, even at the cost of undermining the basic rights and liberties of the Uzbek people.<sup>269</sup>

An exchange of official visits occurred between the two countries' leadership in 1992. The Turkish Ministers visited Uzbekistan between the 28<sup>th</sup> of February and the 6<sup>th</sup> of March 1992 with the aim to observe the needs of these countries on the spot and obtain information for future projects. This visit helped to improve cultural and educational relations between Turkey and Uzbekistan. Eight agreements in different fields were signed in Uzbekistan.<sup>270</sup>

While the two parties' leadership was trying to get closer, nationalist fractions were surfacing in Uzbekistan. For example Aras says that "The leader of the banned Erk Party in Uzbekistan, Muhammed Salih, argues that Turkmenistan is more than a geographical term; it also means an ethnic term."<sup>271</sup> From nationalists' perspective, Moscow is blamed for dividing Turkestan into different nations such as Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan.

Furthermore these movements had close relations with nationalist parties in Turkey but this closeness and support of Turkish parties were not approved by the former

Soviet states' governments. Islam Kerimov was against a supranational mechanism which would coordinate the Turkic world. He was clear in expressing his limitations in his involvement of any pan-Turkic movement. On the Turkish side, although there were nationalist fractions leaning towards pan-Turkic policies such as The National Movement Party and its local organizations gathered around the ideal of Turkism. Turkey's general approach towards purely ethnic ideologies was negative. Most importantly Uzbekistan, similar to the other Turkic Republics, was still a weak state. It needed to restructure and modernize the economy, build its state from scratch, and it had to deal with its own domestic problems like public health problems, high inflation and unemployment.

In general, Uzbekistan welcomed some of the aspects of the Turkish model such as secularism market economy and closeness to the West. Uzbekistan wanted to benefit by Turkey's experience in economic transformation from a centrally controlled economy to a market economy. Moreover Turkey was expected to help Uzbekistan attract foreign investments. Turkey, on the other hand, was willing to meet Uzbekistan's expectations and to establish joint business councils with Uzbekistan. For example the first such council, the Turkish Uzbek Council, was set up as early as November 1991.<sup>272</sup>

As mentioned above although the multiparty aspect of the model was nominally welcomed in practice it has not been accepted and the authorities claim that for the sake of stability implementation of democracy has been delayed.

## **4.5.2 Turkey's Constructive Policies in Uzbekistan**

### **4.5.2.1 Turkey's Contributions to Uzbek Military**

Uzbekistan is the most strategically located country among the Central Asian states. While it has the largest population and the most significant military capability, it has also been a center of regional tension. In Uzbekistan radical Islamist groups, which are Hizb-üt Tahrir, Al Qaida and The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) cause political instability. The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, which is based in Tajikistan and in Taliban controlled areas of Afghanistan and which tends to attack the Fergana Valley, the area between Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan, is one of the greatest threats to Central Asian security.<sup>273</sup>

In 1999, Tashkent was plagued with several bombings which have been linked to the IMU.<sup>274</sup> Three suicide bombings blasted outside the embassies of Israel and the US. Innocent Uzbeks were killed at this event. The IMU was probably behind car bombs in Tashkent in February 1999 that aimed to assassinate Uzbek President Islam Kerimov and that killed 16 persons.<sup>275</sup> The IMU also launched a series of attacks in 2000. To combat the threat of the IMU, the Uzbek government has preempted with a policy of arresting thousands of alleged terrorists.<sup>276</sup> However this policy backfired as the repression of human rights and civil freedoms has promoted radicalism and militancy within Uzbekistan.<sup>277</sup>

Following the August 2000 Islamic incursions Turkey immediately offered Uzbekistan financial aid. Turkey promised to train Uzbek-counter terrorism teams in its military academies. Under a 16 October 2000 military cooperation agreement the two countries further agreed to jointly fight international terrorism and other criminal activities and discussed the possible transfer of Turkish arms and other military equipment to Uzbekistan's armed forces.<sup>278</sup>

Moreover the events of September 11th opened new opportunities for Turkish diplomacy, especially in the military field. Currently Turkey is providing important military assistance to train and equip the Uzbek army in the war against terrorism. This assistance has helped ease the tensions evident in the mid and late 1990s and has given Turkish-Uzbek relations important new impetus.<sup>279</sup>

Turkey and Uzbekistan became partners in countering terrorism however Uzbekistan creates a contradictory situation by its own human rights abuses. According to the Human Rights Watch Report there are major abuses of the rights to freedom of religion, expression, association, and assembly. Moreover Uzbekistan justifies its human rights abuses by referring to the global campaign against terrorism. The same report states that "the government justifies this campaign by referring to the "war on terror," failing to distinguish between those who advocate violence and those who peacefully express their religious beliefs."<sup>280</sup> Although Turkey shares Uzbekistan's concerns about Uzbekistan's security threats and supplies aid and military education to this country<sup>281</sup>, Uzbekistan's weaknesses in the areas of democracy and human rights are likely to

impede Turkish-Uzbek relations in the long term.

#### **4.5.2.2 Turkey's Contributions to Uzbek Education**

Turkey invited students from Uzbekistan between the years 1992 and 1993 following Prime Minister Demirel's official visit to the Turkic Republics as part of cooperation in education. These students learned Turkish in their first year and the next year they attended Turkish universities and colleges. However a major problem in the educational exchange program occurred when Uzbekistan called its students back to Uzbekistan.

The Uzbek government believed that Uzbek students in Turkey would be influenced by the Uzbek opposition in Turkey. It was suspected that some of these students were attending street demonstrations with members of the Uzbek opposition. In the 1992-93 academic year 1120 students and in 1993-94 244 students were called back to Uzbekistan. By 1997 only 438 Uzbek students were registered at Turkish schools.<sup>282</sup> In 2001 there were only six Uzbek students continuing their education in Turkey. (See Table 2)

People of this region believe that the Turkish schools make a big contribution to the improvement of close relations between Turkey and the host countries. There are 25 high schools and one university established by Turkey. (see Table 2) Parents increase their knowledge of Turkey through their children and the teachers and administrators

working in these schools get extensive information on Turkey's politics, economics, social and cultural life through their Turkish colleagues. Special days of Turkey are also celebrated by all students and parents, such as the foundation of the Turkish Republic and the annual commemoration of the death of Ataturk.

Moreover Turkish teachers establish close friendships with local people by inviting students' parents to their homes for dinners to introduce Turkish meals, family patterns and culture. It is not hard to see that the most important factor that carries these schools to success is teachers' work with enthusiasm. They feel part of the Turkic world and see what they are doing as a historical mission since they share the same religion, history and a similar culture with the Turkic people. They are also in good relations with the Turkmen government which supports Turkish schools.

These schools give people hope for a better future. Administrators and teachers believe that their students are offered a high-quality education and they will carry their countries to the world standards by catching up with the universal values.

Education can be used as one of the most direct means to mould the political culture of a target country by attempting to create a generation of elites familiar with and sympathetic to the culture and to the country that provides the education.<sup>283</sup> In this direction, Uzbeks strongly believe that the Turkish schools train the future bureaucrats, leaders and technocrats who are equipped with various skills such as language, computer and leadership skills. After graduation students hope to get into the Turkish universities

and find a good job in Turkish companies. They trust in themselves since they can work in any part of the world with their foreign language, which is English, and academic skills. Students who are trained in Turkish schools are the pioneers in the development of their countries.

#### **4.5.2.3 Cultural Relations**

Uzbekistan has an important place in the Islamic culture. Moreover Tashkent was chosen as the Capital of Islamic Culture in 2007 by ISESKO which is a subsidiary organization interested in education, science and culture of the Organization of the Islamic Culture.<sup>284</sup> However, Uzbeks, under the Communist Soviet Rule, have felt the negative government pressure in openly confessing and practicing their religion. Religious teachings at schools were banned and people were exposed to atheist propaganda. By the late 1980s, as Kendzior argues, “the Soviets had succeeded in curtailing religion in Uzbekistan by removing its outward manifestations: closing mosques and madrasas; banning sacred texts and languages; outlawing non-state-sanctioned religious leaders and congregations.”<sup>285</sup>

Within this context Kerimov says that they were raised up in nihilist and atheist conditions without knowing the value of Islam. He adds “To my understanding Islam is a democratic regime and encourages love for human beings. Islam means purification. It doesn’t allow you to exceed certain moral limits.”<sup>286</sup> During the presidency of Islam Kerimov mosques and religious schools increased in number.

Turkish officials opened educational centers in Uzbekistan to teach Islam and they sent imams to serve people at mosques. TICA and other numerous voluntary organizations gathered books and Qurans to send to their Uzbek brothers. Apart from Turkish religious aid, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Kuwait, Libya and Egypt have sent Korans and other religious books to the Headquarters of the Religious Board in Tashkent and helped to build new mosques and seminaries.

TICA's presence in the country was felt by its financial aids as well. TICA has donated a \$5000 financial source for the project which would generate electricity from solar power. TICA has also provided assistance to Uzbekistan in various areas such as training for Uzbek diplomats, Uzbek radiobroadcasters, building greenhouses and milling.

In the case of alphabet reform, although Uzbekistan considered both Arabic and Latin alphabets, it later decided to adopt the Latin alphabet which would strengthen the relations between Turkey and Uzbekistan by easing communication between the two sides. At the same time the adoption of the Latin alphabet brought Uzbekistan closer to the West. Kubicek notes that "scholars in Uzbekistan proposed to create a common language from the various Turkic tongues spoken in the region, and received initial backing from President Islam Kerimov."<sup>287</sup> On this issue Kerimov said that in the case of the alphabet they would make a decision between the Arab and Latin alphabets and their preference would be on the side of the Latin alphabet.<sup>288</sup>



## 4.6 Conclusion

Turkish leaders were quite satisfied that the ex-Soviet states had approached the Turkish development model with great willingness. The Turkish model offered a Western type of political and economic system. The common features of this model are a secular and democratic political system, a liberal economy and closeness with the West. For these features, Turkey had credibility in the eyes of the Turkic governments. Since the characteristics of the Turkish economic and political system were supposed to integrate these states with the rest of the world it was crucial for the states of Central Asia, which was called as “periphery”, “isolated” or landlocked, to connect to the global system in this new post-Soviet international system.

One of the findings of this chapter is that despite the alleged brotherhood between Turkey and Azerbaijan, Turkey avoided the option of helping Azeris with military intervention during the discourse of warfare in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Turkey and Azerbaijan shared the same goal to liberate occupied Azeri territory from Armenia. Moreover there was great public pressure resulting from the common socio-cultural ties on Turkish government to fight with Armenia militarily in cases of severe crises such as the massacre in Khojali in 1992. Turkey is Azerbaijan’s only ally in this conflict, however Turkey officially did not respond to the expectations of the Turkish citizens and the Azeri government. Turkey avoided military confrontation with Russia who has been on the side of the Armenians. Above all, Turkey’s general stance in case of conflicts is to apply to the international institutions for a resolution. Turkey prefers to work in cooperation with the UN and CSCE in Europe to alleviate the conflict.

In all the republics Turkey has been actively implementing educational policies. The role of education is crucial in transforming the economic, political and cultural systems of the former Soviet Republics. The Turkish Ministry of Education and some private groups like the Gulen community have opened high schools and universities in these states. These schools have been able to build up a good reputation throughout the region. Students gain awards from the international scientific contests. Most importantly they contribute to the reformation of society by turning out to be responsible and well behaved individuals as graduates from Turkish schools.

Like education, culture is another field that Turkey gives importance to achieve its policy goals. As London notes “the advantage of cultural exchange probably is the contact it creates and the possibility that some stereotyped prejudices old or new can be eliminated.”<sup>289</sup> One major goal of Turkey in the area of culture is to promote the Latin alphabet and Turkish language. All republics except Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan changed their alphabets. A common language and a common alphabet would ease any kind of relationship whether it’s political or economical. Common language would strengthen the Turkic identity and bring people closer.

Turkey has been actively working in the area of religion as well. Following the independence of republics people of the region have made their needs well known to Muslim communities outside the region. In response to this demand Turkish Ministry of Religious Affairs and some voluntary organizations sent thousands of books on Islam. Fuller says that “As a result there is a profusion of literature in local Central Asian

languages about Islam and its meaning.”<sup>290</sup> Turkey also tried to meet peoples’ demands about learning Islam by opening religious centers.

Turkey has the strongest energy link with Azerbaijan. Not only oil but also natural gas is exported from Azerbaijan. Turkey needs natural gas for domestic consumption and Turkey’s first gas supply from Azerbaijan’s Shah-Deniz-Guneshli field started to flow in 2007.

Turkey’s choice of Azerbaijan as an oil and gas exporting country proves that common socio-cultural ties are important for Turkey in doing business with other states. Turkey can buy oil from Russia and Iran as well. However Turkey is not comfortable in doing business with these two countries as much as it is comfortable with Azerbaijan. Cultural patterns of Turkey and Russia are quite different with the former based on an Ottoman-Islamic heritage and the latter based on a Christian- heritage. Moreover there is a 500-year history between Turkey and Russia and they are considered to be “archrivals.”<sup>291</sup> As far as Iran is concerned Turkey is not enthusiastic to engage in business relations with this country considering the conflicting relations between Iran and the US, which is a strong ally of Turkey.

## **CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION**

### **5.1 Findings**

This thesis reveals that both Turkey and the five Turkic republics were eager to expand their relations in every field into future cooperation following the break up of the Soviet Union. During the time period between 1991 and 1993 Turkey had its closest relations in the Caspian Sea Region. In these years official and work visits occurred and several agreements on economic, scientific and technical cooperation were signed.

Turkish leaders were quite satisfied that the ex-Soviet states had approached the Turkish development model with great willingness. Since the characteristics of the Turkish economic and political system were supposed to integrate these states with the rest of the world, it was crucial for the states of Central Asia which were described as “periphery”, “isolated” or “landlocked” to connect to the global system in this new post-Soviet international system.

The Turkish model offered a Western type of political and economic system. The common features of this model are a secular and democratic political system, liberal economy and closeness with the West. For these features Turkey had credibility in the eyes of the five Turkic republics. Moreover the US presence in this region had positive impacts on Turkish policy. The US’s major concern in the area is to prevent the spread of radical terrorist activities and to limit the Iranian influence in both political and economic terms. Turkey, in this context, as an ally of the US, could avoid the US’s such concerns

by acting as a stabilizing factor in the region. For Turkish policy makers, on the other hand, a US dimension, supporting Turkey's economic and political interests, is quite attractive. In the view of this background information on Turkish-American agreement, we can better understand US's moves towards supporting Turkey. From a policy perspective, the US supports Turkish development against Iranian influence. Turkey offers its model of secularism in a mostly Muslim population, parliamentary democracy and a free market economy.

These republics' political leaders all expressed their wish to follow the guidance of Turkey in their path to democratization and marketization and extended their goodwill and desire to be close partners with Turkey in the future. They have a communist political culture separating them from democratic societies and they looked to Turkey in their efforts to establish democratic systems. As Kazemin and Ajdar stated "there is an elite class that was reared and socialized in a highly restrictive and controlled Soviet system."<sup>292</sup>

Numerous speeches of Turkic leaders of the period emphasized that they had chosen Turkey as the leading country to help them integrate with the rest of the world. It was reflected in these speeches that common ethnic, historical and religious ties explained their preference for Turkey as the best country to help them in their transition from Soviet rule to independence. Turkey shares a friendly history rooted in the Ottoman Empire with those countries. Their ethnic commonality as Turks dates back to 2000 BC from origins in inner Asia and they all speak Turkic dialects. Adding to these assets they

are the members of the same religion, Islam. For example the Kirghiz president Akayev saw Turkey as “the morningstar of the Turkic world showing guidance to other Republics”<sup>293</sup> or Azeris consider Turkish people in Turkey as part of their nation. As Aras says “The historical and linguistic ties Turkey maintains with much of the region allows for it to be perceived as a model for these countries to leave their Soviet past and enter today’s society in their unique identities.”<sup>294</sup> Turkey enjoyed the privilege of its common ties with the Turkic countries in easily establishing the initial contacts with these countries. In other words Turkey’s past experiences with regard to the Caucasian and Central Asian region served as strong references for its role as the major actor in the future.

Factors other than common ties that help to fully understand Turkey’s role and function in the Caspian Sea Region are to act as a bridge between the regional countries in the Caspian Region and the West to offer a successful development model, which was mentioned above, for the developing countries of the region.

Turkey was quite attractive for Central Asian Republics as a strong member of the Western alliance. As political observers state “throughout 1991–1992 nearly all Central Asian leaders mentioned that they perceived Turkey as the model to follow since they believed that their relations with Turkey could ease their entry in to the Western world; those countries established an extensive network for cultural, economic and, to a degree, military cooperation with Turkey.”<sup>295</sup>

Moreover having gained independence, many Caspian states became determined to move away from Russian influence. The mean that would be used to realize their wish would be to seek to enter the Western alliance. Turkey would be the bridge between the Turkic states of Central Asia and the West. Turkey was supposed to attract foreign investment and to build contacts between the sides by using its familiarity with the culture and similarity of the language. Consequently this would contribute to the economic development of the countries by providing capital and sophisticated technology. Another way of looking at the Turkic countries' willingness to join the Western alliance is that countries like to act in the same direction with the compatible states as the best policy option to preserve themselves. As London mentions it, "many of the newer states which undergo a stage of rampant nationalism have no choice but to affiliate with others of similar interest."<sup>296</sup>

Particularly Turkic leaders tied their hopes to Turkey's EU membership. Turkey, as an EU member, would be the agent to meet European entrepreneurs and natural sources of the Caspian Sea Region. However it is in question if this expectation can be fulfilled considering that Turkey is still far from changing its status from a candidate to full EU membership.

As mentioned above Turkey's offer of a Western type of development model received positive responses and this gave the hope to Turkey to become a major player in the region. However one disadvantage for Turkey in its historical past was the possibility of leaning towards pan-Turkism, the ideology to unify all the Turks. Turkic peoples'

reactions to pan-Turkic tendencies have always been negative.

The five post-Soviet republics were against any kinds of pan-movements at a time when they were trying to build their own nations and identities. Rather they were fans of Ataturk who pursued territorial policies with his famous motto “Peace at home, peace in the world”. For example Turkmen leader Saparmurat Niyazov was an admirer of Ataturk and he even called himself as Turkmenbashi, which has the same meaning with Ataturk, the head of Turks. Ataturk’s nationalist principle was distant from pan-ideals. Ataturk acknowledged that the origin of the peoples of today’s Anatolia was in Central Asia but he never advocated pan-Turkism, which is the ideology of the union of all Turks. Ataturk rather pursued nationalist policies focusing on the development of the country. Actually Turkic leaders’ admiration of Ataturk, the founder of modern Turkey, increased Turkey’s credibility in the region. In opposition to Ataturk’s nationalist principle, pan-Turkism suggests that the gathering of all Turkic people of the post-Soviet region under the control of the same state. The pan-Turkist policies of Enver Pasha, who saw himself as the ruler of a realm embracing Chinese Turkestan, Russian Turkestan, Kazakhstan and Afghanistan, and who was the commander of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Caucasian Army in the WW I, brought Turkey to a complete catastrophe. Thousands of qualified Turkish military troops were killed in their struggle against the Soviets to help Central Asians free themselves from Moscow’s authority. This is an important event that holds an unfortunate place in Turkish historical memory. Additionally the defeat of Turkish-German alliance against Soviets put an end to Turkey’s pan-Turkist adventures. These historical events explain political leaders’ distance towards pan-turkism. Except some marginal groups Turkish



official policy has never supported any pan-Turkic formations.

Violent conflict is an ongoing problem in Central Asia and the South Caucasus. Causes of these conflicts can be defined as a mix of religious, ethnic and political in addition to foreign interests. The Nagorno-Karabakh is an ethnic conflict between the Azeris and the Armenians and it is a border clash that Azeris and Armenians experience in the case of Nagorno-Karabakh. The boundaries of Caucasian states like those of Central Asian and Middle Eastern states have been drawn artificially. Ethnically defined republics have been separated with artificial lines. As Ajdari and Kazami say “Everywhere people with the same religion, customs and language live on both sides”<sup>297</sup> of the frontiers. On the other hand Olikier and Szyana suggest that the major cause of a regional conflict is “the regimes themselves; their weaknesses and volatilities leave them increasingly unable to withstand challenges posed by other fault lines.”<sup>298</sup>

The focus of attention here is not to discuss the causes of conflicts but Turkey’s common approach towards these conflicts. This thesis shows that despite the alleged brotherhood between Turkey and Azerbaijan, Turkey avoided the option of helping Azeris with military intervention during the course of warfare in Nagorno-Karabakh. Turkey and Azerbaijan shared the same goal to liberate occupied the Azeri territory from Armenia. Moreover there was great public pressure resulting from the common socio-cultural ties on Turkish government to fight with Armenia militarily in cases of severe crises such as the massacre in Khojali in 1992. Turkey is Azerbaijan’s only ally in this conflict. Turkey did not officially respond to the expectations of Turkish citizens and the

Azeri government. Turkey avoided military confrontation with Russia which has been on the side of Armenians. Above all Turkey's general stance in case of conflicts is to apply to the international institutions for a resolution. Turkey prefers to work in cooperation with the UN and CSCE in Europe to alleviate the conflict. Actually this is the visible side of the iceberg. It has been alleged that Turkey provides equipment and military personnel to not only Azeris but also to Chechens in their struggle against Russia. It is an interesting phenomenon that numerous solidarity groups have emerged with this intention of helping Turkic people of the region. As Aras points out "there are an estimated 4-5 million Turkish citizens who regard the peoples of Chechnya, Dagestan, Ingushetia, Georgia, Abkhazia, Azerbaijan and other places as their relatives."<sup>299</sup> These types of solidarity groups influence the Turkish government as lobbyists. Their demands rank high on Turkey's domestic political agenda during the Chechen War, the Abkhazian crisis and with the entry of Russian troops to Azerbaijan.

The hypothesis that the stronger the socio-cultural ties are between Turkey and the Turkic states the closer the foreign relations between Turkey and the Turkic countries are is applicable to all five republics. The Turkic states welcomed Turkey's educational and cultural policies with great willingness. In all the republics Turkey has been actively implementing educational policies. The role of education is crucial in transforming the economic, political and cultural systems of the former Soviet Republics. Turkish Ministry of Education and some private groups have opened high schools and universities in these states. These schools have been able to build up good reputation throughout the region. Students gain awards from the international scientific contests. Most importantly they

contribute to the reformation of society as turning into very well behaved and responsible students.

From a policy perspective, educational projects can be considered as a tool of Turkish foreign policy. As Yanik mentions the goal is “to create a stratum of people who will be well versed in Turkish culture and language, which then would act as a bridge between their countries and Turkey.”<sup>300</sup> Other scholars like Akkok and Balci also foresee that “these schools will serve the political and economic goals of Turkey in relation to the Central Asian countries.”<sup>301</sup> Graduates of these schools are perceived as the pioneers to establish successful foreign relations with the West and Turkey as well. In short the politics behind the Turkish schools and student exchange programs is the improvement of political and cultural relations between Turkey and the republics.

Turkish schools are among the favorites in the region. In these schools students meet the Western economic and political culture. They learn English, which allow them to work in any part of the world. It is significant for students to learn about market economy at a time of their countries’ transition from a centrally planned economy to market economy. Among the schools founded by Turkey, especially vocational high schools serve to realize this goal. Students learn the essentials of market economy, which is something these students are not familiar with as being individuals raised up in a socialist system. Additionally it is a great opportunity for students to use new technologies since ex-Soviet republics have fallen behind the developments in agriculture and industry. Vocational high-schools also provide skilled manpower for the factories as

well.

Parents are also quite satisfied about the behavioral changes they observe in their children. The identity formation of both the students and the states give people a hard time. From this problematic period emerges the use of drugs and alcohol. Thankfully the educational training, given by devoted Turkish teachers, ameliorates this crisis of society by turning students into well behaved individuals. The common characteristic features of the students are “being well-bred, hard working, honest, goal oriented, self-disciplined and rational individuals who appreciate the modern way of living.”<sup>302</sup> These schools have had a positive influence on the shaping of the students’ identity. As Akkok, Balci and Demir say parents think that those schools “seemed to fill a value gap which has emerged in the transition period.”<sup>303</sup>

Like education, culture is another field that Turkey gives importance to achieve its policy goals. As London notes “the advantage of cultural exchange probably is the contact it creates and the possibility that some stereotyped prejudices old or new can be eliminated.”<sup>304</sup>

One major goal of Turkey in the area of culture is to promote the Latin alphabet and Turkish language. All republics except Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan changed their alphabets. A common alphabet would ease any kind of relationship whether it is political or economical and a common language would strengthen the Turkic identity and bring people closer. The switch from Cyrillic to Latin may also be interpreted as a move away

from the Russian sphere of influence at a time when they want to position themselves in the post-Soviet space and they want to implement their own unique identities.

Apart from its ideological and political aspect, adopting the Latin alphabet is practical as well. On this practical side the Latin alphabet is often cited as important for computer compatibility. As Nazarbayev told to the Assembly of Peoples, "Latin script dominates in communications".<sup>305</sup> The young and old generations are affected by this switch in different ways. It is hard for old people, who are the least likely to learn English, to adapt to the new alphabet. The young generation, on the other hand, has less difficulty in learning Latin alphabet. Turkey had a similar experience of adoption of a new script. One of Ataturk's reforms was to change the Arabic script with the Latin script in 1938. Like the people in Central Asia, the young Turkish generation found themselves cut off from their cultural past resulting from the script change. Turkic peoples of the region experience the same hard transition as well. The future generations will feel foreign to their literary heritage since the vast majority of literature is in Cyrillic.

Turkey also puts emphasis on institutions which would increase peoples' consciousness of common Turkic values. Turkey especially offered courses on Turkish art and opened Turkology departments in universities. It was Turkey's hope that its contributions in this field would lead to partnerships in economic and political fields. Turkey funded projects like printing books or conferences on pan-Turkism not to revitalize the ideology but to strengthen Turkic identity which would lead to a rapprochement of Turkic peoples. Local people were quite satisfied with Turkey's

contributions in the cultural field. The Turks of the Soviet Union have also been aware of their common origin with those in the Turkish republics. This has not been destroyed through time.

As it is apparent from the factors listed above Turkey is in a more advantageous position than any other country in the world in terms of integrating with the region and exploiting the potential of the region with its cultural closeness and familiarity of the language.

Central Asia is an honored region in the Islamic world with its cities of Bukhara and Samarqand. These cities, which have important Islamic teaching and learning centers and where famous religious figures have lived, are directly linked with the Islamic culture. Historically the people of the Eastern Turkish world have been affected by the developments and initiatives from Istanbul, the former capital of the Caliph and the Turkish sultans. These people were drawn toward Islamic culture and society.

However the offensive period under Soviet control has weakened this link. For example; Kendzior states that “the Soviet regime had succeeded in curtailing religion in Uzbekistan by removing its outward manifestations: closing mosques and medreses; banning sacred texts and languages; outlawing non-state-sanctioned religious leaders and congregations.”<sup>306</sup> Now that the regional countries are free from Soviet rule, people returned to learning their faith as they had in the past.

People of the region have made their needs well known to Muslim communities outside the region. To meet this demand, the Turkish Ministry of Religious Affairs and some voluntary organizations sent thousands of books on Islam. Today the Turkish Republic, which is the inheritor of the Islamic civilization, still has influence over the cultural and religious lives of the Turkic people and pays attention to these peoples' demands. Fuller says that "As a result there is a profusion of literature in local Central Asian languages about Islam and its meaning."<sup>307</sup>

Generally speaking the strong interest towards Islam is not a consequence of political Islam emerging from the region but rather it is a way to improve solidarity between people. In support to this idea Fuller says that "the nomadic traditions of Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan all emphasize traditions of folk Islam."<sup>308</sup> Islam also has the function of strengthening nationalism. In this respect Kazakh President has mentioned that "Islam could serve to strengthen a sense of Kazakh nationalism."<sup>309</sup> Eventually a combination of Islam and nationalism is likely to strengthen an awareness of a shared civilization.

With regard to Turkey's economic interests in the region Turkish trade relations in the Caspian Sea Region started in 1992. We find that Turkish economy follows a similar pattern in its relations with the Azerbaijani and Central Asian markets. The values indicating the total costs of trade volumes are quite close to each other. The only two countries which reached trade volumes above average are Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan with the former having a \$1 billion trade volume and with the latter having a \$800

million trade volume in 2005.

Trade analysis reveals that Turkey's trade volume with each of the five Turkic countries shows an increasing trend only after 2001. This is the result of the two economic crises: 1998 financial crises of Russia and 2001 economic crisis of Turkey. Foreign trade of the ex-Soviet states was dependent on the Russian economic situation. During the 1998 economic crises in Russia, people of the region preferred to buy Russian products, which were cheaper than Turkish products. Presumably half of the Turkish companies operating in the region were closed. Turkey also experienced a strong financial crisis in 2001 and this led to the contraction of the economy. Interest rates and public debt were high and economic growth was volatile. This economic weakness was inevitably reflected in Turkey's foreign trade and investment.

The US also gives importance to the economic growth, which is supposed to lead to political stability, of the regional countries. The US companies are heavily involved in the infrastructure development projects. Regional economic growth is acknowledged as one of the important factors that would secure the sovereignty of the regional countries. In this context there is an improved Turkish-American joint action towards the economic and political transformation of the Turkic countries.

One common theme that attracts attention when Turkey's investment capacity in the region is considered is that Turkey enjoyed the privilege of exploiting the Central Asian Market in the absence of serious competitors. Post-Soviet Turkic countries are still



in a transition from Moscow's command economy to a liberal economy. There are unstable tariff systems, unsatisfactory banking services and they lack regulating laws. Some of them have long done business by using their local monetary unit, which does not exactly match the value of Turkish lira and this may result as loss of money for Turkish businesspersons. These types of structural problems prevent big companies from doing business there. Moreover they do not want to take the risk of doing business in an unstable environment where they encounter high inflation rates, low output, red tape and bribery, which are the common problems in the regional countries. Another difficulty is to find qualified labor force. It is a significant problem because mostly it depends on how qualified workforce is to take progress in running successful production. The regional countries offer cheap workforce but businesspersons complain that employees are not working in the way they should work.<sup>310</sup> This is a significant issue that needs to be resolved before demanding that foreign investors engage in business in the area.

An important business field where mostly Turkish entrepreneurs work is building construction. Turkish people usually built hotels and airports. This can be interpreted as a way to make the cities like Tashkent or Manas more attractive and welcoming to foreigners.

The regional economies were mostly based on the agricultural industry and farmers were producing raw materials for Russia and they have fallen behind technological developments during the Soviet rule. In relevance with this situation one of the major product groups that Turkey exports to these countries are electronic devices

both partial and as a whole. Another major product of Turkey's exports is automobiles resulting from the situation that post-Soviet governments cannot respond to the enterprises in automobile industry and cannot respond to the demand for passenger automobiles. Many new cars are foreign, exclusively Audi, Mercedes or Volvo. On the other hand Turkey mostly imports commodities like copper, leather, silk, mineral oil and cotton from the Turkic countries. Turkey uses cotton, leather and silk for its textile industry which has an important place in Turkish industry.

Turk Eximbank has done much to stimulate trade and business links in the region. One point that is common to all five republics is that they received Eximbank credits from Turkey for their national development projects. Looking at the used partition of the credits given by Turk Eximbank to the Turkic countries from 1992 to 1998 one can see how much these countries were in need of economic aid. These credits were used for national development projects and financing trade. Also they were used for purchasing emergency needs like medicine and food. Turkey was comfortable in giving hard cash since these credits were guaranteed under state guarantee letters. This was a mutually beneficial deal for the republics and for the Turkish entrepreneurs.

While the republics found a funding source to realize their projects, Turkish exporters received Eximbank credits for their short term projects. Turk Eximbank encouraged businesspersons to invest in the region.

Common policy goals of Turkey and the five republics led Turkey to establish

close foreign relations with the regional countries. Turkey tried to give military aid to the Turkic republics of Central Asia in their struggle against terrorist groups which have the capacity to destabilize governments to threaten international security and which are mostly located in Tajikistan and Afghanistan. Turkey's aid substantiated in the form of sending military equipment and money and also Turkey offered training the military servicemen through NATO. Particularly after 9/11 Turkey and the regional countries turned out to be strong partners by signing military agreements within the scope of global war against terrorism.

The hypothesis that the more Turkey has business interests in the Caspian Sea Region the more Turkey will have closer foreign relations with Turkic countries is mostly apparent in the case of Azerbaijan. In the area of energy politics Turkey has its strongest link with Azerbaijan. Moreover, in the area of energy politics, the US shows significant support for Turkish interests. The US acknowledges Turkey's concerns for the Bosphorus Straits which is exposed to shipping congestion and environmental risks resulting from the inconvenient way of the transition of oil in large amounts. As Chufirin notes " since 1995 the US government has assertively backed this route not only to show support for Turkey but also because it believes that such a pipeline enhance economic and political ties in the region and cement its independence from the undue influences of Russia and Iran. ”<sup>311</sup>

Not only oil but also natural gas is exported from Azerbaijan. The two profound projects that Turkey was able to realize are the Baku-Tbilisi Ceyhan Oil Pipeline Project

and the Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum Gas Pipeline Project.

The BTC Project serves to the interests of Turkey in two ways: It is the first constructed pipeline which bypasses the Bosphorus Straits and Turkey has the privilege of earning transit and operating fees from this project since the pipeline passes through Turkish territory.

The Bosphorus connects the Black Sea with the Sea of Marmara, and the Dardanelles links the Sea of Marmara with the Aegean and Mediterranean Seas. This Turkish waterway is quite busy because of supplying Europe with oil from the Caspian Sea Region. Increasing number of tankers from the Black Sea can lead to accidents in the narrow straits. It has become quite risky to use the Bosphorus Straits as an energy transition corridor and Turkey does not want to take this risk anymore by letting pipeline routes pass through the straits. The BTC Pipeline, on the other hand, extends from the Azeri-Chirac-Guneshli oilfield of Azerbaijan to Georgia and from there to a terminal at Ceyhan on the Mediterranean coast of Turkey.

Turkey has oil in the Black, Mediterranean and Aegean Seas but it depends on foreign companies to extract oil from these areas. British Petrol (BP) or Shell is the two responsible companies for energy projects in the country. Turkey needs to pay high costs for the production of oil since national companies. This situation forms an impediment for Turkey's economic growth.

TUPRAS and TPAO are the two national companies for exploration, storage and refining of oil. However these companies do not have sufficient technology and capital to exploit Turkey's resources. Apparently Turkey does not have the privilege to rely solely on national energy industry for its energy projects. However Turkey may gain well from doing energy business if it can work with joint ventures to produce oil and gas by being the major responsible country in the joint venture rather than having a small share in ventures. One way of convincing foreign companies is to use its energy card wisely by opening its sources to foreign companies. Actually the Petroleum Market Reform Bill, which was passed in December 2003 and which aims to liberalize the oil economy, was a good starting point to attract foreign companies do business in the country.

Turkey has the strongest energy link with Azerbaijan. Not only oil but also natural gas is exported from Azerbaijan. Turkey needs natural gas for domestic consumption and Turkey's first gas supply from Azerbaijan's Shah-Deniz-Guneshli field started to flow in 2007.

Turkey's choice of Azerbaijan as an oil and gas exporter country proves that common socio-cultural ties are important for Turkey in doing business with other states. Turkey can buy oil from Russia and Iran as well. However Turkey is not comfortable with these two countries as much as it is comfortable with Azerbaijan. Russia worked to undermine the Ottoman control in the Balkan region as Sezer says "by acting as the patron liberator of Balkan peoples most importantly of Greeks and Serbs." A second point that causes the two countries nourish negative perceptions of each other is that

Russia has never supported the nationalist awakening of the Turkic Muslim people in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Cultural patterns of Turkey and Russia are quite different with the former based on an Ottoman-Islamic heritage and the latter based on a Christian- heritage. Moreover there is a 500-year history between Turkey and Russia and they are considered to be “archrivals.”<sup>312</sup>

As far as Iran is concerned Turkey is not enthusiastic to engage in business relations with this country considering the conflicting relations between Iran and the US, which is a strong ally of Turkey. Additionally, unlike Azerbaijan, Turkey is different from Iran in terms of ethnicity and religious sect. Iranians are Persians and mostly Shia while Turkish people are mostly Sunni.

This study shows an important aspect of the Turkish-American alliance that the US has considerable presence in the region and its presence has positive impacts on Turkish policy towards this region. The US has supported both political and economic interests of Turkey. The NIS is also very interested in forming strong bilateral relations with the US. As Hunter says, “as the only remaining superpower and leader of the Western world the US has been extremely important to the Central Asian countries”<sup>313</sup> Starting from the 1990s the post-Soviet countries sought for possible ways to establish ties with the US at different levels. Hunter explains that “a continuous stream of US academics, business people, journalists, and non-governmental organizations began

flowing into Central Asia and there was a reverse flow of similar groups to the US.”<sup>314</sup> Apart from these positive impacts of the US on Turkish policy in the Caspian Sea Region, Turkey and the US share some common goals which are “ensuring that the region does not become a breeding ground for illicit trafficking in arms, controlled technologies and drugs or a center of ethnic and religious separatism that could spread political devolution to other countries like China, Russia, Turkey or South Asia.”<sup>315</sup>

A final finding that this study shows is about the contextual factors of Turkey and the regional countries. The contextual factors which act as driving forces of Turkish policy can be categorized as economic and political factors. The contextual economic factors Turkey’s need for natural gas and oil, Turkey’s need for new pipelines which would avoid oil transition through the Bosphorus Straits and Turkey’s need for the Central Asian market to sell its products which can not be sold to Western markets. Turkish entrepreneurs’ willingness to invest in the region while other foreign companies abstain from starting business in the region because of the risky business environment is another contextual factor leading Turkey to move closer to the Caspian Sea Region.

On the political and social level, contextual factors can be listed as follows. Turkish politicians’ strong will to support their Turkic brothers in cases of trouble as in the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict, to try to meet their needs such as books teaching Islam; voluntary organizations’ efforts to achieve infrastructure projects to contribute to the regional countries’ national development and Turkish politicians’ eagerness to establish official ties with the Turkic leaders with whom they share certain characteristics.

On the other hand the common themes of the internal contexts of the regional countries are their poor infrastructure inherited from the USSR, their need for technology and hard currency. On the political level they had a strong desire move away from the Russian influence and establish their own unique identities. They did not want to be labeled as 'isolated' and for this purpose; they were enthusiastic to establish political ties with different countries. These factors led them to be open to the rest of the world and at the same time they avoided coming under the influence of any supra-national ethnic or religious organization. Lastly; the region's exposure to terrorist activities is another contextual factor which leads the states to act against terrorism in cooperation with the international community.

## **5.2 Some Questions for Future Studies**

Looking back over to this study it is unlikely that Turkey will become a leading superpower in the region. Turkey lacks the necessary economic and financial resources to have a major influence in the region. Nevertheless the Turkish government started initiated various activities directed towards the development of the regional countries. Turkey offered training services, educational and cultural assistance to the republics. Turkey gave scholarships to the Turkic students and gave them the opportunity to receive their college and graduate education in Turkey. Turkish programs were broadcast by satellite and Turkish development agencies opened numerous cultural centers in the region. However these policy efforts are insufficient, as Fuller says, "to reorient the Republics toward Turkey".<sup>316</sup>



Findings showed that both Turkey and the five Turkic republics were enthusiastic to carry their relations in every field to future cooperation following the break up of the Soviet Union. The time period between 1991 and 1993 was the period when Turkey had its closest relations in this region. In that period official and work visits occurred and several agreements on economic, scientific and technical cooperation were signed.

Turkey was in a more advantageous position than any other country in the world in terms of integrating with the region and exploiting the potential of the region with its cultural closeness and familiarity of the language. However the Turkic Republics' interest in Turkey gradually declined starting from the 1994s. One reason for their declining interest in Turkey is that the original expectations were not met. Winrow notes that "Turkey initially had made unrealistic promises and proposals by offering up to \$3 billion in support to the Turkic states."<sup>317</sup> Turkey had given promises beyond its capacity. Also Turkey's offer of economic success was questionable since Turkey had its own economic problems at home. In this context some scholars offered that these republics may have more to gain from the western industrialized nations in terms of economic development models and technical advice than they will gain from Turkey.<sup>318</sup> Other than the West there are the industrializing nations of East Asia which also offer successful economic models. The Turkic leaders' hiring of Korean economists serves as an example of their appreciation of the advantages offered by East Asian countries.

Actually given Turkey's economic and political expectations it is not reasonable to expect Turkey to be a superpower like Russia. Moreover, given the problematic

domestic environments of the republics, not only Turkey but also none of the regional states has the resources to give full support to their economic development. Above everything, the republics need to seek solutions for poverty and turmoil prevailing in their territories.

The recent Turkish political atmosphere shows that it is more important for the AKP government to work for long term and stable relationships than to try to fulfill exaggerated expectations. The AKP government puts more emphasis on economic cooperation than cultural similarities. We can say that today Central Asian politics is less central to Turkey than before. But the question is at what level Turkey will maintain interest in the region in the future. Is Turkey likely to revive its initial enthusiasm towards the region or is Turkey going to be distracted by its busy foreign policy agenda?

A number of points need to be considered before one can make a prediction. The future of Turkish foreign relations in the region will mainly be determined by the pipeline selected for oil and gas transportation from the Caspian Region. The crucial states, in this regard, are Kazakhstan with its oil reserves and Turkmenistan with its gas reserves. Will Turkey be able to transport natural gas from Turkmenistan or will Turkey be able to realize its Kazakh oil transportation project as a back up to the BTC pipeline?

Also Turkey's future politics will be affected by the actions that Azerbaijan and Armenia will take towards the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Will the Azeri and Armenian side be able to agree on a settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh

conflict and normalize their relations? Turkey as the strongest ally of Azerbaijan is likely to support Azerbaijan fully while at the same time Ankara wants to improve its relations with Yerevan. It is unlikely to resolve this conflict until the Nagorno-Karabakh Armenians give up claiming their unapproved independence over the enclave and Azeris accept some limitations over the same territory. With a resolution to this conflict, Turkey will be able to strengthen its relations with Azerbaijan.

Uzbekistan is criticized in the fields of human rights and democracy. The progress made in these fields will accelerate the development of Turkish-Uzbek relations. However Uzbekistan's human rights records include serious violations of the right to freedom of religion, expression, association and assembly.<sup>319</sup> Although Turkey shares Uzbekistan's concerns about Uzbekistan's security threats and supplies aid and military education to this country<sup>320</sup>, Uzbekistan's weaknesses in the areas of democracy and human rights are likely to impede Turkish-Uzbek relations in the long term. Therefore it is important to answer the question of how and when Uzbekistan is going to ameliorate the domestic situation in human rights and democracy.

Despite the risky business environment in Kyrgyzstan, Turkey is a key economic partner of Kyrgyzstan. Thus Kyrgyzstan wants to strengthen its relations with Turkey. The question is whether Turkey and Kyrgyzstan will be able to institutionalize their economic relations through a joint economic commission as both sides plan to form an economic cooperation organization.

An

important issue, which is raised by this study for future exploration, concerns identity. The regional countries are under the influence of different identities. As Ajdari and Kazemi mention “these countries borrowed several critical elements from three Islamic groups; religion from Arabs, administration and bureaucracy from the Persians, and military from the Turks.<sup>321</sup>” The question is whether each of the republics will preserve their own unique nationalities. Will they be a part of the Western system or a Russian system?

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