T.R.
YILDIZ TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
POLITICAL SCIENCE AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS DEPARTMENT
MASTER OF ARTS PROGRAM

MASTER THESIS

ANALYSIS OF TURKEY-NORTHERN IRAQ RELATIONS IN THE 1990s: A NEOCLASSICAL REALIST PERSPECTIVE

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Thesis Advisor
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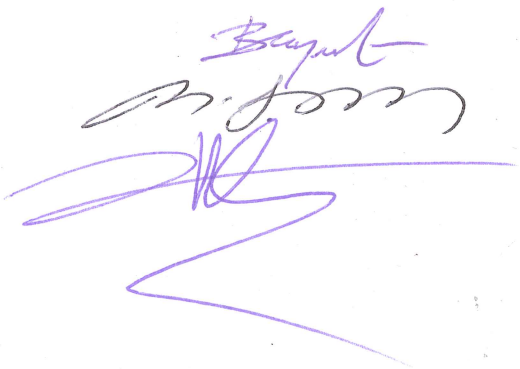

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ABSTRACT

ANALYSIS OF TURKEY-NORTHERN IRAQ RELATIONS IN THE 1990s: A NEOCLASSICAL REALIST PERSPECTIVE

Jabir Lund

June, 2017

It would seem Turkish foreign policy in the Middle East has undergone profound changes in the last decades. However, global and regional conditions have also changed drastically. This thesis investigates one emblematic case where changes in structural conditions have been accompanied by significant change in Turkey's foreign policy. That case is the relations of Turkey with what has recently emerged as the autonomous Kurdish Region of Northern Iraq (KRI). A neoclassical realist approach will be applied to understand the impact of structural changes on those relations, while at the same time controlling for the inevitable effects of domestic changes and state-specific peculiarities. In this thesis both sides of the relation will be analyzed with a focus on the decade of the 1990s as a period of significant change, both structurally and in terms of internal dynamics. Neoclassical realism privileges structural change theoretically, however, it allows a systematic investigation into the most influential factors both structural and domestic that shape foreign policy in particular cases. This thesis introduces this approach to the analysis of relations between Turkey and the KRI, proposing a model that is then applied to an analysis of the 1990s at the structural and domestic level for both sides before offering a brief conclusion related to the implications of the findings for further analysis of Turkish foreign policy.

Keywords: International Relations, Turkey, Northern Iraq, foreign policy, neoclassical realism.

ÖZ

1990'LI YILLARDA TÜRKİYE-KUZEY IRAK İLİŞKİLERİ: NEOKLASİK REALİST PERSPEKTİFTEN BİR ANALİZ

Jabir Lund

Haziran, 2017

Son on yıllarda Ortadoğu'da Türk dış politikasının derin değişiklikler geçirmiş olduğu görülmektedir. Bununla birlikte, küresel ve bölgesel koşullar da büyük ölçüde değişmiştir. Bu tez, yapısal koşullarda meydana gelen bu değişikliklere Türkiye'nin dış politikasında belirgin bir değişimin eşlik ettiği bir örneği incelemektedir. Bu örnek, Türkiye'nin yakın zamanda ortaya çıkmış olan özerk Kuzey Irak Kürt Bölgesel Yönetimi (KRI) ile olan ilişkisidir. Yapısal değişikliklerin bu ilişkiler üzerindeki etkisini anlamak için, aynı zamanda iç değişikliklerin ve devlete özgü özelliklerin kaçınılmaz etkisini de düşünerek, neoklasik realist yaklaşım uygulanacaktır. Bu tezde, ilişkinin her iki tarafı, hem yapısal hem de iç dinamikler açısından önemli bir değişim dönemi olan 1990'ların on yılına odaklanarak analiz edilecektir. Neoklasik realizm, teorik olarak yapısal değişime öncelik tanır; ancak, özel durumlarda dış politikayı şekillendiren hem yapısal hem de iç faktörleri sistematik bir şekilde incelenmesine de olanak tanır. Bu tez, Türk dış politikasının daha ileri bir analizinde kullanılacak olan bulgularla ilgili kısa bir sonuç önermeden önce, her iki taraf için yapısal ve iç düzeyde 1990'ların bir analiz modeli önererek, Türkiye ile KRI arasındaki ilişkilerin analizine bu yaklaşımı getirmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Uluslararası ilişkiler, Türkiye, Kuzey Irak, dış politika, neoklasik realizm.

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Istanbul, June 2017 Jabir LUND

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ANAP	: Anavatan Partisi (Motherland Party)
DYP	: Doğru Yol Partisi (True Path Party)
EU	: European Union
FPE	: Foreign Policy Executive
GAP	: Southeastern Anatolia Project
GCC	: Gulf Cooperation Council
IR	: International Relations
ISIS	: Islamic State in Iraq and Syria
KDP	: Kurdistan Democratic Party
KRG	: Kurdish Regional Government
KRI	: Kurdistan Region of Iraq
NATO	: North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NCR	: Neoclassical Realism
NSC	: National Security Council (Turkey)
OECD	: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OPEC	: Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries
PKK	: Kurdistan Workers' Party
PUK	: Patriotic Union of Kurdistan
RP	: Refah Partisi (Welfare Party)
SHP	: Sosyaldemokrat Halkçı Parti (Social Democratic People's Party)
UK	: United Kingdom
UN	: United Nations
US	: United States
USSR	: Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

1. INTRODUCTION

It would seem Turkish foreign policy in the Middle East has undergone profound changes in the last decades. However, global and regional conditions have also changed drastically. This thesis investigates one emblematic case where changes in structural conditions have been accompanied by significant change in Turkey's foreign policy. That case is the relations of Turkey with what has recently emerged as the autonomous Kurdish Region of Northern Iraq.

Having experienced troubles with the capital, Baghdad, Ankara seems to have preferred Erbil, capital of the autonomous Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI) as its primary partner in cross-border relations, dealing in a number of bilateral issues, from trade to energy to security, a process that began, as this thesis will demonstrate, in the 1990s but has only recently began to show its full potential. Similarly, Kurdish authorities in Northern Iraq, organised as the Kurdish Regional Government (KRG) seem to view Turkey as a key neighbour that can facilitate their ambitions for further economic, and even political autonomy. Nevertheless, it is clear that this relationship cannot simply be put down to a recent paradigm shift in Turkish policy. Fundamental changes in the context of the relationship were happening long before. Turkey's policy to Northern Iraq had been in a process of change ever since the region emerged as a contested zone of authority in the early 1990s. This also coincided with, and was perhaps directly caused by major shifts in global and regional power configurations in that decade – the collapse of the Soviet Union and the first Gulf War. This indicates that Turkey's changing relations with Northern Iraq are not subject to a sudden internal paradigm shift in Turkish foreign policy but that they have developed alongside each side's responses to wider currents in global and regional politics. However, this does not preclude the possibility that domestic factors, on both the Turkish and Iraqi Kurdish sides, have affected the course of the relationship.

In this thesis I propose to trace the history of this relationship, and analyse the main drivers, structural and domestic, of this seemingly unprecedented development. Analysing the impact of these factors on relations will help to understand why the

relationship has flourished and what elements may be responsible for change, both in the past and into the future. This thesis will seek to define these elements by focusing on an examination of relations between the two parties in the decade of the 1990s – which at its beginning marks the inception of the relationship, and by the end of the decade the first signs of positive cooperation between the two parties.

Thus the aim of this thesis is to understand the factors, structural and domestic, that have led to cooperation between Turkey and Northern Iraq. To do this it will focus on the decade of the 1990s as an important time of change which marked the emergence of the relationship. While the first decade and a half of the 20th century has seen a de-facto autonomous Kurdish region in Northern Iraq and Turkey intensify relations and engage in increasing cooperation, the 1990s represents the groundwork for this development. It was during this decade that Turkey had first to confront the possibility of a separate authority in Northern Iraq and that the nascent form of the KRG was established and presented with the possibility of becoming an actor on the international stage in its own right. This took place, as mentioned, in the context of major global and regional changes, as well as the development of other important external and bilateral issues, trade relations, energy, and refugee flows.

To understand these 'structural' changes and their effects on the mutual evaluations of each side in the relationship is to better understand the conditions that have led to cooperation or, as the relationship was far from stable in the 1990s, that may cause conflict between them. The hypothesis is that shifts in the global and regional balance of power, brought about by major events such as the end of the Cold War and the Gulf War have been the major drivers of foreign policy of the two parties toward one another. If this can be proved, it may also be assumed that more recent events such as the second Gulf War of 2003, or the regional upheavals of the last years, will have been the major influencers on policy maker's decisions. This would help in understanding not only the drivers of Turkey's relations with Northern Iraq, but perhaps the fundamental factors in its Middle East policy in general. At the same time, it is also possible structural factors are not the only drivers of the relationship. There may be domestic factors that influence the way elites from each side set foreign policy objectives. These could range from misperceptions about the nature of the structural change at hand, psychological or ideological preconceptions about one's self and others, or internal political disarray so severe that the normal process of making foreign

policy becomes disrupted. If the purpose of the investigation is to explore the effects of structural change on a specific international relationship, a method is needed to control for the effects of these internal factors.

Neoclassical realist theory proposes just such a method. As will be seen in Chapter 2, the neo-classical realist approach considers intervening domestic variables as important modifiers to otherwise structurally determined relations between states. It allows the enduring effect of relative power to dictate the main course of relations while also considering the ways domestic variables may regulate or modify foreign policy formation and implementation. Thus as we shall see in the next chapter, neoclassical realism allows us to incorporate the structural insights of neorealist international relations theory and supplement these with considerations about the domestic level of analysis from the same realist tradition.

There have been many studies on relations between Turkey and Northern Iraq; historical, in terms of foreign policy analysis, and based on specific issues such as energy or ethno-political issues, or focussing on national politics or foreign policy in general on one side of the relationship.[1] However, in this thesis I propose using a theoretical framework to analyse the relationship between the two parties and specifically investigate the structural factors affecting it while controlling for the inevitable influence of domestic factors too. I aim to use the decade of the 1990s as a case study to apply this theoretical approach, analysing the effect of structural factors while also investigating possible intervening domestic variables that have affected the development of the relationship. While I will investigate both structural and domestic factors, the hypothesis is that structural factors have greater weight while domestic

[1] See for example: Ofra Bengio, "Ankara, Erbil, Baghdad: Relations Fraught with Dilemmas", *Ortadoğu Etütleri,* Volume 5, No 1, July 2013, pp.65-84; Bill Park, "Turkey-Kurdish Regional Government Relations After the U.S. Withdrawal from Iraq: Putting the Kurds on the Map?", *Strategic Studies Institute and U.S. Army War College Press*, March, 2014; Henri J. Barkey, "Turkey's New Engagement in Iraq: Embracing Iraqi Kurdistan", *United States Institute Of Peace: Special Report*, 237, May 2010; Matthew J. Bryza, "Turkey's Dramatic Shift Toward Iraqi Kurdistan: Politics Before Peace Pipelines", *Turkish Policy Quarterly*, 11/2, 2012, pp. 53-61; Hasan Celâl Güzel, Selman Kayabaşı, *Kuzey Irak: Kürtçülük ve Ayrılıkçı Terör* , Timaş Yayınları, 2007; Kemal Kirisci, "The Kurdish question and Turkish foreign policy." *The future of Turkish foreign policy*, 2004, 277-314; Mahmut Balı Aykan, 'Turkey's Policy in Northern Iraq, 1991–5', *Middle Eastern Studies*, vol. 32, no. 4, 1996; R.W. Olson, *The Kurdish Nationalist Movement in Turkey: 1980-2011,* Mazda Publishers, 2011; Michael M. Gunter, *The Kurdish Predicament in Iraq,* Macmillan, 1999; Philip Robins, *Suits and Uniforms: Turkish Foreign Policy Since the Cold War,* Hurst & Company, London, 2003.

conditions act as intervening variables. This as we shall see is in line with neoclassical realist international relations theory, which will underpin this thesis.

After this introduction the thesis is divided into three further chapters and a conclusion. The first of these chapters (Chapter 2) will set out a theoretical framework for the analytical parts of the thesis which will follow in chapters 3 and 4. Chapter 2 will explain why I have chosen to follow the research model of neoclassical realist scholars as the theoretical base for this research. It will give an outline of the theory, emphasising not only how it recognises the primacy of structural change in determining foreign policy choices, but also how it recognises the possibility of influence arising at the domestic level. Thus neoclassical realist theory offers a way to analyse the relations of specific states while still maintaining a commitment to the theoretical rigour of structural realism. It offers an ideal approach to this thesis's aim of determining the variables that created and continue to shape the development of relations between Turkey and Northern Iraq. Invariably the most important of these will be structural – changes in the distribution of power among the players – however, it must also be recognised that domestic variables may have a determining effect on foreign policy making. Neoclassical realism allows precedence to be given to structural factors, but also allows analysis to control for potentially important domestic variables. Before explaining the ways in which domestic variables can influence foreign policy making I will show how the primary idea of structural change is envisioned – generally in line with the neorealist model that gives precedence to global distributions of power in determining how states act. This means that changes in the distribution of power incentivise different strategies among states. I will also introduce levels of structural analysis in global, regional and issue based distributions of power as distinguishable structural realms. The second part of the chapter will deal with the main domestic factors that neoclassical realist scholars have proposed as intervening variables between structural change and foreign policy response. Based on an evaluation of these domestic variables I will propose a model for the examination of domestic factors affecting Turkey's relations with Northern Iraq in the 1990s. This model will reflect two main aspects. One refers to strategic culture, the traditional and general basis upon which threat perceptions are made, while the other refers to the influence of specific groups or individuals with the ability to affect foreign policy making on each side.

Chapter 3 will analyse the structural context and historical background necessary to understand the relative positions, both structurally and internally of Turkey and Northern Iraq at the beginning of the 1990s. In the first part of the chapter I will outline the historical structural context and relative positions of both actors, at the global, and regional levels. I will also introduce three issue based structural considerations; energy, trade and the refugee issue. This historical evaluation of structural conditions is necessary as major events, changes, and developments on all these levels in the 1990s will be the main theme of analysis in the final chapter. The second part of Chapter 3 will apply the first part of the domestic variables model set out in Chapter 2. This means a historical appraisal of traditional strategic culture that may inform threat perception as well as the traditional make up of the groups or personalities within the foreign policy making elite.

The final chapter (Chapter 4) will analyse relations between Turkey and Northern Iraq in the context of structural change between 1990 and 2000. Before turning to the structural analysis it will provide an assessment of the coherence of the 'foreign policy executive' (FPE) on each side, in terms of formulating and executing effective foreign policy unconstrained by internal political wrangling or conflict, reflecting the second part of the domestic model set out in chapter 2. Thus a better understanding of the ways in which domestic variables may be affecting policy will be achieved before turning to an analysis of structural change and each sides' reactions in the 1990s.

For each of the final sections on structural change in the 1990s – global, regional, and issue based – I will highlight a number of major events and developments. For example, the rise of US hegemony in the Middle East, the Gulf War, or the occurrence of a refugee crisis that affects the players. For each event I will investigate how the changes affected the actors' foreign policy towards each other. Throughout the analysis, other actors (the US, Iraq, Iran, etc.) will be mentioned as they form part of the global, regional or issue based balance of power. Nevertheless, the focus will be on how these developments affected policy between Turkey and Northern Iraq.

Finally, the conclusion will summarise the findings of the thesis with regard to structural and domestic variables that shaped relations between Turkey and Northern Iraq in the 1990s and relate them to more recent developments since the beginning of the 20th century.

2. STRUCTURAL AND DOMESTIC VARIABLES IN NEOCLASSICAL REALIST FOREIGN POLICY ANALYSIS

In this chapter I will provide a theoretical framework for the research in this thesis. I have chosen to use a neoclassical realist theoretical approach due to its recognition of structural change, in the neorealist mode, as the primary factor affecting foreign policy making. At the same time, it allows for analysis of internal domestic issues to help explain particular foreign policy decisions that may not attune to a strictly structurally determined outcome. Neoclassical realist theory offers a way to analyse the relations of specific states while still maintaining a commitment to the theoretical rigour of structural realism.

This chapter has four main sections. The following section outlines neoclassical realism as a theory and investigates its place within the realist tradition and its applicability in this thesis. After that I will outline the place of structural change within the theory. This will draw largely on neorealist thought but will also include some criticisms and considerations relevant to the case specific analysis later in this thesis. The next section will outline and review the domestic considerations that neoclassical realist scholars have considered to affect foreign policy making. Finally, the last section, drawing on the domestic factors already set out, will propose a model which will assist in revealing the sources of domestic influence on foreign policy making in Turkey and Northern Iraq.

2.1 Neoclassical realism as a theory of international relations: Structure takes precedence

The purpose of this thesis is to provide convincing methodical research on which to base an assessment of the conditions and factors that govern the type of relations engaged in between Turkey and the neighbouring, semi-autonomous Kurdish region of Northern Iraq and to determine the major factors that have caused conflictual or cooperative relations among them. These objectives set it firmly within the scope of international relations (IR) research and therefore require consideration of IR theories

that were developed and refined with such purposes in mind. Of the two major schools in IR theory, liberalism and realism, it is realism that seems most suited to this task. Liberalism as an international relations approach is interested in the ways international institutions and interdependence among states act to increase cooperation. In this sense it is not a theory of conflict while at the same time, with its focus on the liberal goods providing cooperation, it may overlook other structural causes for cooperative relations between states. Realism, on the other hand, does not preclude cooperation among states, but at the same time it seeks to understand the causes of conflict as well as alliances; these may arise from structural configurations that incentivise states to engage in cooperative or conflictual relations with one another.

An approach based on international relations theory also needs to consider the entire global system in its appraisal of specific relations. Turkey's relations with Northern Iraq, though cross-border, take place in the context of changing regional dynamics in the Middle East and in global great-power configurations. Realism's leading theory, neorealism, is perhaps the most developed in its analysis of the pervasive effects of structural conditions and distribution of power on the way states act in the international system.

However, a model that hopes to untangle future dilemmas must at some point consider the empirical past. Neorealism does not so much advocate this, as help us to decide what patterns to follow in the empirical trove of history. It is worth noting the warnings of Kenneth Waltz, author of the seminal neorealist work, that it is not a theory to be applied in specific cases.[2] Nevertheless the conclusion that it is states that act, creating and preparing for conflicts and alliances, and doing so according to imperatives such as their own and others' capabilities under conditions that lack any overarching restraint, is a useful starting point for historical analysis. Predictions about the type of problems that will face the relationship and likely responses of its participants to the opportunities and challenges brought about by structural change require a theory that unpacks the "blackbox" of the neorealist state and gives specific functions to otherwise functionally indistinct units. Whereas in recent IR research liberal and regime type theories have claimed this ground for themselves, there is precedent on the realist side for such considerations. From Machiavelli to E.H. Carr, classical realists have sought

[2] Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics,* McGraw-Hill, 1979 (pp. 60-72)

to explain the variation of states' policies and actions in an otherwise all-against-all environment. A relatively new sub-field of realism, dubbed neo-classical realism (NCR) by Gideon Rose,[3] has attempted to combine the theoretical clarity and emphasis on structural factors of neorealism with an openness toward historical analysis that can add case specific nuance to research. While this project has received significant criticism for straying away from the hardcore of neorealist tenets and sometimes appropriating liberal tropes, in my opinion, it represents the best fit for a research project of this kind.

What must be kept in mind regarding NCR in general is that it emphasises above all else the primacy of structural factors, sees these as the major harbingers of change and expects states to succeed or fail in as much as they successfully adapt to the opportunities and challenges thrown up. As Randall Schweller sees it:

> In theory and practice, all three of [the] structural-systemic alternatives – neorealism, offensive realism, and dynamic differentials theory – can and should be used by neoclassical realists as a first cut, providing a baseline expectation for state behaviour. Only when behaviour and outcomes deviate from the structural systemic theories' expectations should unit-level variables associated with neoclassical realism be added to these theories to explain why.[4]

Whilst proponents simultaneously try to explain variations to these expectations, and account for seemingly incongruent policies, they do not, like liberal theorists might, seek to pin these to particular regime types, nor create generalisations based on these types. Realists expect conflict, cooperation, or indifference between states, and generally agree that any one of these options is potentially beneficial to a state's interests, depending on the relative distribution of capabilities. Neoclassical realists expect the same, but they also expect a number of internal factors to interfere with how states interpret and act upon these ever present possibilities. To this end, neoclassical realist scholars have devised models of the internal factors that influence foreign policy making. But, what should distinguish these scholars from their liberal peers is that the ultimate causal factor, the overriding dynamic, comes from external structural factors, and is only mediated or filtered by domestic factors. Neoclassical realists have listed and also weighted the relevance of these internal factors, citing leaders' perceptions and cohesion, ideology, culture and the ability of the state to direct its resources as the

[3] Gideon Rose, "Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy," World Politics 51, no. 1 (October 1998), pp. 144–77

[4] Randall Schweller, "The Progressiveness of Neoclassical Realism, " in Colin Elman and Miriam Fendius Elman (eds.), *Progress in International Relations Theory: Appraising the Field*, MIT Press, 2003, (p. 346)

'domestic variables' that influence a state's course of action. In some cases, these are posited comprising a general model, but in others, in my view more usefully, they are generated to deal with, and limited to, specific case studies.

This neoclassical realist model is what I intend to emulate in approaching this research. I believe the *a priori* commitment to macro-realism guarantees a level of theoretical rigour that is not available with a purely historical narrative approach. At the same time unpacking the domestic variables both inside Turkey and in Northern Iraq is essential for a detailed understanding of their relations.

The next section will consider the relevant theoretical implications for the structural level of analysis – changes in the distribution of power at a global, regional and issue based level. As we have seen neoclassical realism takes much of its analytic capacity at the structural level from neorealism and therefore follows many of its core tenets. I will then turn to the domestic variables which are posited as additional, relevant factors, supplementing structural factors, in the neoclassical realist school.

2.2 Structural change and distribution of power

Distribution of power at the structural level is a notoriously controversial notion. Whether one terms it 'power', or 'capabilities', this basic calculation of neorealist analysis has come under increasing scrutiny[5]. Whether posited as 'power as resources' or 'relational power', the notion that one can quantify a state's power, contrast it with that of others, and thereby predict the likely outcome of interactions between them has repeatedly been called into question. However, often overlooked in these criticisms of neorealism is that its first proponents never intended it to be used for such analysis. As pointed out earlier in this chapter, Kenneth Waltz warns against applying the theory to specific cases. Waltz, who chooses to conceive power as resources, or 'capabilities',[6] is not concerned with predicting outcomes from specific relations, but rather, defining the type of structure within which those relations take place. As the distribution of

[5] See Baldwin, David A., "Power and International Relations", in *Handbook of International Relations*, eds. Walter Carlsnaes, Thomas Risse, and Beth A. Simmons. 2nd Ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2013): 273-297

[6] Specifically: size of population and territory, resource endowment, economic capability, military strength, political stability and competence. Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics,* McGraw-Hill, 1979 (p. 131)

capabilities among actors in the anarchic international system changes, so too, does the structure of that system.

2.2.1 Polarity and units in the system

The distribution manifests at the global level either as a multipolar, bipolar, or unipolar system. Each of these will present implications for the way a state acts within the system, whether in general or in regard to a specific relationship. Thus the contribution of neorealism is to isolate and repeatedly underline the significant ramifications of the overall structure of the system on sub-systemic interactions. The system may not act, only states can act, but the system and its structure do present causes for and affect the outcomes of those actions. The actions of one minor state towards another minor state may also produce radically different outcomes depending on the configuration of the system, or in Waltzian terms, its 'polarity'. While it may seem an obvious point if translated into layman's terms that the consequences of a state's actions also depend on the other players in the game – the contribution of neorealism is its attempt to formalise this and extract from each configuration the strategies that it incentivises among states.

It should be noted, however, that the founding theories of neorealism, in both its defensive (Waltz) and offensive (Mearsheimer) variations, limit the scope of consequence to 'great powers'. The number, and the distribution of power amongst them will determine the overall system dynamics. As Waltz puts it, "variation in number [of great powers] are changes of number that lead to different expectations about the effect of structure on units".[7] Again it should be noted here that "units" does not refer to all states, only to the great powers themselves. However, by no means does this reduce the relevance of the theory when looking at a specific set of relations; rather it traces a stark outline of the context in which they take place, and allows us to infer a whole set of influences that may be prevalent in the wider system. These may include; the prevalence of proxy wars engaged in by competing great powers, the likelihood of a great power exerting itself hegemonically in a region, or of great powers exacerbating a regional conflict or impeding rapprochement among local powers. Neither variant of neorealist theory explicitly draws out this relationship between

[7] Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics,* McGraw-Hill, 1979, (p. 162)

structural systemic conditions, borne of great power configurations and their effects on the relations between smaller powers, yet their potential to contribute to such analysis is clear.

2.2.2 States' strategies under different structural conditions

Waltz's defensive realism, with its assumption that great powers ultimately seek stability in the system, reduces all great power strategies to the common rubric of balancing. Each configuration, bipolar, multi-polar or even unipolar create their own incentives to balance, as well as different levels of flexibility in alignments[8]. Internal balancing, the growing of a state's capabilities through its own efforts (indeed the preferred strategy for it is less risky) may take precedence in a bipolar system, whereas external balancing – where a state forms alliances with other states to counter a common adversary is more likely in multipolar systems[9]. The durability of alliances and the incentives to renege or switch alignments are also modified according to the number of great powers and the relative distribution of capabilities in the system. For Waltz the dangerous aberration to balancing among great powers is "bandwagoning", where a state throws in its lot with a rising hegemon in the hope of short term profit, but ultimately imperils the stability of the system.

Mearsheimer's offensive realism challenges Waltz's assumptions that states ultimately seek stability and that balancing is the only rational strategy, with the assertion that states in fact seek hegemony as the only sure-fire way to guarantee their own security.[10] In doing so he broadens the incentives available to states beyond strategies that are aimed at neutralising external aggression, to ones that may themselves represent an aggressive bid to maximise power[11]. Peter Toft points out that Mearsheimer also neglects to elaborate a precise model of how these strategies are incentivised under different polarity systems, although Toft himself claims they can be inferred and provides the tables below. In this example, as we can see, different configurations in

[8] In a multipolar, as opposed to bipolar system for example, the units have more options to form alliances to balance escalation. See: Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics,* McGraw-Hill, 1979 (pp. 165-166)
[9] Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics,* McGraw-Hill, 1979 (p. 165-166)
[10] John J. Mearsheimer, "Structural Realism," in Tim Dunne, Milja Kurki, and Steve Smith, eds., *International Relations Theories: Discipline and Diversity*, Oxford University Press, 2013, pp. 77-93, (p. 77)
[11] John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, Norton, New York & London, 2001, (p. 38)

the polarity of the system are held to incentivise different strategies among great powers, which must in turn radically alter the calculations of smaller states too. Whether or not a great power chooses a strategy of gaining power, or one of checking aggression, depends on a cost-benefit calculation in relation to its ultimate quest for hegemony. In the case of strategies aimed at checking aggression, these are also moderated by the geographic features and distance of the source of aggression to the state in question. Although Toft does not incorporate it here, it should also be noted that Mearsheimer himself also places limits on the hegemonic ambitions of states according to geography, noting the "stopping power of water" and that states will seek regional rather than global hegemony.[12]

FIGURE 2

Choosing between Strategies of Gaining Power

Bipolarity	**Balanced multipolarity**	**Unbalanced multipolarity**
Blackmail Blood-letting	Limited war Blackmail Bloodletting Bait and bleed	Hegemonic war (Nuclear blackmail)

FIGURE 1: Choosing between Strategies of Gaining Power[13]

FIGURE 3

Choosing Between Strategies of Checking Aggression

	Geographic Location		
Distribution of Power	Nearby landlocked great powers	Distant landlocked great powers	Off-shore great powers
Balanced multipolarity	Balancing	Buck-passing	Buck-passing
Unbalanced multipolarity	Balancing	Balancing	Balancing
Bipolarity	Balancing	Balancing	Balancing

FIGURE 2: Choosing Between Strategies of Checking Aggression[14]

[12] John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, Norton, New York & London, 2001
[13] Peter Toft, *John J. Mearsheimer: An Offensive Realist Between Geopolitics & Power*, Copenhagen: Department of Political Science, University of Copenhagen, 2003 (p. 10)
[14] ibid. (p. 11)

I will not go into the detailed features of these alternative strategies here nor endorse the model above, but rather take it as an example of the insight that neorealist theories provide into the structural conditions under which specific relations take place.

When turning to the historical structural background in Chapter 3, and the analysis of relations between Turkey and Northern Iraq in the 1990s in Chapter 4, I will draw on the insights about structural dynamics presented in this section to better define the wider context within which these relations take place, not just at the global, but also regional and issue based levels.

2.2.3 Global, regional, and issue based distributions of power

Changes in the distribution of power are what define the structural level of analysis in neoclassical realism. In the case of this thesis's analysis of the relations between Turkey and Northern Iraq in the 1990s, the major change was witnessed, of course, at the global superpower level – as the world emerged from the clear bipolar system of the Cold War to something resembling a more unbalanced multipolar system since. The relative power of the United States, the Soviet Union, later Russia, the EU, and other global players and the ways in which these have acted and reacted to each other, as well as proactively pursued their interests in other arenas have had major consequences for states all over the world. This is particularly true for the Middle East, a key theatre of proxy war during the US and Soviet bipolar years. Later it became the testing ground for American unilateral action as many predicted the rise of unipolar dynamics.

A number of turning points such as the end of the Cold War and the two invasions of Iraq can thus be seen as critical global and regional systemic shocks that have affected the course of relations between Turkey and Northern Iraq. Regional dynamics often may have been put into play by global causes, yet regional players have also had their say. Iran, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Israel, and Turkey have long represented poles of the regional system. Meanwhile the neutralisation of Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq during the 1990s, and later his removal, opened up a crucial venue for proxy competition among them.

Connected at both the regional and global level, but worth considering as a separate category, are distributions of power and capabilities related to specific issues. Of most relevance here are economic and specifically in the case of Turkey and Northern Iraq,

energy related resource distributions. This relates both to the capacity to produce and supply energy and to the domestic demand of an actor. Other issues have an effect, such as financial and trade flows, but also the flow of people, especially in the form of large refugee and internally displaced populations.

Changes in the distribution of power, at the global, regional and issue based levels, provide the structural incentives for foreign policy responses by states. Meanwhile calculations about the effects of these changes on the existing balance of power are what motivate choices in foreign policy responses. However, in real world cases, these choices are not always rational responses to structural change taken by a completely objective entity. Beyond the fact that states are never responding to one event in isolation, domestic factors may also affect the way states respond to structural change. If security is the aim of the choice, what is understood by security? Who makes the choice and what are their biases? And, do they have the necessary resources at their disposal to turn it into effective policy? Thus, in addition to structural factors, domestic ones must also be addressed. While neoclassical realism provides models for both aspects of this analysis, the meeting of the two is also its most controversial aspect.

2.3 Why neoclassical realism?

2.3.1- Neoclassical realism as reconciliation between structural and domestic factors

A quick definition of structural factors in neoclassical realism would default to the neorealist position of systemic change and incentives that results from shifts in the global distribution of power. Underlying this, regional dynamics come into play and possibly other issue based distributions of power. Finally, a substratum of internal dynamics would regulate the way state units act upon structural shifts. Yet, many of the more nuanced, and especially more recent neoclassical realist works, including some of those referenced in this chapter seem to question this parsed dynamic. Steven E. Lobell's "complex threat identification", for example, emphasises that states and their leaders "can act internationally for domestic reasons or domestically for

international purposes".[15] Whilst a degree of theoretical clarity may be sacrificed, these types of considerations are particularly relevant when analysing a specific case of relations such as I propose in this thesis. It is vital to have a dynamic understanding of the ways in which international and domestic variables can be integrated into one picture. Beyond neoclassical realism there is precedent for this in two-level game theory, such as that proposed by Robert Putnam.[16]

Introducing a volume on the subject Andrew Moravcsik sets out some of the theoretical implications of this view.[17] Firstly, and reassuringly for neoclassical realism, "the two-level-games metaphor views the relationship between domestic and international politics through the eyes of the statesman".[18] The statesman is involved in a complex game of bargaining with outside actors and domestic constituents to define a "win-set" that can overcome constraints on both levels. Statesmen will need strategies to manipulate domestic constraints, collude with foreign powers, and at times influence their respective domestic constituencies.[19] Meanwhile he must contend with the converse actions of foreign governments on his own constituency, and ensure that any signals in return abide to his personal policy preferences. Structure and the way we react to it are mutually inseparable, it is only for theoretical purposes that separation is attempted. The method Moravscik proposes for two-level-games theory is bargaining. This sets the process of the formation of national preferences into constant and dynamic flux. As opposed to other attempts at integrating domestic politics, which see it as a process of setting national interests and how these may differ from structural incentives,[20] it highlights that these very incentives can be warped, magnified, reduced, or even created by domestic configurations, both at home and abroad. Structural changes are also not oblique and discrete, they arrive directly as well as filtered through subsystems each subject to frequent change.

[15] Steven E. Lobell, "Threat assessment, the state, and foreign policy: a neoclassical realist model", in Steven E. Lobell, Norrin M. Ripsman, Jeffrey W. Taliaferro (eds.), *Neoclassical Realism, the State, and Foreign Policy,* Cambridge University Press, 2009 (p. 43)
[16] Robert Putnam, "Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games", *International Organization,* Vol. 42, 1988, pp. 427–460
[17] Peter B. Evans, Harold Karan Jacobson, Robert D. Putnam (eds.), *Double-edged Diplomacy: International Bargaining and Domestic Politics*, University of California Press, 1993
[18] ibid. (p. 23)
[19] ibid. (pp. 24-32)
[20] ibid. (p. 16)

Neoclassical realism may at times err on the side of clarity when addressing structural factors. The proposition being upheld is that structural factors offer rational incentives to states but that internal factors debilitate rational responses. The two-level-games approach does not necessarily contradict this but it does add complexity to the notion of structural incentives. These incentives cannot be disaggregated from other dynamics that face statesmen, domestically, regionally and even within foreign states. Relative power too, is subject to a number of non-constant variables. Geography can be moderated by military technology, natural resources, or the lack thereof, exacerbated by economic ambitions, and domestic coherence by regional instability. Nevertheless, structural change at the systemic level provides the basic contours of this study with further nuance introduced by sub-systemic, or regional change and issue based distributions, for example refugee crises, energy and economy. All of these manifest structurally as variations in the distribution of power among actors and can be pegged to turning points on a historical timeline that traces the contours of change in the external environment.

At the same time a model is needed to address the domestic variables that may affect reactions, in the form of foreign policy, to changes at the structural level. As the following section will show, this is where neoclassical realism distinguishes itself as not just a theory of international relations but also of foreign policy analysis.

2.3.2 Neoclassical Realism as a Foreign Policy Theory: Domestic Factors

The term 'neoclassical realism' came into use after a seminal review by Gideon Rose in the journal *World Politics*, in which he identified a common approach among a number of scholarly articles and books.[21] He saw in the work of these authors an attempt "to build on and advance the work of previous students of relative power [i.e. structural realists] by elaborating the role of domestic-level intervening variables."[22] Their primary subject is "the impact of relative power on foreign policy"[23] but they all acknowledge that this power's impact on foreign policy is "indirect and problematic".[24] Essentially it is problematic because 'foreign policy' requires that they

[21] Gideon Rose, "Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy," *World Politics*, Vol. 51, No. 1, October 1998, pp. 144–77
[22] ibid., (p. 154)
[23] ibid., (p. 155)
[24] ibid. (p. 157)

introduce the state into the equation. Whereas neorealism treats the state as a 'black box', neoclassical realism embraces this notoriously difficult term from political philosophy. This is where the 'classical' comes in, Rose goes as far as to cite Thucydides' Peloponnesian War as the "archetype" work:

> "which grounds its narrative in the theoretical proposition that the "real cause" of the war was "the growth of the power of Athens, and the alarm which this inspired in Sparta," and then describes how systemic incentives were translated through unit-level variables into the foreign policy of the various Greek city states."[25]

Despite ancient Greek antecedents, neoclassical realism is perfectly comfortable to start with contemporary textbook definitions of the state; primary actor, territory, security oriented, and monopoly on violence. Proponents contend that this perhaps simplistic conception stays true to relative power's enduring effect on foreign policy, and the state itself – the state will always prioritise security, and "be epitomised by a national security executive". While they are best placed to correctly "perceive" the imperatives of structural change this does not preclude that they will not have to:

> "bargain with domestic actors (such as the legislature, political parties, economic sectors, classes, or the public as a whole) in order to enact policy and extract resources to implement policy choices."[26]

To be clear the authors reject the notion that these domestic actors might collectively "define the 'national interest'"[27] in the liberal mould. Rather, sub-state actors are potentially powerful forces that can impede or expedite the pursuit of the national interest as set by the "security executive". While this executive is uniquely privileged in its access to information and in its singular focus to perceive the national security interest, it is also embedded in a constant game of bargaining with societal actors "to secure the goods to implement policy".[28] Perceptions too can be subject to inter elite debates and struggles:

> "about the nature and extent of international threats, persistent internal divisions within the leadership, social cohesion, and the regime's vulnerability to violent overthrow."[29]

Thus leaders are constrained by internal divisions, their own cognitive biases, and internal and external threats to their ability to implement foreign policy. These constraints on leaders' responses to security imperatives are all certainly relevant to

[25] ibid. (pp. 153-4)
[26] Steven E. Lobell, Norrin M. Ripsman, Jeffrey W. Taliaferro (eds.), *Neoclassical Realism, the State, and Foreign Policy,* Cambridge University Press, 2009, (pp. 24-25)
[27] ibid. (p. 25)
[28] ibid. (p.27)
[29] ibid. (p.28)

Turkey and the KRI throughout their history and continue to resonate in current debates over foreign policy. The contention that the contours of state action are fundamentally shaped by systemic factors is also borne out in the Turkish experience and even more so in Northern Iraq. It could be said, for example, that the emergence of the Kurdish Regional Government (KRG) as an autonomous international actor within Iraq was brought about exclusively by external factors. Here it should also be noted that neoclassical realism does not preclude such sub-state actors from its definition of actor.[30] This is understandable for a theory that purports to bridge the gap between the broad theoretical effectiveness of neorealism where world states are the only actors, and the study of specific cases where such sub-state actors inevitably matter.

Foreign policy making, in the neoclassical realist conception, is thus constrained by intervening variables that occur at the domestic level. While the internal bargaining mentioned above will make its mark, one of the most cited and credited intervening variables is the "perception" of threats by states and their security executives. While they are fully aware of the anarchic nature of the system, it does not provide any clear cut rules of engagement, and threats "are rarely unambiguous".[31] These problems of perception mean policy making is never an entirely straightforward process, and is compounded by pervasive uncertainty. It is often only with the arrival of a clear systemic shock that feedback to the foreign policy making elite induces responses that approximate to the predictable. The end of the Cold War delivered such a shock, and the urgency with which leaders, not just in Turkey but also around the world, sought to adjust policy, is telling. Yet even in such exemplary cases, the nature of power and range of issues upon which it can impinge, the spectrum of strategic and tactical decisions open to leaders, and the uncertainty of others' intentions and reactions, make it difficult to get a hold on the policy implications of relative power. At such junctures and under even less structurally stark conditions, is where neoclassical realism hones in on domestic variables to get a picture of the complex dynamics that shape foreign policy making in the state. A useful preliminary sketch of such dynamics is found in Steven E. Lobell, Norrin M. Ripsman and Jeffrey W. Taliaferro's book *Neoclassical Realism, the State, and Foreign Policy (2009)*. The authors start by listing three major

[30] ibid. (p. 26)
[31] ibid. (p. 29)

questions that should be addressed in neoclassical realist research. These questions are paraphrased below:

1. Threat assessment: how do decision makers assess threats and opportunities?
2. Domestic actors influence: to what extent can domestic actors influence foreign policy? If they do, is it a question of substance or style?
3. Resource extraction, domestic mobilisation, and policy implementation: can states be obstructed by domestic factors in mobilising resources to pursue their chosen policies?

These avenues mirror the main internal dynamics that most NCR scholars would point to in the creation of a state's foreign policy. The numbering also reflects a hierarchy of internal factors that many would not dispute. In the following sections I will introduce each of these aspects, noting both their place within the broader NCR literature and my own evaluation of their relevance to this thesis. Because threat assessment is the locus between the structural (where the threat usually originates) and the domestic (where it is perceived or assessed by leaders) I will follow most neoclassical realist scholars in defining it as the primary domestic factor. However, also important will be the discussion of the degree to which consensus can be achieved among internal actors in adopting a certain policy – particularly relevant in the case of Turkey where military-civilian relations have long impinged on the foreign policy making process, also in Northern Iraq where the nascent Kurdish polity was divided into two opposing political and military factions during the 1990s. Finally, I will delve into the question of implementing policies, allocating national resources and maintaining course in the face of potential domestic obstacles.

2.3.2.1 Threat assessment

As Gideon Rose notes, once the importance of structural variables in neoclassical realism is acknowledged, the most salient internal variable is usually considered to be "decision-makers' perceptions", with some scholars placing these "at the heart of their work".[32] This preferential weighting of threat perception keeps the balance tilted towards external factors, as threats are deemed primarily to originate externally. Conversely, 'perception' or 'assessment' can be conceptualised in a variety of ways;

[32] Gideon Rose, "Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy," *World Politics*, Vol. 51, No. 1, October 1998, pp. 144–177 (p. 158)

from simple readings that assume the foreign policy making elite, often called the "foreign policy executive" (FPE), to be equivalent to the state; to more detailed investigations of the processes and players involved in producing threat assessments. Nevertheless, in accordance with neoclassical realist tenets, the picture is one of states reacting to external threats in a way that is mediated by their internal perceptions. It is worth noting at this point, that the perceived "threat" itself may not originate outside the boundaries of a nation.[33]

Robert Jervis certainly places perception at the heart of his book *Perception and Misperception in International Politics.*[34] Importantly he takes the concept of "decision-makers" as a given, eschewing situational factors such as regime/bureaucracy type or intra-society bargaining, and focuses rather on the cognitive and psychological processes that colour perceptions. It is worth noting that many more recent works of NCR reject this narrow focus and tend to unpack the state further. However, Jervis's is a good starting point and in my opinion his approach, granting a certain autonomy to the foreign policy executive, is a useful one. On the other hand, his exhaustive analysis of cognitive psychological mechanisms is rather too complex to be applied systematically to a specific case such as this thesis's subject. A number of general considerations are worth noting especially as he relates them to the strategic formulation of foreign policy. As I shall explain later, these cognitive processes, if generalised from the individual leader to the foreign policy executive as a collective, can often be closely inferred from an appraisal of a state's 'strategic culture'.

Jervis begins with a claim that both offensive and defensive realist models may apply in the international system. It is up to states' decision makers to correctly perceive the dynamic that applies and avoid unnecessary conflict among status-quo states through escalation (the "spiral model"),[35] or adequately respond to a revisionist state by making their own defensive resolve clear enough to deter an aggression (the "deterrence model").[36] This quandary of perception is mediated, that is hindered or facilitated, by the cognitive processes of decision makers. These processes can be divided into four

[33] ibid. (p. 43)
[34] Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*, Princeton University Press, 1976
[35] ibid. (pp. 62-78)
[36] ibid. (pp. 58-61)

main categories. First, cognitive consistency, whereby decision makers will allow their estimation of the source of information to override rational evaluation of its truth value, and vice-versa to accept information that accords to one's beliefs regardless of its source.[37] Secondly, decision makers will often take a rational shortcut in their evaluation of events by comparing them to previous events which they may have experienced and been impacted by on a number of levels.[38] Jervis' point here is that such empirical evaluations are not always conducive to appropriate perceptions and may overlook key factors in novel events.[39] Thirdly, decision makers tend to attribute a level of centralisation and unitary purpose in others that may not exist.[40] Finally, and conversely to this, A actor may overestimate his own importance to B actor by misjudging B's intentions.[41] This tendency can well result in A taking actions to deter aggression on B's part that had never been intended, in turn causing B to respond accordingly.

Thus Jervis lays out a structurally determining model, based on the incentives of both defensive and offensive realism. Yet he emphasises how the question of a states' perceptions plays an important role in the way it responds to such structural incentives. Thomas Christensen and Jack Snyder adopt a similar approach in a paper entitled "Chain gangs and passed bucks: predicting alliance patterns in multipolarity".[42] Yet as the title suggests, their interest is in the structural incentives to form alliances among states under multipolarity and the problems or pathologies that arise from states' misinterpreting the advantages of a particular alliance strategy.[43] Such misinterpretations result in states adopting suboptimal strategies and succumbing to the pitfalls, either of chain-ganging – where a state is dragged into an unnecessary conflict by a reckless ally because it does not want to lose that ally; or buck-passing – whereby a state refuses to take a position on an international threat expecting another state to take up the slack, resulting in insufficient balancing to deter conflict. As with Jervis, both defensive and offensive strategies are potentially valid in the international system but it is up to decision makers to decide which dynamic applies in a given

[37] ibid. (p. 123)
[38] ibid. (pp. 220-239)
[39] ibid. (pp. 281-282)
[40] ibid. (p. 320)
[41] ibid. (p. 348)
[42] Thomas J. Christensen and Jack Snyder, "Chain Gangs and Passed Bucks: Predicting Alliance Patterns in Multipolarity", *International Organization*, Vol. 44, No. 2, 1990, pp. 137-168
[43] ibid. (p. 141)

setting. Christensen and Snyder propose two hypothesises as to why this often fails that are both broader and less detailed than Jervis's psychological-cognitive account. Firstly, they posit that "soldiers' and policy makers' perceptions of international structural incentives […] are shaped by their formative experiences",[44] in line with Jervis's conception. Again these "formative experiences" are often, as we shall see in Chapter 3, the base determinant of a state's strategic culture. However, Christensen and Snyder diverge from Jervis when they propose a second major cause for misperception, or rather a predisposition to either offensive or defensive strategies independent of the actual structural incentives. This predisposition is determined by the shape of civil-military relations in a country. Simply put, a state in the grip of military control is likely to develop a "cult of the offensive", whilst states under firm civilian leadership succumb to the opposite "cult of the defensive".[45] Whilst still a parsimonious account it opens the question up to the type of internal variables we will see in the next section, relating to intra-FPE bargaining and the influence of internal actors on foreign policy. Whether or not Christensen's and Snyder's model lends itself to Turkey's historical foreign policy is immediately controversial. Turkey has conventionally been recognised to prefer defensive strategies while at the same time experiencing a balance of foreign policy making power generally in favour of the military.[46] It may be that historical experience (the imperial legacy in the immediate neighbourhood) and overarching alliances such as NATO, may have been a more important factor in determining Turkish defensive preference than civil-military relations; or perhaps military dominance has not always meant the same for Turkey as it has for other military-led states. I will turn to this question in further detail in the next chapter.

The common rubric of "perception" is redefined as "threat assessment" by Steven E. Lobell.[47] This serves a conscious purpose in drawing attention to the "threat", which perceived or misperceived, ultimately drives foreign policy creation. What Lobell

[44] ibid. (p. 144)
[45] ibid. (p. 144)
[46] Ali L. Karaosmanoğlu and others have argued that modern Turkey has always displayed a preference for defensive realpolitik, as well as a prominent role for the military in foreign (and domestic) politics. These arguments will be addressed in further detail in Chapter 3. See Ali L. Karaosmanoğlu, "The Evolution of the National Security Culture and the Military in Turkey", *Journal of International Affairs*, Vol 54, No 1, 2000, pp. 199-216
[47] Steven E. Lobell, "Threat assessment, the state, and foreign policy: a neoclassical realist model", in Steven E. Lobell, Norrin M. Ripsman, Jeffrey W. Taliaferro (eds.), *Neoclassical Realism, the State, and Foreign Policy,* Cambridge University Press, 2009

wants to highlight is that this is not only a structural factor. Common sense tells us that if a threat is open to interpretation it may well be created where it does not exist, in response to absolutely no external stimuli. But more specifically, Lobell wants to unpack the concept of threat to provide a more nuanced picture of what the foreign policy executive is faced with. He is not so much concerned with how something is being perceived as with broadening the understanding of what can be taken as a threat. In fact, the entire volume to which Lobell's chapter belongs, and of which he is an editor does not address perception *per se* throughout, perhaps a sign of the changes in emphasis undergone by neoclassical realism. Lobell addresses "threat assessment" on two levels. Firstly, the ontology of "threat" itself, and secondly the question of who, from inside the state, influences the "assessment". The first question, related in a way to perception, asking, "what is perceived as a threat?" can be included in this section, whereas the second will be better dealt with in the next.

Lobell points out that leaders of states are involved in a multi-tiered game. An overall strategy may involve tactics that appear sub-optimal in one competition but are perfectly rational once considered within the "network of games" in which an actor is embedded. Leaders consider threats arising from the systemic, subsystemic, and domestic tiers and the "boundary lines dividing these [are] blurred and interrelated".[48] This appears to be a useful insight when considering Turkey and Northern Iraq, where policy on both sides would certainly seem to be influenced by threats caused not just systemically, but also those originating at a regional level or even internally. It has often been demonstrated that Ankara considers its flourishing relations with the Kurdish Regional Government (KRG) as a strategic asset in its own internal struggle against PKK terrorism, while the KRG sees Turkey as a ballast in its struggle for autonomy against Baghdad.

However, Lobell is keen to further qualify the implications of threats, arguing that common indicators of relative power, the stuff that is directly related to systemic change, are not detailed enough. He proposes that power cannot be understood in aggregate form, and that one or more components of relative power may or may not be perceived as threats.[49] If another state's power increases in a sphere that is considered a strategic interest then it will be taken as a threat. If not, it may not be seen

[48] ibid. (p. 46)
[49] ibid. (pp. 54-55)

as a threat. As Wohlforth writes, "power cannot be tested; different elements of power possess different utilities at different times."[50] Again this is an important insight for the examination of the 1990s, and reinforces the proposition that balances of power within certain issues should be given space for separate analysis. Strategic interests on Turkey's side have come to reflect, for example, developing economic clout, and the need to acquire external trade partners and sources of domestically unavailable natural resources. On the KRG side, energy export potential has become a hugely important strategic interest. For both sides too, refugee issues have at times elevated to the highest level of strategic importance.

This section has unpacked some of the issues addressed in the more parsimonious neoclassical realist models where the only major impediment to foreign policy making is the perception and interpretation of systemic change. Those undertaking such initiatives are taken for granted, as unitary actors, the "state", its "leadership", or the "foreign policy executive". But what if there are competing perceptions and interpretations among internal state actors, and what if these can influence foreign policy making?

2.3.2.2 Domestic actors and their influence on foreign policy making

While I have included Steven E. Lobell's considerations on the nature of threats in the previous section related to perception, his second set of considerations are of a more disputed nature. Many of the strongest criticisms of neoclassical realism have arisen due to its apparent willingness to incorporate domestic variables, and in some cases to accord these a level of causality beyond what should be acceptable, given its claim to uphold neorealism. Such criticisms have been led by Andrew Moravcsik among others.[51] His charge that many iterations of neoclassical realism have essentially given precedence to liberal arguments about sub-state actors but are dressed in a realist guise, deserves attention. Where interest groups, elites, and other actors are involved in a struggle to define foreign policy objectives, and where any one of these groups may at least potentially have a decisive role in implementing policy, we can no longer claim the state as primary actor in international politics. Rather, we must turn to the liberal

[50] William Wohlworth, T*he Elusive Balance: Power and Perceptions during the Cold War,* Cornell University Press, 1993, (pp. 306-307)
[51] Jeffrey W. Legro and Andrew Moravcsik, "Is Anybody Still a Realist?", *International Security*, Vol. 24, No. 2, 1999, pp. 5–55

hardcore that holds the fundamental actors in international politics to be rational individuals and private groups.[52] The neoclassical realist defence against such accusations of theoretical degeneration would seem to rest upon a notion of degree.[53] Asking to what degree states can be influenced by internal actors is not the same as giving those actors primacy. Nevertheless, there exists a broad range of responses to that question, ranging from the position Jervis takes that such considerations risk unnecessary clouding of a decision making process ultimately undertaken by a unitary leadership, to that of Lobell and others, that, indeed, interest groups within the state can powerfully affect the foreign policy making process.

Lobell wants to draw attention to the impact of societal leaders on the process of foreign policy making. He notes that foreign policy executives (FPEs) are often made up of individuals with ties to parochial groups within society,[54] and that "societal leaders" perhaps strictly outside the FPE may well make independent international threat assessments.[55] These societal leaders, he says, will generally fall into one of two groups, *internationalist,* or *nationalist*; those that benefit from cooperation and international involvement and those that oppose it and benefit from isolation. A balance of power exists within the state itself, with internationalist and nationalist elites vying with one another to lobby the FPE into specific policy stances. These seem valid points although crucially, Lobell does not specify to what degree these elites may influence the FPE, although presumably it is to a significant degree. He talks of the internal balance of power between these groups enabling or disabling foreign policy coalitions, thus seriously affecting the way the FPE responds to systemic factors. This is a consideration that will be noted in Chapter 3, as we shall see foreign policy making in the 1990s in Turkey seemed severely affected by rifts within the governing elites.

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[52] Andrew Moravcsik, "Liberal International Relations Theory: A Scientific Assessment," in Colin Elman and Miriam Fendius Elman eds., Progress in *International Relations Theory: Appraising the Field*, MIT Press, 2003, pp. 159-204

[53] 'Degeneration' in this sense refers to the classification of research programmes, wherein a theoretical approach is evaluated according to whether it is able to generate 'novel facts' (i.e. whether it is a productive theoretical contribution) without straying from the essential tenets of the theoretical backbone it claims to represent. See Imre Lakatos, "Falsification and the Methodology of Scientific Research Programmes" in Imre Lakatos and Alan Musgrave (eds.), Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge, Cambridge University Press, 1970, pp. 91-195, and Colin Elman and Miriam Fendius Elman, eds, *Progress in International Relations Theory: Appraising the Field,* MIT Press, 2003

[54] Steven E. Lobell, "Threat assessment, the state, and foreign policy: a neoclassical realist model", in Steven E. Lobell, Norrin M. Ripsman, Jeffrey W. Taliaferro (eds.), *Neoclassical Realism, the State, and Foreign Policy,* Cambridge University Press, 2009 (p. 62)

[55] ibid. (pp. 60-61)

In Northern Iraq the effects of full-blown civil war all but extinguished the possibility of any unitary foreign policy at all. Nevertheless, at this point we have seen how Lobell's contribution helps to disaggregate the concept of threat, positing that it may emerge from the domestic as well as systemic level. He also argues that a range of societal actors may play a role in determining the threat and the way to which it is responded.

Others such as Colin Dueck and Norrin M. Ripsman are keen to define precisely the manner in which national elites may affect the foreign policy making process. Dueck, analysing historical US military interventions, contends that the FPE essentially decides on the national interest and threats to it unanimously, but that it will then pander to societal actors in the way that it implements policies – in terms of conduct, framing and timing.[56] Ripsman seeks to delimit the influence of internal actors even further, suggesting that real influence is relative to the ability a group has to effectively veto foreign policy making through their ability to remove a national executive from power.[57]

Despite these stark summaries, the above authors also go to great lengths to elucidate the ways in which domestic actors can influence the formation and implementation of foreign policy further down the scale from absolute influence or veto. In this sense Moravcsik's criticism bites as the arguments often seem to veer on regime-type and interest-group arguments. Perhaps Moravscik's own theory of "preferences" would be a more robust model.[58] His contention that the types of interests possessed by domestic groups are not limited to the domestic sphere is also another of the points worth noting.[59]

[56] Colin Dueck, "Neoclassical realism and the national interest: presidents, domestic politics, and major military interventions", in Steven E. Lobell, Norrin M. Ripsman, Jeffrey W. Taliaferro (eds.), *Neoclassical Realism, the State, and Foreign Policy,* Cambridge University Press, 2009 (p. 148)

[57] This certainly seems a relevant point with regard to Turkey where the spectre of military overthrow has long threatened state leaders, not just in the foreign policy sphere. In the case of Iraq, and indeed the KRG, the importance of the military as an actor, formal, peshmerga or National Guard has long been acknowledged. Yet the question of the continued relevance in all cases, especially Turkey's will be addressed in the following chapters. See: Norrin M. Ripsman, "Neoclassical realism and domestic interest groups", in Steven E. Lobell, Norrin M. Ripsman, Jeffrey W. Taliaferro (eds.), *Neoclassical Realism, the State, and Foreign Policy,* Cambridge University Press, 2009 (pp. 179-186)

[58] Andrew Moravcsik, "Taking Preferences Seriously: A Liberal Theory of International Politics", International Organization, 51/4, Autumn 1997

[59] ibid. (p. 523)

2.3.2.3 Resource extraction, domestic mobilisation, and policy implementation

One final potential source of variance between the predictions of structural realism and actual foreign policy needs to be addressed. This is the question of constraints placed on a state in terms of implementing foreign policy and mobilising the adequate resources. Gideon Rose actually defines this as the second major internal factor after perception, but it would seem that in more recent neoclassical realist work it has been relegated below the type of considerations mentioned in the previous section. Fareed Zakaria's 1998 work, however, gives prime import to this factor.[60] He notes the "puzzling question"[61] as to why the United States only began to reluctantly exert its influence abroad shortly before World War I, even though it had possessed considerable relative power for decades. Zakaria's argument is that conventional measures of relative power, which define structural incentives, do not necessarily translate into foreign policy. It is necessary for a state, or its executive power, to be able to harness and implement its relative capabilities. With regard to the United States he argues that national power, the aggregate capabilities of a nation, are not equivalent to state power – the ability of a central authority to direct those capabilities. Only with increased centralisation and strengthened hold by the American state over the federal structure was it possible for state power to direct considerable national power outside, something it presumably wanted, but had been unable to do previously.

While there is some common sense truth to this, I would argue that Zakaria's point is slightly overplayed. Conventional neorealist measures of capability (natural resources, military, technology, and so on) are empirically reliable indicators of a state's willingness to exert international influence. The question of whether states are able to harness these capabilities seems to me secondary to me to the question of why or where it would seek to exert influence. In that sense it seems counterfactual to claim that the United States was unable, and not simply averse, to exerting its influence prior to the beginning of the 20th century. Isolationism is indeed a foreign policy, as was the Monroe Doctrine. The crucial difference I would argue is not the United States' relative ability to harness national power but its identification of threat that expanded (perhaps due to systemic changes and influenced by changes in military technology) to include those emanating from further afield. This of course took place parallel to

[60] Fareed Zakaria, *From Wealth to Power*, Princeton University Press, 1998
[61] ibid. (p. 5)

the decline of Great Britain as the world's superpower and the rise of the United States (and its relative capabilities) to a similar status. Zakaria seems rather enamoured with a picture of the United States as an exceptional economic power with a uniquely decentralised political system.

Investigating the role of ideology as a mobilizing force for aggressive foreign policy, Randall Schweller claims modern powers, super or regional, have surprisingly refrained from extending their territorial control beyond their erstwhile borders.[62] This, of course, excludes the pariah cases of the ideologically driven USSR or Nazi Germany, whose bids for territorial expansion were ultimately unsuccessful. Unfortunately, this seems an inadequate and archaic definition of expansionism. Perhaps not even archaic, just plain mistaken. Athens Delian League was not a territorial empire but rather a system of hegemony, similar to that practiced now and in recent times by the United States in client states or through alliances such as NATO. Schweller specifically argues that ideology, in this case fascism, is the deciding factor in enabling states to turn their domestic resources into hegemonic bids.[63] It seems to me rather idealistic to characterise Soviet and Nazi expansionism as hegemonic while holding the United States' global involvement and intervention as something else. Of course, the latter may be far less crude, less ideologically violent and territorially focused, but it is all the same an attempt to secure hegemonic control over perceived or real interests and combat threats, wherever they may be around the world – a "hegemonic" project. Therefore, I would argue that fascist ideology is certainly not the only enabling factor allowing a state to project its domestic resources abroad in an aggressive and hegemonic fashion, and that this idea would detract from the offensive realist contention that hegemony can be a rational security-oriented policy.

Jeffrey W. Taliaferro constructs a model of the "resource extractive state" to understand the ways in which a state's capacity to extract resources from its population and territory affect its ability to implement foreign policy.[64] A state's ability to extract resources and mobilise society is hindered or advanced by the type of institutions it

[62] Randall L. Schweller, "Neoclassical realism and state mobilization: expansionist ideology in the age of mass politics", in Steven E. Lobell, Norrin M. Ripsman, Jeffrey W. Taliaferro (eds.), *Neoclassical Realism, the State, and Foreign Policy,* Cambridge University Press, 2009
[63] ibid. (p. 227)
[64] Jeffrey W. Taliaferro, "Neoclassical realism and resource extraction: State building for future war", in Steven E. Lobell, Norrin M. Ripsman, Jeffrey W. Taliaferro (eds.), *Neoclassical Realism, the State, and Foreign Policy,* Cambridge University Press, 2009 (p. 214)

has, whether there is state-sponsored nationalism present and whether it exhibits a statist or anti-statist ideology among its population. Nevertheless, Taliaferro is careful to point out that the independent variable will always be systemic threat, and that internal factors only aid or hinder responses by enabling resources. He also points out that the resource extractive capability of a state is not always an internal factor but can be externally created. Where a state is relatively isolated geographically and devoid of imminent threat (such as Great Britain) it will not necessarily develop the central extractive state, which other states that are in more precarious positions (such as Prussia) might.[65] It seems to me to be a valid point that internal barriers may arise that impede a state from achieving the results which a pure quantitate assessment of its capabilities would predict. However, I would contend that these barriers are more likely to be sporadic, in times of crisis, or intense conflict among internal groups than permanent institutional impediments. It is also worth noting Taliaferro's point that a state's security priorities may be shaped by geography and the imperatives of economic and resource related realities, another argument in favour of analysing issue based distributions of power.

The previous sections have outlined domestic factors in neoclassical realist literature. I have organised them according to the generally accepted weight of their influence on foreign policy making, and evaluated their applicability for this thesis. In the next section I will present a summary of these factors and propose a model for approaching domestic factors in the case of relations between Turkey and Northern Iraq.

2.4 Domestic variables to consider in Turkey-Northern Iraq relations

In the previous section I reviewed a number of different approaches to neoclassical realism and some of its important and constructive critiques. This was in relation to the type of internal dynamics that should be considered in neoclassical realist research. In this section I intend to specify which of these I will investigate and apply in this thesis.

I agree with the basic neoclassical realist assumption that threat perception is one of, if not the most, important of domestic variables. With regard to domestic actors and their influence on the formation of foreign policy, a number of important points were

[65] ibid. (p. 211)

raised about the ability of factions within a foreign policy executive to dominate or impede foreign policy making. The critical nature of internal factional struggles to foreign policy decision-making in both Turkey and Northern Iraq is borne out in the historical background (covered in Chapter 3) and in the analysis of the 1990s itself (Chapter 4). To a large degree I discount the theories of resource extraction and ideology, as proposed by Zakaria and Schweller. Rather, I would argue that an evaluation of the relative position of internal groups that have a decisive say on foreign policy formulation and the presence of insurmountable internal conflict in enough to determine the ability to turn policy, and capabilities, into action.

I therefore propose a domestic factors model that gives primacy to threat perception. However, as the next section will argue, the constant influences on threat perception in a given FPE need to be defined in a general sense. At the same time, the influence and preferences of factions and personalities within the FPE must also be taken into account. This overlaps with the second variable, which encompasses the changing configurations among actors within the FPE and its effect on the ability to formulate policy and mobilise the resources to implement it.

2.4.1 Threat perception and strategic culture

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, neoclassical realist analysis gives precedence to incentives drawn from the external environment in explaining a state's foreign policy. However, it also seeks to understand the ways in which internal factors shape how a state formulates and carries out its response to these incentives. I noted how external incentives come into play in a complex and intertwined fashion and that, in line with some of the theories mentioned, they can rarely be disaggregated from internal developments, let alone other external ones. This presents a dilemma as it relativizes the commitment to prioritise structural factors in the neorealist sense. Perhaps this is the reason 'threat' takes centre stage in neoclassical realist thought.

Analysing threat perception, or assessment, offers an avenue through which to approximate the various factors that may be at play in determining a state's foreign policy response to structural change. The threat perception approach, rather than simply enumerating a list of external threats and incentives, allows us to gauge their relevance to policy making in a specific state. Threat perception, essentially, encompasses the external environment. Nevertheless, perception implies a perceiver

(or to use previous terminology, a foreign policy executive) and, if it is to be taken as a cause of variance from structurally determined foreign policy, its indicators need to be specified.

A threat can be defined as an event or development beyond the FPE's control that impinges on the national interest. The national interest itself, according to the realist canon, must primarily be security (relative or absolute), broadly based on military strength and supported by economic success. Nevertheless, security can have various interpretations and emphases, which inform the 'strategic culture' of an actor. Conversely we can approximate a picture of the strategic culture, by enumerating the particular aspects of security an actor emphasizes and the reasons (historical or otherwise) that it does this. The ways in which it believes it can gain or maintain the capacity to defend its security in turn affects threat assessment in a general sense.

However, for a full picture of the ways domestic conditions affect threat assessment an appraisal of strategic culture needs to be supplemented with the insights of Jervis and others, who expand on the role of leaders' cognitive processes, shaped by experience and images of self and others, in threat assessment. Lobell's points on multi-tiered threats and the interrelation of domestic and international incentives and the relevance of particular aspects of a counterpart's capabilities that present some kind of threat to a state's interests, are also a vital consideration. These are points I will investigate in the next chapter in relation to Turkey and Northern Iraq, from the perspective of formative historical experiences that have shaped strategic culture, as well as outlining the different groups within the FPE and their strategic tendencies.

2.4.2 FPE coherence and domestic actors influence

The second part of the domestic model relates to the actual actors within the FPE, their influence on policy making and the emergence of crises among them that potentially impede policy implementation. This aspect can be termed "FPE coherence", and as it pertains to domestic actors in Turkey and Northern Iraq in the decade of the 1990s it will be applied in Chapter 4. Coherence here means the degree to which the FPE can be readily taken as a unitary actor and its ability to effectively formulate and implement foreign policy. In the case of Turkey, this may range from remarkable harmony between players and efficiency (at times even due to the decisive influence of one personality), to periods of internal instability resulting in muddled and neglected

foreign policy. In Northern Iraq, the range may be much wider, encompassing periods of disputed control over the state itself, let alone its foreign policy. This assessment of FPE coherence serves as an indicator of a state's ability to translate capabilities into foreign policy. Here we can also mark turning points on the domestic front; major reconfigurations of the make-up of the FPE, independent of specific foreign policy challenges. Also the players within the FPE will be defined, as will their specific interests, and their relative bearing on the process of foreign policy formation and implementation (and indeed threat assessment).

The scholars referenced earlier make a number of important points, with reference to domestic actors and their influence. The ability of internal groups to veto foreign policy as described by Ripsman, the relative strength of "nationalist" or "internationalist" domestic constituencies cited by Lobell, and the influence of internal politics on the *mode* of foreign policy proposed by Dueck, are all relevant on this secondary level. Also Moravcsik's notions of international bargaining, where the statesman sits at the crossroads of international and domestic negotiations, is a proposition worth keeping in mind. These considerations will be taken into account in Chapter 4, which will begin with an assessment of changes in internal coherence when analysing the FPE in Turkey, and (in less formal terms) Northern Iraq, before turning to the analysis of structural change.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to provide a theoretical framework for the analytical parts of this thesis which will follow in the next two chapters. I have chosen to apply a neoclassical realist model as the theoretical lens for this research, as it recognises the importance of structural change in determining foreign policy choices while also controlling for the inevitable influence of domestic factors. I have shown how this idea of structural change is envisioned, primarily following the neorealist model of the effects of global distributions of power on how states act, and I have introduced further levels of structural analysis in regional and issue based distributions of power. The next chapter, Chapter 3, will provide the necessary historical background and context to develop this model and apply it in Chapter 4, dealing with relations between Turkey and Northern Iraq in the 1990s.

In the second section of this chapter, I outlined and discussed the main domestic factors which neoclassical realist scholars have proposed as intervening variables between structural change and foreign policy response. Then, drawing on the review of domestic factors, I proposed that two main avenues needed to be investigated with regard to domestic factors for the actors analysed in this thesis. First, the general strategic culture and specific domestic actors' influences on the process of threat assessment – which will be addressed in the next chapter, as background to the analysis of Chapter 4. Second, the coherence of the FPE and the balance of power among domestic actors within it during the period in question, which will be addressed fully in Chapter 4. Thus two models will be applied simultaneously; a structural model to determine the main structural changes that affected relations, and then a domestic model to determine which, if any domestic factors, were relevant influences on the process of foreign policy formation and implementation on both sides. Both of these models require historical background knowledge in order to be applied to the 1990s. The structural part requires an introduction to the pre-1990s status quo and dynamics at the global, regional and issue based levels, in order to comprehend the significance of changes at these levels during the 1990s. Meanwhile the domestic model requires historical background and analysis of literature to determine the inherited strategic cultures of each side, as well as an outline of the legacy, continuity, and main policy preferences (if distinct) of the main groups within their respective FPEs. This historical background and context will be provided in the next chapter (Chapter 3), and will allow us to determine the most significant changes at the structural level as well as unpack FPE coherence during the 1990s in Chapter 4.

3. HISTORICAL CONTEXT: WHAT STRUCTURAL CHANGE AND DOMESTIC BACKGROUND MEANS FOR TURKEY-NORTHERN IRAQ RELATIONS BEFORE THE 1990s

This chapter provides contextual background for the examination of structural and domestic effects on relations between Turkey and Northern Iraq in the 1990s in Chapter 4. Structural conditions at the global, regional and issue-based levels should be traced back as they have had a profound impact on the later positions of both Turkey and Iraq as well as the development of its Northern Kurdish semi-autonomous region. The first part of this chapter will address these issues. At the global level the most historically relevant phenomenon is undoubtedly the Cold War, both in its profound and lasting effect on the players in this thesis and the question of what type of international system has followed its resolution post 1990. On a regional level, there are a number of questions that need to be addressed before next chapter's analysis. What, if any, are the specific features of the Middle East? What has contributed to stability or conflict in the region? And, who are the main players at the regional level and what has been the historical configuration among them? In both global and regional sections, I will outline the positions of both Turkey and Northern Iraq as they have developed up to the beginning of the 1990s. Further to that I will investigate issue based structural conditions and set out the rationale for choosing energy, trade, and refugee flows as important realms that may have their own particular effects on relations.

Then in a second part of the chapter I will address the historical internal context for both sides. This will involve a sketch of the basic tenets of Turkey's strategic culture as it has developed over the decades and its traditional main players leading up to the 1990s. I will also address the internal political history of Northern Iraq and trace the historical formation of what would later become a nascent FPE in the 1990s. These sections will be limited to pre 1990 realities, thereby informing us of the traditional existing strategic culture and setting the stage for the analysis of FPE coherence in the 1990s in chapter 4.

3.1 The structural context of power relations

3.1.1 Global power structure and place of Turkey and (Northern) Iraq

Turkey faced a clear choice at the end of World War II; to remain neutral between two superpowers, one far away and apparently of little threat (the United States), and the other on its doorstep with a history of revisionist proclamations and indeed actions toward it (the Soviet Union). In the end Turkey threw her lot in with the distant protector, the United States. Given Turkey's relative weakness after the war the choice was clear. As William Hale states, "the Turks had to assure themselves of a countervailing force if they were to oppose Stalin successfully".[66] Turkey's requirements were threefold according to Hale; first ensure the Soviets did not receive US support in their policies towards Turkey; second, secure funding for Turkey's armed forces; and thirdly, to create a long-term alliance with the US. One by one, these requirements were met, first in 1945-6 when US diplomats upheld the Montreux convention of the Bosporus Straits which the Soviets keenly wished to alter. Then, as the Truman Doctrine secured a measure of defence funding for Turkey in 1947; and finally, when Turkey was gratefully admitted into the NATO alliance in 1952.[67]

This was a major change for Turkish foreign policy, yet it reflected a shift in international realities that would remain salient, at least until the early 1960s, when the theatre of superpower conflict moved further afield, from Europe to Asia and Africa. After recognising this new configuration Turkey, perhaps belatedly, "exploited its ability to gain strategic rent, both economic and political, from both sides in the Cold War".[68] Gradually more independent, Turkey nevertheless remained staunchly in the Western camp through its continued commitment to NATO. New global realities also contributed, such as the re-emerging weight of Europe in the form of the European Community which was an attractive proposition for Turkey on all levels; political, economic and cultural. Thus the post World War II balance of power played a fundamental role in shaping Turkey's basic orientation, both as a 'Western' power, an important NATO member, and as a diplomatic and military entry point into the Middle East /Eastern Mediterranean for its superpower ally the United States. Turkey, as a

[66] William M. Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy, 1774-2000*, Frank Cass, 2001 (p. 113)
[67] ibid. (pp. 113-120)
[68] ibid. (p. 179)

formidable regional power and valuable ally (due to its capabilities and geographic position) seemed forced to take a definitive stance in the bipolar standoff.

Iraq came into existence from the wreckage of the Ottoman Empire after the First World War. Under British mandate, its foreign policy was firmly tied to that of Great Britain well into the 1950s, despite heavy internal turmoil. Great Britain's own position after the war was drastically reduced, clearly no longer the formidable world power it had once been, by 1955 it could do little more to hold on to its influence in the Middle East than facilitate the ultimately unsuccessful Baghdad Pact. This bound Iraq and Turkey, and later, Iran and Pakistan into an anti-Soviet alliance before Great Britain ultimately ducked out of its Middle East role all together after Suez. Although it never formally joined, the Pact was clearly instigated by the United States as a counterweight to Soviet ambitions in the region. For Iraqi nationalists, who would come to power after the 1958 revolution, these ambitions were not viewed with as much alarm as they were across the border in Turkey.[69] This was partly due to geographical distance, and partly to the fact that the salient threat to their newly acquired independence emerged rather from Britain, France, Israel and the United States itself, whose interests in Israel and some Arab regional powers such as Saudi Arabia and Egypt were becoming clear. attested to by the Eisenhower doctrine of 1957. Despite immediately leaving the Baghdad Pact, Iraq under General Qasim did not seem to view the USSR as anything more than "a possible source of diplomatic and economic support, as well as a future supplier of arms."[70] Nevertheless the United States was happy to look the other way, to say the least, when Colonel Arif and the Ba'ath Party took over in the 1963 revolution. For the next decade, regional and domestic politics took centre stage in Iraq, although relations were broken off with the United States following the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, and a series of economic partnerships were undertaken with the USSR (culminating in the 1972 Soviet-Iraqi Treaty of Friendship). It was not until the end of Nasser in Egypt that Iraq became an important centre of interest in its own right for the United States. First this was motivated by Iraq becoming the new frontline of regional contestation between the Soviet Union and the United States as Soviet influence was purged from Egypt. Then

[69] Oral Sander, 'Türkiye'nin Dış Politikasında Sürekliliğin Nedenleri', Melek Fırat (der), Türkiye'nin Dış Politikası, Imge Kitabevi, 2006, p. 71-99 (p. 114)
[70] Charles Tripp, *A History of Iraq*, Cambridge University Press, 2007 (p. 158)

it was compounded by Iraq's brewing conflict with US ally Iran. This of course would change after the Iranian Revolution, a massive and unexpected blow to US influence in the region. Despite its apparent reckless support of the Saddam Hussein regime during the Iran-Iraq war of the 80s, the United States was becoming keenly aware of the threat to its interest, not least in terms of oil, that this headstrong, and surprisingly durable dictator posed.

In his book on the theory of regional war and peace,[71] Benjamin Miller posits that when more than one great power can project influence in a region, such as under bipolarity, they may either compete or cooperate, and that this will contribute either to a cold war or a cold peace among the region's states. Cold war, of course, means exacerbation of regional fault lines and the manipulation of proxies on both sides. Cooperation means that great powers will intervene to prevent regional conflicts from escalating. Iraq's position among the superpowers would seem to have been constrained very much by the competitive mode of relations among the superpowers as its internal politics and external relations were turned into proxy arenas.

As for Iraq's Kurds, their position in the bipolar Cold War was determined by the respective benefit perceived in the superpowers' machinations and by their own political and military leaders. Between the end of the First World War and the end of the Second, any notion of Kurdish statehood had been written off, and signed off, by the erstwhile great powers as the Treaty of Sevres became a footnote in history to that of Lausanne. Whether or not a Kurdish state (not in the Wilsonian sense of nation but in the sense of a viable supra territorial institution in waiting) had existed is also for the footnotes of history as what quickly emerged after the 1940s was a series of largely country specific Kurdish political movements. In Iraq, although with important links to Iran, the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP), under Mulla Mustafa Barzani, came to the fore. The Soviet Union was quick to realise the potential influence that could be had through patronising the Kurdish movement both in Iraq and Iran. It sponsored the short-lived Kurdish Mahabad Republic on territory it controlled in North Western Iran. Despite being among the most important figures in the founding of Mahabad, and receiving asylum afterwards in the USSR, Mustafa Barzani turned out to be rather ambivalent about the Soviet Union. The KDP became reliant on Iran, under the Shah,

[71] Benjamin Miller, *States, Nations, and the Great Powers: The Sources of Regional War and Peace*, Cambridge University Press, 2007

for support in its struggle against Baghdad. Thus it also came into the orbit of the United States as Baghdad became hostile. In the words of Charles Tripp, "It appeared that any enemy of the Baghdad regime was a potential ally of the United States."[72] For the Kurds, a fatal hiatus in their beneficiary position vis-a-vis the United States occurred during the Iran-Iraq War of 1980-88, when US support for Baghdad all but condoned the vicious campaign against the Kurds that followed.[73] With the true genocidal potential of the Saddam Hussein regime fully established, the Kurds did, however, receive American patronage when Washington turned its sights on the regime itself during the Persian Gulf War. The Kurds for their part, as we shall see, recognised the value of this patronage from the world's lone superpower and would soon turn it to their advantage.

Thus we can see from the Cold War the emergence of certain structurally determined patterns in the respective relations of Turkey, Iraq, and the emerging Kurdish Regional Government vis-a-vis the global superpowers. A spectrum of strategies from external balancing to proxy-politics seems to have governed the superpowers' relations with the main actors in this thesis under bipolar conditions. Which strategy applied to which actor appears to have been determined by the actors' geographic position and relative capabilities as well as the role they wished to play in regional politics, all of which were subject to change over time. Turkey, from the United States' perspective, formed part of its balancing strategy through alliance and defensive support, firmly enmeshing it in the Western bloc and formalising the mutual military commitment through NATO. Of course this alliance did not remain unquestioned, even if Turkey saw the Soviet Union as its main threat, at times it wondered over US and NATO defence guarantees and US policy on issues such as Cyprus.

Both superpowers made overtures to Iraq over the course of the Cold War. These fell far short of the security and economic incentives that the United States offered to Turkey, an established and strategically located regional power, both for European security and the Middle East. Iraq, emerged more as a venue of contestation than an essential element of a balancing strategy – an asset to be denied the rival and occasionally employed as proxy. It was an ambiguous proxy, too large to fully control

[72] Charles Tripp, *A History of Iraq*, Cambridge University Press, 2007 (p 203)
[73] Joost R. Hiltermann, "Halabja - America didn't seem to mind poison gas" *NYTimes.com,* January 17, 2001

yet too relatively unimportant to merit extraordinary effort. The superpowers seemed content to win gains by making overtures to internal political forces hostile to their rivals, and by supporting foreign policy initiatives that aligned with their interests. Meanwhile the Iraqi Kurds, although they may have been useful in the long term to the regional powers that cultivated them as proxies, they were only of occasional interest to the superpowers when perceived to be of immediate utility in achieving wider strategic gains.

3.2.2 Regional power structure and place of Turkey and (Northern) Iraq

Turkey straddles Europe and Asia, and recent debates have raged over whether it is a European, an Asian, or a Middle Eastern power. It has also been posited as a "pivot" or "insulator" state, a key geographic nexus for the interactions between distinct regions.[74] There is no reason why it may not at different times, or concurrently, fulfil all of these roles. The concept of regions in international politics is undoubtedly useful but also reductive. Their theoretical purpose is to provide manageable ways of understanding predominant and repeated phenomenon specific to a particular geographically contiguous group of nations. Turkey's relations with Iraq and its Kurdish autonomous region are thus to be considered, mainly, within the Middle Eastern context. In Turkey's case, however, its unique geographic position has meant that other regional dynamics have come into play in a significant manner. Nevertheless, this section will focus on the Middle East as the main arena for regional variables. As Raymond Hinnebusch defines it, the Middle East is,

> "constituted around an Arab core, with a shared identity but fragmented into multiple territorial states; the core is flanked by a periphery of non-Arab states – Turkey, Iran and Israel – which are an intimate part of the region's conflicts and an integral part of its balance of power"[75]

That these states, for the most part, found their independence in recent times from the clutches of powers beyond the region has meant that regional dynamics are greatly influenced by 'outside parameters'. Hinnebusch outlines this enduring legacy in terms of structural Marxist 'core-periphery relations'. Western (core) imperialism and the

[74] This approach is often taken in "Regional Security Complex Theory" literature, associated with the "Copenhagen School" and scholars such as Barry Buzan and Ole Waever among others. See: Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver, *Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security*, Cambridge University Press, 2003

[75] Raymond Hinnebusch, *The International Politics of the Middle East*, Manchester University Press, 2003 (p. 1)

region's unique interests (petroleum, Israel) have made of the Middle East a key periphery, and a 'uniquely penetrated system'. At its extreme this penetration has seen the "fragmentation of the Middle East into a multitude of weak states dependent on core states for security against each other."[76] The intensity of this dynamic would seem dependent on two factors, firstly, the international system, hegemonic or bipolar in the region; and secondly the level of anti-imperialist nationalism manifest in the states' policies, and indeed the unity among differing states' ruling elites. Historically, Hinnebusch notes the conjuncture of Pan-Arabism as a mitigating factor on superpower penetration, as an approximation of regional unity in the face of imperialism.[77] Problematic as this assertion may be, he also concedes that as yet the region remains, "the epicentre of world crisis" and no closer to any semblance of regional unity vis-a-vis imperialism.

While many would argue that Arab nationalism as a relevant factor in regional politics came to an end definitively in the 1970s, Michael N.Barnett[78] contends that it in fact continued to play an important role in a redefined form. For Barnett the two competing commitments that had exacerbated conflict in the region up to the 1960s were those to state sovereignty (within existing boundaries), and those to Arab nationalism, which sought to revise those boundaries. As the legitimacy of state structures developed and as the Pan-Arab project failed, Arab nationalism, according to Barnett, became the basis of a new regional order in the constructivist sense of regulating institutions built on shared norms. These norms were the new Arab nationalism.[79] Thus Barnett tends to criticise purely realist 'balance of power' approaches to regional order, and posit this constructivist approach as an alternative. Yet writing in the mid 1990s his optimism about emerging regional institutions based on shared Arab nationalist norms now seem a little outdated. Nevertheless, his account of the entrenchment of state-nationalism in the Arab world, identifying three dynamics in the formation of Arab states, remains relevant, for example, the economic and political rationale of *etatism*,

[76] ibid. (p. 3)
[77] ibid. (pp. 22-30)
[78] Michael N. Barnett, "Sovereignty, nationalism, and regional order in the Arab states system", International Organization, 49 (2005), pp 479-510
[79] According to Barnett, the new Arab nationalism put the issue of "state vs. nation" to rest. While still holding to the idea that a shared Arab identity and set of interests exists, it forgoes revisionism and respects individual state sovereignty in its, "centrist definition of Arab nationalism that implies interstate cooperation and consultation-but little else". See *ibid.* (pp. 502-503)

the state's absolute control over economic policy and resources. Economically, it made sense for leaders to centrally coordinate their young economies as they emerged into established and industrialised global markets. But politically, it also allowed governing elites, "to act as the populace's primary financial guardian and material source of support"[80], guaranteeing in return a significant measure of deference to state authority. While this idea has been developed into widely used concepts such as 'neo-patrimonialism', the basic idea is particularly relevant in the case of Iraq.

The second important element in the formation of modern Arab states has been the history of conflicts between them. This not only bolstered national identity through ideas of 'us' vs. 'them', but also necessitated the broadening of national institutions, particularly the military. As Barnett says, "Conscripts were trained in state armies, wore state uniforms, were buried in state graves, and were honored with state holidays."[81] Finally, Barnett notes the importance of state sponsored attempts to manufacture national identity. Thus Arab states, since their inception in the early 20th century, may have managed to gain a measure of coherence as political units although apparently not enough to offset the symptoms of regional and internal instability.

As we saw in the previous section, Benjamin Miller credits supra regional influence for a great deal of the instability in the Middle East.[82] While the superpower penetration of the region and its significant effects on its 'war-proneness' are fairly clear, there are also according to Miller, other factors specific to the region that equally contribute. Miller cites the state to nation imbalance, or incongruence, as one of the key factors in explaining war and conflict in the Middle East region in particular. Whereas other regions, particularly in the Third World similarly inherited artificial boundaries and imposed states, these often accepted or dealt with these inherited problems without recourse to the use of force, at least according to Miller.[83] In the Middle East, however, the predominance of revisionist ideologies has aggravated the legitimacy of states and the regional order. Basically this means that Middle Eastern states have been plagued with a variety of problems related to the legitimacy of their states vis-a-vis their nations, or citizenry. These can be categorised, in Miller's

[80] ibid. (p. 497)
[81] ibid. (p. 498)
[82] Benjamin Miller, States, Nations, and the Great Powers: The Sources of Regional War and Peace, Cambridge University Press, 2007
[83] ibid. (p. 135)

typology, as 'states without nations', where a viable state structure exists but is not legitimate in the eyes of all of the people, for example Iraq; or 'nations without states' where a national identity may exist but there is no viable state to represent it, such as with the Kurdish or Palestinian people. States, where they exist, can also be weak, and their elites more or less dependent on outside patronage and more or less desperate in their attempts to hold on to power - all of which are to be presumed as features of key Middle Eastern states. This has created a particularly murky pool of historical international relations in the Middle East.

As early as 1965 Malcolm Kerr put forward an attempt to find a pattern amidst the peculiarities of the Middle East, and particularly to explain the alliance and rivalry configurations amongst its core Arab states. His book *The Arab Cold War*[84] sought to demarcate the early period of conflict in the Middle East from the wider Cold War. The key cleavage at the regional level was not exemplified by the clash of capitalist and Marxist-Leninist regimes but between conservative monarchies and socialist republics.[85] At the outset, the conservative monarchies consisted of Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Iraq, while the leading socialist republics were Egypt and Syria. Here Miller's premise – that great power rivalry, if unable to contain, exacerbates such regional conflicts – fits, as during this early period of the Cold War regional powers would have leveraged the drive to align with a side into their policies vis-a-vis rival states.

The basic fault line of conservative monarchies vs. socialist republics may well have persisted beyond the downfall of the Iraqi monarchy, as the new republican regime effectively switched camps. But the camps, of course, also reflected wider Cold War alliances and it is telling that the decline of the socialist republics also coincides with the first signs of US hegemony in the region. For its part, the Pan-Arab ideological currency of the republics had also greatly depreciated following the disappointing results of the various Arab-Israeli wars and the death of Nasser. Thus a new era was ushered in, marked with the Iranian Revolution, which brought about two things. First, classic regional geopolitics, as the geographically determined rivalry between Persian and Arab took to the fore, and the US hegemon weighed in heavily on the Arab side.

[84] Malcolm Kerr, *The Arab Cold War: Gamal 'Abd al-Nasir and His Rivals, 1958-1970*, 3rd ed. London: Oxford University Press, 1971

[85] Nabeel Khoury, "The Arab Cold War Revisited: The Regional Impact of the Arab Uprising", MEP, 20/4, 2013, pp, 73-87 (p. 73)

Second, a new ideological tool, Islamism, reflecting the new Iranian regime's claim to 'Islamic revolution'. Saudi Arabia took the lead to counter Iranian influence in the region diplomatically, and, beyond sponsoring its own brand of ideology, was also instrumental in establishing the Gulf Cooperation Council in 1981. Saddam Hussein, who felt the determinants of geography and indeed demographics a little more pressingly, responded with less diplomacy.

Turkey, to a large extent up until the 1980s remained aloof to the vagaries of Arab politics. Again, like the United States under isolationism, this does not imply the absence of a foreign policy. Turkey's blanking of the Middle East was carefully calculated and based on historical antecedents and contemporary threat perceptions. Early on in the new republic, as territorial disputes with Middle Eastern neighbours over Mosul and Hatay were settled, Turkish policy makers "focused on domestic reforms […] rather than on regional affairs".[86] After the Second World War, the international conditions outlined in the previous section pushed Turkey into an alliance with Western states, and it worked actively with US support to "limit the inroads made by the Soviet Union"[87] in the region. However, after the 1950s Turkey once again turned its attentions away from the Middle East and toward other fronts in the Cold War. This was largely due to its place within NATO and the alliance's focus on the borders with Warsaw Pact countries. Turkey would also have been keenly aware of NATO's reluctance to "support it in an 'out of area' conflict in the Middle East" for fear of escalation of a conflict with Iraq or Syria and "detracting from the defence of Western Europe".[88] In the 1980's however, Turkey reversed this trend and became more assertive and engaged in the region as a whole. Although the reasons for this will be discussed in the next chapter, it is important to underline at this point some of the dynamics which began beforehand, especially under the leadership of Turgut Özal (1983 onwards). Firstly, came a new economic orientation, one which as we shall see prioritised exports and came to see the Middle East as an important potential market. Secondly, the rise of the Kurdistan Worker's Party and it's insurgency which began in the early 1980s and became a regional issue for Turkey, straining relations with Iran and Syria, and tempering relations with Iraq which, "depended on joint opposition to

[86] Aaron Stein, *Turkey's New Foreign Policy: Davutoglu, the AKP and the Pursuit of Regional Order*, Routledge (Whitehall Papers), 2015 (P. 3)
[87] ibid. (p. 4)
[88] ibid.

Kurdish national aspirations".[89] Indeed the incentives to maintain cordial relations with Iraq had already been established; both on the economic front as the Kirkuk-Yumurtalik pipeline opened in 1977 and geopolitical as Turkey came to see an independent Iraq as a key counterweight to any regional attempts at hegemony, whether from Egypt, Syria, or Iran. A final regional issue has been a key factor in Turkey's foreign policy. As conflict and uncertainty has increased, apparently unabated, so too have refugee flows. Turkey has come to appreciate the full implications of this issue since it first accepted some 63,000 Kurdish refugees following Saddam Hussein's savage al-Anfal campaign to wreak revenge on the Kurds after the Iran-Iraq War[90].

The role of Iraq's Kurds' in the region, in as much as they have been autonomous players, has been determined by two major factors. Firstly, their utility as a proxy for outside powers. Secondly, their role has been determined by geography, and history. Landlocked and surrounded by states who feel their own sovereignty threatened by Kurdish autonomy, whether limited to Iraq or transnational, Iraqi Kurds have had to seek strategic partners in the region to secure their own survival and maintain their security and development. This has been seen in the case of critical Iranian support against the Saddam Hussein regime, a matter of survival, and in terms of economic development as we see with the unprecedented relationship that has developed with Turkey.[91]

The political history of Iraq's Kurds has also shaped the way they have engaged in the region. As we shall see rival movements that organised around distinct political parties and armed militias competed for control of territory and wider political authority. While it should be recognised that an idea of a unitary Iraqi Kurdish entity certainly existed and motivated both major groups, the rivalry between the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) was a defining feature of Northern Iraqi Kurdish foreign relations. This meant that regional powers had more than one nexus to deal with in approaching Iraqi Kurds, who were felt as an increasingly effective for some – irritating for others – proxy.

[89] William Hale, Turkey, The US and Iraq, Saqi Books, 2007 (p. 26)
[90] ibid. (p. 36)
[91] Iraq's Kurds have also received notable support from Israel as part of their "peripheral and minorities' alliance" (see Ofra Bengio, *The Turkish-Israeli Relationship,* Palgrave Macmillan, 2010. p. 34) designed to complicate the process of political union amongst hostile regional states.

As this section has outlined, the regional structure is determined by the complex balancing between multiple powers of varying strengths, among them Turkey, Iraq, Syria, Egypt, Iran, Saudi Arabia, the Gulf states, and Israel. The configuration among these has been kaleidoscopic and heavily determined by global structural pressure, not just threat perceptions among the actors. Nevertheless, the purpose of this section has not been to exhaustively enumerate the historical alliance patterns among Middle Eastern states, rather, as with the previous section, to elucidate some of the main strategies pursued by regional actors over and against one another in pursuit of security.

The type of strategies is as much determined by traditional balancing considerations, alliances and offensive checking, as it is by regional peculiarities. As discussed above, Middle Eastern states, particularly Arab ones, have long found internal incoherence as much a security issue as external threat. This has had two effects on foreign policy strategy. Firstly, it has meant that foreign policy initiatives have often been motivated by internal security considerations – an example would be Turkey's alliance with Iraq, motivated by its concern to impede the PKK, another would be the various Arab-Israeli wars, in part at least, prompted by Arab leaders' desire to consolidate legitimacy at home. Secondly, foreign policy strategies directed externally have often used tactics designed to capitalise on the internal disunity in another state, whether aimed at the state in question or a third party. This has resulted in a marked predominance of the use of proxies among Middle Eastern states as a tool to check one another and retain balance among rivals. Here we can point to Iranian support of Iraqi Kurds against Iraq, and Syrian support of the PKK against Turkey.

3.2.3 Issue based power: energy, economy, migration

The two previous sections have dealt with the distribution of power and capabilities at the global and regional level and the types of strategies they have incentivised among the actors involved. In line with neorealist insight these strategies are aimed primarily at securing a states' survival and balancing against threats to a states' security. A number of factors can be considered as constituting this 'security', chiefly of course, the ability to protect the territorial state from military aggression and other forms of violence in purely military terms.

However, there are some issues that should be considered separately, as they bring with them a whole set of implications for relations among states that may transcend the norms of security balancing. A nation's economic standing does, of course, directly correlate to its security capacity, yet the specifics of its economic relations with other states may also transform its security calculations. This notion is most often associated with liberal theories, especially as put forward by Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye in their 1977 book[92] on 'complex interdependence' in which they hold that increasing interdependence, especially economic, amongst states mitigates the effectiveness of military force as a tactic in the pursuit of security. At the same time, military force endangers the cooperative relationships which support a new set of state interests, again primarily economic. While the underlying liberal assumption, that economic interests have come to trump security as the only motivation for states (or even societies) does not hold in the realist view, there are points to be taken from this idea. It is useful to recognise the possibility that distributions of power and capabilities in certain issues may modify the incentives thrown up by military distributions of power.

Energy ranks high among these, and in the Middle East, a region endowed with immense natural resources, fossil fuels have formed the backbone of home economies and exports for as long as current states have existed. That the region was assumed to contain the lion's share of energy resources has also shaped the way outside powers have approached it. These resources represented both an essential part of economic security at home as well as a valuable asset to be denied to rivals. Although the stark incentives of the early Cold War no longer hold because energy production and consumption has diversified across the world, the basic dynamic remains in place. The Middle East still holds the world's largest proven reserves, with an established infrastructure and cheap to-market prices. The producing nations of the region may have achieved a beneficiary level of institutionalisation in the export relationship through organs like OPEC, and China may soon become the regions largest export destination; the United States meanwhile apparently continues towards self sufficiency, yet energy security in the Middle East continues to be a major driver of

[92] Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, *Power and Interdependence: World Politics in Transition*, Little, Brown, 1977

foreign policy among the great powers, and certainly was leading up to and during the 1990s.[93]

In all this it is important therefore to understand and attempt to pinpoint the role of energy in foreign policy and how the distribution of power or capabilities within this issue come to bear on foreign policy making. This in turn belies the common trope that energy is simply a fundamental security interest that states will pursue no matter what the cost, even war. The real significance of energy as a structural variable is to be found in investigating the ways in which distributions of supply and demand, technological and trade conditions, and individual states' energy-related ambitions can mitigate conflictual relations and lead to cooperation and not just the ways in which it leads to conflict.

As with the other structural planes outlined in previous sections (global and regional), foreign policy incentives are affected by change in the distribution of power and capabilities among states. In terms of energy and the relations between Turkey and Northern Iraq, the major structural changes that emerged over the 1990s (and will be investigated in Chapter 4) relate to Turkey's growing demand for energy, the collapse of its traditional energy relations with Iraq, and changes to the relative position of the KRG as a potential energy exporter. This situation would develop from a status-quo that had seen an important energy relationship develop between Turkey and central Iraq. This relationship was strongly tilted towards Iraq in terms of the balance of power in resources. However, Turkey could offset this to a considerable degree as an important importer, route to market, and partner in infrastructure to the Iraqi energy industry.

Turkey itself has negligible amounts of oil reserves. Natural gas deposits, considering the size of the population and economy, are also minimal. Turkey has therefore come to rely on energy imports, and as its economy has increased so too has this dependency. Where it does not have the advantages of some of its Middle Eastern neighbours in terms of reserves, Turkey's lot is partially mitigated by its consumer power and geographic position. As long as fossil fuels continue to make up the bulk of global energy consumption, as long as Turkey's surrounding regions continue to hold

[93] See Gawdat Bahgat, "Global Energy Outlook: Opportunities and Challenges", *Perceptions*, Autumn 2014, Volume XIX, Number 3, pp. 5-14

significant resources (the Middle East is not the only one) and as long as the current export practices and technologies, broadly pipelines and ports, continue their current trends, Turkey is uniquely placed to become not just an energy consumer and corridor but also a hub - a decisive player in the market.[94] As her economic clout has increased this potential has not been lost on Turkish leaders, past and present, and has become a driving ambition, not just in policy but, as we shall see in the next chapter, in producing concrete trade deals and infrastructure projects, initially with the Iraqi authorities in Baghdad, but more recently with Iraq's Kurdish regional authorities. Turkey, although not favoured in the distribution of power-as-resources in the energy issue, wielded considerable power as an energy consumer and potential transit or hub nation.

For Iraq's Kurds the economic benefits of Iraq's energy resources had been kept well out of their reach by Baghdad's central government. In 1975, following the Algiers Agreement ending Iraq's hostilities with Iran and thus Iran's support of Iraqi Kurds against Baghdad, the Iraqi regime had instigated a programme of "Arabisation", especially in oil rich areas such as Kirkuk, evicting the Kurdish population and replacing them with poorer Arabs from the South.[95] In the mid-1980s, when Iran once again began to patronise Kurdish forces in Iraq against the central government, the Iraqi regime had taken efforts to protect the oil infrastructure and pipelines from attack by the Kurds, and maintain it firmly within their control even as they lost much of the rest of the Kurdish territory.[96] Thus Iraq's Kurds, up until the 1990s had been denied a role in the energy calculations between Turkey and Iraq. Indeed, it would not be until after the second American intervention in Iraq in 2003 that they were able to establish themselves as a formal player with a say in infrastructure and export projects in the energy field. Nevertheless, the 1990s represented, as we shall see in Chapter 4, the breakdown of the traditional energy relationship between Turkey and Iraq, as well as the emergence of Iraq's Kurds as an informal black-market player in this field, increasingly aware of the potential the lucrative energy market held for their struggle for autonomy.

In terms of trade, similar considerations were at play. Turkey had been one of Iraq's largest trading partners with total trade between the two in the late 1980s, the years

[94] Mert Bilgin, "Energy and Turkey's Foreign Policy: State Strategy, Regional Cooperation and Private Sector Involvement", *Turkish Policy Quarterly*, Vol. 9 No. 2, pp. 81-92, (pp. 90-92)
[95] Charles Tripp, *A History of Iraq*, Cambridge University Press, 2007 (p. 206)
[96] ibid. (p. 235)

leading up to sanctions, totalling around $3 billion a year. Turkey also benefitted from its position as a transit state with trucks transferring goods from Turkish ports over the Iraqi border.[97] All of this coincided with Turkey's new economic orientation that had been spearheaded by Turgut Özal in the over the decade. This saw Turkey begin the economic transformation that would see it emerge into what Richard Rosecrance would term a "trading state".[98] That is a state that recognises the near parity of economic and military power and sets economic development, especially through foreign trade, as a major national priority. As we shall see in Chapter 4, the structural shocks brought on by the Gulf War, and sanctions against Iraq forced Turkey to find a new approach to its trade relations with Iraq, one that would increasingly recognise the potential role of its Kurdish neighbours, and the shift in balance of power in trade issues in their favour.

Alongside energy and trade, one further issue should be addressed that has a perhaps inordinate weight on the distribution of power and influence among states. This is the refugee issue, specifically the movement of vast numbers of refugee and internally displaced peoples across borders or within state territories, creating powerful incentives for states to respond whether with internal or foreign policy. Kelly M. Greenhill, in a book on the subject, argues that mass migration has become a major motivator, if not tool, of foreign policy over the past century.[99] This means that humanitarian crises which result in massive population movements have been manipulated, exploited and even instigated with foreign policy goals in mind. States have used these crises to coerce other target states to act in ways they may otherwise not. States have also become increasingly aware of, if not susceptible to, this kind of manipulation. This was a particularly salient concern for Turkey with regards to developments in Iraq in the period that will be discussed in the next chapter. In 1988, Saddam Hussein's retribution on the Kurdish parties for their alliance with Iran during the Iran-Iraq war left 1.5 million people displaced within the Kurdish region, aside from up to 180,000 dead. Although Turkey only received 63,000 of the displaced as refugees, Ankara was keenly aware of the potential effects of the influx on its own

[97] "Trade in Turkey: Bridging Maneuvers," *EIU Business Middle East*, Economist Intelligence Unit May 1, 2002
[98] Richard N. Rosecrance, *The Rise of the Trading State: Commerce and Conquest in the Modern World*, Basic Books, 1986
[99] Kelly M. Greenhill, *Weapons of Mass Migration: Forced Displacement, Coercion, and Foreign Policy*, Cornell University Press, 2011

political stability and national security, not least with regard to its Kurdish population and the threat of PKK terrorism.[100] This is an area where Turkey, as a refuge destination, has felt the distribution of power weigh strongly against it, regardless of the cause of the forced migration, whether consciously aimed at affecting Turkey or not. Here leaders' threat assessments have connected the issue to wider, vital security concerns. In 1988 and again in 1991, Turkey's FPE was forced to adopt drastic foreign policy measures.

The three issues outlined above, energy, trade, and refugee flows, represent areas of structural change that may have an undue, or unusual, degree of influence on foreign policy decision making on both sides of the relationship between Turkey and Northern Iraq. This undue influence may be partly due to the infrastructural and institutional ties that were established in the areas of energy and trade, or due to the perceived security vulnerability of one side in issues such as refugees and migration. Changes in the distribution of power across these issues are therefore more likely to effect re-evaluations of wider policy orientations on both sides. As we saw the pre-1990s status quo advantaged the central Baghdad government in energy as resources but was counter-balanced by Turkey as a significant importer and export route, as well as with her value as a trade partner and source of goods for the Iraqi economy. This balance of power would be severely upset after 1990 as Iraq was placed under sanction and became unable to exercise its power within the energy field and Turkey was forced to seek other partners in this issue as well as in trade, bringing it closer to Iraq's Kurdish authorities. Turkey's vulnerability in the migration issue could not be offset and refugee crisis such as that of 1988 and later in 1991 would lead to drastic policy measures that would seem to contradict wider strategic goals.

3.3 Historical Context of Domestic Variables: Strategic Culture and Threat Perceptions

In the second part of Chapter 2, I discussed the neoclassical realist approach to internal variables in the process of foreign policy formation and implementation. I concluded that the most decisive domestic factor that affects the formation of foreign policy is threat assessment. I argued that many of the indicators associated with a state's

[100] Kerim Yildiz, *The Kurds in Iraq: The Past, Present and Future*, Pluto Books, 2004 (pp. 30-31)

strategic culture will also affect its threat perception, but that we also needed to look at the role of groups or personalities within the FPE and their own influence on the process of threat perception and determining foreign policy responses. Beyond perceiving threats, I also concluded that the effectiveness or efficiency of the FPE in formulating and implementing rational policy would be influenced by the coherence of domestic players within the FPE. In this section, I will outline the general strategic culture that scholars have perceived in Turkish foreign policy and mention some considerations for the main players within the FPE and their influence on threat perception. After Turkey I will turn to Northern Iraq. Although it is premature in the 1990s, let alone before, to talk of a foreign policy executive, I will give a brief outline of the historical background and politics of the main groups that would come to lead the KRG's foreign policy. While attempting to cover similar point as those applied to Turkey (strategic culture, influential players, etc.), this section will of necessity be less structured. Having covered strategic culture and given a basic outline of traditional FPE players for both sides of the relationship as historical background in this chapter, I will turn to the FPE's internal coherence, its main players and main turning points in the domestic configuration for both sides throughout the 1990s in Chapter 4.

3.3.1 Turkey

Ali L. Karaosmanoğlu, perhaps the foremost authority on the subject, suggests that Turkish security culture has its roots in three major historical dynamics. Firstly, Turkey, and before it the Ottoman Empire, has always rooted its grand strategy in *realpolitik*.[101] However, the predominantly offensive *realpolitik* of the early Empire developed into a predominantly defensive one in the late Empire that has persisted into the Republic. Second, a process of Westernisation, that again traces its roots into the Ottoman Empire has left its mark on Turkish national security culture. Finally, the interplay of civil-military relations, and the military's own particular (yet evolving), conception of strategic priorities and for the most part overbearing influence on security policymaking are all important aspects of strategic culture in the Turkish context.

[101] Ali L. Karaosmanoğlu, "The Evolution of the National Security Culture and the Military in Turkey", *Journal of International Affairs*, Vol 54, No 1, 2000, pp. 199-216

The realpolitik element within Turkey's strategic culture, cited by Karaosmanoğlu, changed after the peak of the Ottoman Empire, around the end of the 17th century, from a predominantly offensive approach to a defensive one. Balance of power was a strategic element in both approaches, although with different emphases. During expansion the Empire pursued balancing to maximise its own offensive power advantage against its main rival the Habsburg Empire. Later, the decline of the Ottoman Empire as a major European power into the 19th century would see it employ balancing defensively as a way to preserve the Empire's territorial integrity against a host of aggressive outside powers. The defensive realpolitik persisted into the republican age as "the fear of loss of territory and the fear of abandonment" were strengthened by the aggressive partition that was proposed in the Treaty of Sevres. The historical experiences of Greek, Balkan, Arab, Armenian and Kurdish nationalisms were also viewed through this lens of threats to territorial integrity.[102] The PKK's terrorism, with its separatist and nationalist claim, thus also impinges on a major defensive pillar in Turkish strategic culture.

The second element of Turkish security culture cited by Karaosmanoğlu, "Westernisation", also has its roots in Ottoman times. In the 19th century, the aim of policy became to "avoid being an object of European power rivalries as a land ripe for partition".[103] Alongside its defensive realpolitik Karaosmanoğlu argues that the Empire's drive to integrate into the European state system and its internal "Westernisation" reforms had the same aim. The first process, as yet unfinished, began with the Empire's admission into the Concert of Europe in 1856 and continues in Turkey's membership in NATO, the Council of Europe and European Customs Union, as well as ongoing attempts to become an EU member state. Turkey thus developed a relationship with Western states based on "reciprocity and diplomacy", and governed by an international law that upheld territorial sovereignty, equality among states and bilateralism. The second process of Westernisation, internal reforms, ties into Karaosmanoğlu's third major influencer on security culture and the special role of the military.

Beginning in Ottoman times and continuing into the Republican era the primary candidate of modernisation efforts to ensure parity with Western states were the

[102] ibid. (pp. 202-203)
[103] ibid. (p. 204)

military institutions. In turn, the military became the engine of Western oriented reforms and guardian of the process. As Karaosmanoğlu writes:

> "The recognition of the superiority of European military techniques and organization prepared the necessary ground for cultural, administrative and political borrowings from the West. The modern army needed officers trained in Westernized military schools, where, to a certain extent, they became familiar not only with the new military techniques, but also with the Western way of life and Western culture and ideas. Thus, the military emerged as the prime Westernizing force in modern Turkish history."[104]

While a suspicion of Western intrigue aimed at Turkey lingered on after the First World War, the aim of the Republican elite and military was to create "a nation-state with a Western type of polity as soon as the danger of Western occupation was removed".[105]

The military's influence on Turkish politics has evolved alongside the deepening process of Westernisation to reflect not just security interests but a concern with political systems. This has led the military to see itself as the guardian of secularism and national unity. While it has undertaken three direct interventions into Turkish politics to safeguard these principles it has also ensured that under less extreme circumstances its influence has been enshrined in constitutional mechanisms. At the same time the genuine commitment to Westernisation has led to increasing democratisation and has also meant a gradual acceptance of civilian power on behalf of the military. As we shall see in the next chapter the decade of the 1990s represented a decisive time in the story of Turkish civil-military relations as a number of important steps were taken to tilt the balance in favour of the civilian regime under Özal at the beginning of the decade, while the end of the decade saw the military reaffirm itself as its fundamental interests came under threat. Thus while subscribing to and upholding the nation's strategic culture with significant influence in foreign policy the military has over time limited its decisive interventions into internal politics to respond to what it views as its fundamental enemies. These according to Karaosmanoğlu are "militant Islamist movements that threaten the secular character of the state" and "the Kurdish separatist movement represented by the PKK".[106]

While Karaosmanoğlu underlines the special and evolving role of the military in upholding Turkey's strategic culture, many other scholars concur with him on the basic

[104] ibid. (p. 206)
[105] ibid. (p. 207)
[106] ibid. (p. 213)

elements of the culture itself. Oral Sander, in a chapter on continuity in Turkish foreign policy, writes that the main themes of Turkey's republican foreign policy can be categorised under three general headings.[107] Firstly, related to the legacy of Atatürk and the Turkish War of Independence. This implies the longstanding drive to emulate the European nation-state model, and Atatürk's pronouncements on peaceful foreign policy, independence, and creating a modern civilisation, all national goals that have been instrumental in shaping Turkey's Western-oriented foreign policy. Secondly, Turkey's geographic position and persistent sense of vulnerability. This has meant security and national integrity has always been highest on the agenda. The Anatolian peninsula's position at the intersection of multiple continents has made it the focus of civilizational conquest and struggle for millennia. This lends a sense of persistent insecurity to any state founded on the peninsula, something that is equally true for modern Turkey. More concretely, according to Sander, the modern state began life sharing borders with a number of states that were under direct control of foreign hostile powers, Britain and France; and others, which would soon be under control of the Soviet Union. This direct border with the Soviet Union became a constant source of concern during the Cold War, alongside concerns over control of the Bosphorus Straights, the militant stance of Middle Eastern neighbours such as Syria and Iraq, and the imperatives of its alliance with the West and key role in NATO. All this meant that security and countering immediate threat were high on the foreign policy agenda and underlay strategic thinking. The third major theme in historic Turkish foreign policy, has been (alongside most world states) the increasing economic factor. This attests to the recognition that the first two sets of interests, independence and regional security, cannot be successfully addressed without economic success.[108]

Mustafa Aydin identifies six core elements as the motivators of Turkey's foreign policy.[109] Firstly, security from external aggression due to its geo-strategic position beside the traditionally aggressive Soviet Union, and conflictual areas of the Balkans and Middle East. Second, the desire to achieve and maintain sovereignty and economic independence (which were somewhat trumped by the need for anti-Soviet alliances

[107] Oral Sander, 'Türkiye'nin Dış Politikasında Sürekliliğin Nedenleri', Melek Fırat (der), *Türkiye'nin Dış Politikası*, Imge Kitabevi, 2006, (pp. 71-99)
[108] ibid.
[109] Mustafa Aydin, "Determinants of Turkish Foreign Policy: Historical Framework and Traditional Inputs", *Middle Eastern Studies*, Oct 1999, Vol. 35, No. 4, pp. 152-186

during the Cold War). Thirdly, a long standing belief in the achievements of Western progress has led security to become linked to belonging to the 'West' and following its development path. Fourth, economic development, as "a source of strengthened power for the nation". The other two relate to Turkey's commitment to maintaining its standing in the international arena, in terms of abiding by international law, essential to claim legitimacy in its policies and actions.

While these are generalisations of the baseline strategic culture there are other processes that affect the formation of policy in relation to threat assessment. These were discussed from a theoretical perspective in the previous chapter. We saw that the most parsimonious of these theories attempt to explain novel policy choices with reference to collective cognitive psychological perception processes that influence the assessment of events. Thus we had Robert Jervis's contention that leaders are affected in their assessment of threat by: their own constructions as to what valid sources of information are; by comparing new events to those from historical experience and drawing conclusions; by judging others intentions and unity of action, and finally; by judging their own role in another actors' intentions.[110]

One major contention in analysis concerning such cognitive short-cuts within the Turkish FPE has been to do with attitudes towards the Middle East. Scholars tend to argue that historically formed prejudices have had a significant effect on Turkey's foreign policy decisions vis-a-vis the Middle East. Philip Robins argues that the Turkish elite's reckoning of their Arab neighbours, which was perhaps shaped by the historical experience of empire and Arab revolt, and by ineffectual relationships such as the Baghdad Pact, resulted in a notable disinterest. This is both in the region as a strategic backdrop and indeed in a true assessment of the motivations and interests of the Arab states. This disinterest manifested in foreign policy failures where, "Ankara misjudged the aspirations of Arabs from Algeria to Egypt"[111] in pushing its British backed alliance during the Baghdad Pact. But, the disinterest also resulted in some successes. As Robins points out during the Iran-Iraq war Turkey was able to benefit economically from its position of neutrality. On the other hand, Oral Sander argues that Turkey's foreign policy toward the Middle East was shaped mostly by its position

[110] Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*, Princeton University Press, 1976
[111] Philip Robins, *Suits and Uniforms: Turkish Foreign Policy Since the Cold War,* Hurst & Company, London, 2003, (p. 99)

within the Western alliance and concern for Soviet expansion in the region. Thus it was not necessarily based on neglect, but on a keen awareness of the potential threat emanating from militant states such as Iraq and Syria and the influence of the Soviet Union. Turkey was therefore more inclined to move only in ways that reflected the policy of the broader anti-Soviet coalition to which it belonged, especially given the instability it witnessed in its Arab neighbours.[112]

Meliha Benli Altunışık writes specifically about Turkish strategic and security culture toward the Middle East in a 2007 article.[113] She identifies four "entrenched norms" in Turkey's strategic culture towards the Middle East. The first two of these reflect the wider security culture outlined above and represent Turkey's inclination towards status quo policies and defensive *realpolitik*. The last two norms are related more specifically towards the Middle East. First is the "inclination of Turkey's foreign and security policy makers of not to get involved in the affairs of the region".[114] This reflects an understanding of a region that is characterised by conflict, and which stands beyond Turkey's primary goal of orienting itself to Europe. According to Altunışık this has meant that Turkey's interventions in the region, although increasingly activist, have taken place in the context of its Western oriented policies (such as earlier interventions in the context of Cold War rivalries), or because it has felt no alternative but to intervene (such as in the Gulf War of the 1990s). Finally, Turkey's experience of transition from Empire to Republic, and the history of resistance to outside attempts to reduce and divide its territory have had a profound impact. With the aborted Treaty of Sevres at the heart of this traumatic historical memory, Kurdish separatism has taken a special significance in this aspect. As Altunışık writes:

> "Not only was the early history of the modern Turkish republic marked by a series of Kurdish rebellions against the unitary, centralizing and secular regime in Ankara, but the rebellions were thought to have an external dimension in the form of British support as part of its imperial design."

While these norms have underpinned Turkish security culture over the decades Altunışık also notes how competing or revised cultures have made inroads more recently. On the one hand, Islamist politicians have emphasised Turkey's natural role in the Middle East drawing on Ottomanist sentiment. On the other hand, Turgut Özal

[112] Oral Sander, 'Türkiye'nin Dış Politikasında Sürekliliğin Nedenleri', Melek Fırat (der), *Türkiye'nin Dış Politikası, 3.Baskı*, (Ankara: Imge Kitabevi, 2006), pp. 71-99 (pp. 79-82)
[113] Meliha Benli Altunışık, "Turkey's Security Culture and Policy Towards Iraq", *Perceptions*, Spring 2007, pp. 69-88
[114] ibid. (p. 70)

brought an economic emphasis to Turkish foreign policy that stressed the value of cooperative economic relations with Middle Eastern states. As we shall see in chapter 4, these competing norms would enter into direct conflict with the traditional security culture, especially as upheld by the military, during the 1990s.

Another potential influence on decision makers' cognitive processes is ideology, although as argued in the first chapter, its effect should not be overstated in the realm of foreign policy. For the Turkish elite, the ideology commonly known as Kemalism, ubiquitous in the security establishment and bureaucracy, represented a combination of the strategic culture outlined above and an unrestrained drive towards the "West", as well as an apparent disdain for the "Şark/Orient". While the shortfalls of foregoing a proper assessment of the Middle East due to its focus on Europe are more measurable, the variance the Westward drive has produced from structural incentives is not so clear. After all, it could be argued that structural change had produced the ideology. In fact, Sedat Laçiner argues that Kemalism experienced a transformation after the 1981 coup:

> "[T]he 1980 Coup's Kemalism was very different from previous versions of Kemalism. It was a neutral and pragmatic ideology lacking unchangeable principles, instead arguing that what was good for the Turkish nation was good for Kemalism. Secondly, this new Kemalism, contrary to Inönü's autocracy, was loyal to democracy. Third, unlike Ecevit's Kemalism, it was pro-Western and pro-American. For Evren, the coup leader, the United States was the most important ally and the Soviet Union still posed the greatest threat to Turkish security. Finally, this Kemalism was capitalist in orientation viewing Turkey's future in the capitalist rather than socialist world."[115]

Often cited as having opposed the official ideology, president Turgut Özal's inclinations were, if Laçiner's description is to be taken at face value, in fact not too far from this revised Kemalism. In any case, Özal's "ideology" advocated something of a cultural and economic opening towards the Middle East, as well as a first recognition that minority issues need not necessarily be so securitised. Later too, the Islamist party of Necmettin Erbakan, in government in the later part of the decade, brought a conscious drive toward revising relations with Muslim states and the Third World that took the Kemalist ideology head on. However, in a climate of unstable domestic politics and the resurgence of the security establishment, it could be argued that this rival ideology did less in terms of producing alternative foreign policies and

[115] Sedat Laciner, "Turgut Özal Period in Turkish Foreign Policy: Özalism", *USAK Yearbook*, Vol. 2, 2009, pp. 153-205 (pp. 154-155)

threat assessments, and more in terms of confusing the general process of coherent policy formation.

The core of the FPE in Turkey during the 1990s remained (as it had been since the establishment of the Republic) the group of 'state actors' that among them would set the national interest and were responsible for threat perception. William Hale defines these as composing, "the president, prime minister, and foreign minister, plus the commanders of the armed forces (brought together since 1961 in the National Security Council) and the professional diplomats in the foreign ministry."[116] These, of course enjoyed different and varying levels of influence on foreign policy formation and threat perception.

Philip Robins also identifies the same set as the 'primary players' in foreign policy formation. Expanding on the rubric of 'government', he includes the various ministers, prime minister and other influencers. According to Robins, "the proliferation of cabinet posts, as a way of creating more senior patronage for party leaders" in Turkey has often meant that the 'formal' figures are supplemented by other decision makers within the government who do not hold specifically foreign affairs portfolios.[117] Also, according to Robbins, the government in Turkey especially during the 1990s, tended to suffer from regular bouts of 'emasculation'; that is, effectively being left outside the foreign policy decision making process. As we shall see in chapter 4, this was primarily due to the "fragmentation of political parties and the necessity since 1991 of coalition government" which in turn, caused party leaders to bypass the traditional cabinet mechanisms in favour of "government by cabals, cliques, and committees". A further limitation on the government's role in foreign policy making, was the pervasive influence of the Kemalist elite, which spread throughout many institutions, most prominently in the military but at a 'secondary-level' in the bureaucracy with which the government of the day had to work. These ultimately laid down "the guidelines of grand strategy".[118] It was this elite that were most loyal to the traditional strategic culture laid out above.

[116] William M. Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy, 1774-2000*, Frank Cass, 2001, (p. 205)
[117] Philip Robins, *Suits and Uniforms: Turkish Foreign Policy Since the Cold War,* Hurst & Company, London, 2003, (p. 69)
[118] ibid. (p. 69)

The next decisive player in foreign policy formation is represented by the presidency. This role was of the highest importance throughout Özal's tenure in the early 1990s, although even his influence was reduced by the end of his term. The inherent ambiguity in the Turkish constitution of 1982 technically grants significant power to the president. It would seem that the function of the president's ability to assert the role as well as the relative strength of other players in the FPE, determine the relevance of the presidency. As prime minister in the 1980s, Özal had been influential in trade and economic policy while the security establishment dealt with security and foreign affairs.[119] Nevertheless, Ali Balcı argues that Özal was able to become almost the sole determiner of foreign policy by the end of his premiership and into his presidency.

By way of the next important FPE player, Robins provides an overview of the Foreign Ministry, as Turkey's bureaucratic crown jewel. Drawn traditionally from a narrow elite and priding itself in capacity, skills and efficiency, the Foreign Ministry has long stood as a powerful player in its own right, with appointments constitutionally protected from the political realm. With regard to its immovability, Robins notes that Özal's unique personal diplomatic missions were partly a response to his inability to control the Foreign Ministry's diplomats. Nevertheless, it is interesting in the case of Turkey's relations with Iraq, that Robins also points out that the Foreign Ministry had traditionally focused its considerable capacity on its 'Western' operations. This meant that Middle Eastern (excluding Israel) and other postings were often neglected and not afforded the same degree of attention and precision by the Foreign Ministry.[120] Finally, and most characteristically for Turkey, the role of the military, or 'security establishment', is of utmost importance.

Since 1961, and reinforced in the 1982 post-coup constitution, the security establishment's prime organ of influence over foreign policy has been the National Security Council (NSC). This is, and was then even more, a highly influential body tasked with 'advising' the state on national security policy. In practice, especially in times of weaker governments, it has been able to impose its view practically

[119] Ali Balcı, *Türkiye Dış Politikası: İlkeler, Aktörler, Uygulamalar*, Etkileşim Yayınları, 2013 (pp. 160-163)
[120] Philip Robins, *Suits and Uniforms: Turkish Foreign Policy Since the Cold War,* Hurst & Company, London, 2003 (p. 73)

unhindered, at least in certain key spheres.[121] These relate to national security issues both at home and abroad, the most significant of which in recent times has been the Kurdish insurgency in the country's South East. This would be an issue that would come to the fore in the 1990s. According to Gencer Özcan, "political issues pertinent to identity were rapidly oversecuritized."[122] This reinforced the general securitisation of foreign policy, and indeed internal issues such as PKK terrorism in Turkey. Özcan writes:

> "In August 1989, the General Staff had delivered a landmark statement indicating that the threat was coming from within as well as outside Turkey. The decisions taken in the National Security Council's March 1990 meeting heralded a new era in the struggle against the PKK. Accordingly, a governmental degree went into force in April 1990 taking extra measures to deal with separatist threat. In 1992 the *National Security Policy Document* pinpointed Kurdish separatism as the major source of threat."[123]

As we shall see in chapter 4, the changing weight of the military's influence throughout the 1990s meant that these fundamental threat perceptions had a varied effect on foreign policy making.

As I have outlined above, the Turkish FPE is primarily made up of the government (with its various foreign affairs related ministers and informal players), the security establishment, the bureaucracy in the form of the foreign ministry, and the president. A picture emerges of an FPE largely dominated by the military establishment, with a notable hiatus from this standard state of affairs under Özal's late premiership and presidency. As we shall see in the next chapter, despite beginning the decade with a strong tilt towards the president, the main arena of contestation returned to the area between government and the security establishment as the decade wore on. The bureaucracy initially played a facilitating role ensuring smooth proceedings in foreign affairs, for the first four years or so of the decade, but as coalition government began to stall and break apart, the security establishment, took an overbearing, yet embattled, role in the process. Each of these players were able, according to their degree of influence, to contribute their own vision of threat and the appropriate response to the process of formation and implementation of foreign policy.

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[121] Although it is the primary organ of their expression, the views of the NSC were also reflected in the wider security establishment, including the secret services, and the Kemalist elite that dominated the bureaucracy, making their recommendations all the more persuasive.

[122] Gencer Özcan, "Turkey's Changing Neighbourhood Policy," Turkish Yearbook of International Relations, 35 (2004), pp. 1-15 (p. 4)

[123] ibid., (p. 3)

The process of threat perception was mediated by a security oriented strategic culture, shaped by Turkey's founding ideals, geographic and economic imperatives. This strategic culture was basically held to by the dominant player in the FPE, the security establishment. At the same time, other actors in the FPE such as the presidency, where they were able, may have brought more radical deviance from the standard threat assessment process.

3.3.2 Northern Iraq: an FPE in the making

Come the early 1990s it was premature to speak of a foreign policy executive in Northern Iraq. Nevertheless, the embryonic stages of the same phenomena that would define later dynamics in the Iraqi Kurdish FPE were apparent in the history of the emergent Kurdish authorities, who would later build an autonomous state within Iraq. At the heart of that fledgling state, enabling its birth and flourishing, lay security, a semblance of which Iraqi Kurdish groups had long provided. However, while a territory emerged as an arena of political contestation in Northern Iraq, come the 1990s the provision of security was essentially divided between two power blocs, both vying for control, ultimately through violence. Thus effectively two factions emerged within the region, each with its own armed force, or, in the Kurdish terminology, peshmerga.

It is vital to understand the origins of the peshmerga as without it there would be no Kurdish authority in Northern Iraq. It is from the leadership of this fighting force and its associated political parties that the future FPE would be composed. It is also thanks to its capability as a security provider, the basic requirement for a state, that outside powers came to treat the Kurdish authorities as an international actor in their own right. Peshmerga translates from Kurdish as 'those who face death'. This fighting force, which has operated with varying degrees of formality and unity under different historical conditions, has been at the core of the Kurdish national struggle since the 1940s, with roots that go even further back and stretch around the region.

After Iraqi independence, the peshmerga's function soon developed as the primary defence force for the various Kurdish groupings in Northern Iraq against the aggressive attempts of the central Baghdad government to impose its control. A leadership structure emerged to coordinate the units of this fighting force made up of recruits from various tribal and political groupings. The legendary figure of Sheikh Mahmud Barzinji, a Qadiriyah Sufi leader, had been central during the British mandate of Iraq,

first recognised as a tributary ruler of Sulaimani province and then ferocious rebel and leader of numerous uprisings against the British. Later, during the early years of Iraqi independence, resistance against the central government came to be spearheaded by the Barzani clan from the town of Barzan, near Erbil. Sheikh Ahmad Barzani, clan chieftain, led successful campaigns against other Kurdish tribes bringing many under Barzani control, as well as continuing the armed struggle against central Iraqi forces, which were, in the early 1930s, still supported by the British. His younger brother, Mustafa, became a well respected commander, and when the Barzanis were forced out of Iraq with their followers they entered Iran, where they supported the Soviet-backed Mahabad Kurdish Republic against the US backed Iranian monarchy.[124]

Mustafa Barzani would eventually return to Iraq after the demise of the short-lived Mahabad Republic and a stint in exile in the Soviet Union. He returned wiser to the politics of competition between international and regional powers, as well as to the currents of nationalist and communist ideologies that were privileging the urban elite over traditional clan structures among the Kurds. The Mahabad experiment had seen the formation of the Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran, and Barzani, as a respected military and tribal leader, had convinced various Iraqi Kurdish groups, including Kurdish sections of the powerful Iraqi Communist Party, of the need for a similar structure in Iraq. This they duly formed, with 32 delegates, a central committee, secretaries, vice-presidents and Mulla Mustafa Barzani as president in exile.

By the time Barzani returned to Iraq from the Soviet Union, the KDP had become the decisive political body representing Iraq's Kurds, at times allying itself with the central government, but mostly in conflict. Mustafa Barzani remained the leading figure in the KDP, but by the end of the 60's, a bitter ideological dispute and power struggle had broken out between Barzani, the clansman, and Ibrahim Ahmad and Jalal Talabani, heavyweights of the leftist urban faction. Talabani was popular not just for his intellectual status, but also for the initiative he had shown in the Kirkuk and Suleimani areas when he had taken charge of the battle fronts in the latest conflict with the Iraqi government. Suleimani was also the hometown of Ibrahim Ahmad, who had been an important player in the Iranian KDP, and was instrumental in bringing the leftist Kurdish factions into the new Iraqi iteration of the party. As the competition between

[124] Kerim Yildiz, *The Kurds in Iraq: The Past, Present and Future*, Pluto Books, 2004 (pp. 15-17)

the two factions escalated Mulla Mustafa eventually prevailed, forcing Ahmed, Talabani and thousands of followers into Iranian exile. Things would get worse over the following years as Barzani sought Iranian and Israeli patronage, and the Talabani and Ahmed factions made overtures to the new Ba'athist government.[125] The situation was reversed after the 1974-5 war with the Iraqi government. Barzani was routed to Iran, a violent settlement was imposed on the Kurds with mass clearances, population transfers and massacres. In the wake of this Jalal Talabani announced a new party from Damascus, the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, and with his supporters moved in to fill the vacuum left by Barzani and the KDP.[126] The rivalry between the two parties did not abate. There were frequent armed clashes until it became clear that the ire of Saddam Hussein, stoked with international backing during the Iran-Iraq war, was to be unleashed on the Iranian-backed Kurds in the form of the notorious "al-Anfal" campaign.

By 1987 Saddam Hussein had separated the command of military units fighting the Kurds from the army and put them directly under Ba'ath party control, appointing his cousin, Ali Hassan al-Majid to the position that would earn him the epithet 'Chemical Ali'. The two thousand ground troops and supporting air power that were unleashed on the Kurds as part of the 'Al-Anfal Campaign' destroyed over 4,000 villages, displaced one million of the 3.5 million population, and killed up to 180,000 of them in battle, concentration camps and with chemical weapons, which were used in the notorious Halabja attack where up to 5,000 civilians were killed. Further, Saddam Hussein moved to impose a policy of 'Arabisation' on the cleared territories, forcibly relocating Kurds to provinces in the south of Iraq and luring poor Arabs to populate their towns.[127] This was of major consequence, especially in strategic locations, such as those containing valuable oil resources, notably the city and province of Kirkuk. Nevertheless, the Kurds had briefly set their differences aside and united in the face of this brutal onslaught. The KDP (now led by Mulla Mustafa's son Massoud Barzani), the PUK and other smaller parties met in Tehran to form an alliance, the Kurdistan Front – and so would enter the 1990s.

[125] Charles Tripp, *A History of Iraq*, Cambridge University Press, 2007 (159-160)
[126] Kerim Yildiz, *The Kurds in Iraq: The Past, Present and Future*, Pluto Books, 2004 (p. 24)
[127] Ofra Bengio, *The Kurds of Iraq: Building a State Within a State*, Lynne Rienner, 2012 (pp. 177-191)

From the above historical outline some basic inferences can be made about the strategic culture that developed among the increasingly permanent authorities in the Kurdish region of Iraq. While radically opposed through much of the 1990s, both the Barzani and Talabani factions traced their roots to the historical KDP. In its first instance the party was pitched by the Soviet Union against US-backed monarchies in Iran and Iraq. With the Iraqi Barzani clan gaining a central role in the party with the figure of Mulla Mustafa Barzani, the end of the Mahabad republic and his return to Iraq, the main focus became the fight for autonomy from Baghdad. A cycle emerged in the relations of the KDP with the Iraqi central government, as new regimes in Baghdad would appear more amenable to Kurdish demands before resorting to outright repression, often resulting in armed conflict between Kurdish peshmerga and government forces. While the KDP, lead by the tribal and relatively politically conservative Barzani clan, only delicately held together a wide spectrum of factions, the pattern of conflict with Baghdad also produced a common set of demands from early on. In 1970 an unprecedented peace agreement was put on the table that seemed to embody a baseline of Kurdish aspirations. These included Kurdish self-rule, recognition of the bi-national character of Iraq, political representation in the central government, language and other cultural and civil rights. In Kurdish eyes at least, it also appeared to grant a territorial definition of Kurdistan, one that included the oil-rich region of Kirkuk. Territory and the exclusive right to protect that territory were clearly vital interests of the KDP. By 1974 the agreement had gone nowhere and the Iraqi government under Saddam Hussein unilaterally imposed a much weaker settlement on the Kurds, which also definitively excluded Kirkuk. What followed was all out war with a new status-quo, Saddam Hussein. Throughout the 1974-75 war, as in previous wars, the KDP relied on aid from Iran, and to a degree Israel, in its struggle against the Iraqi government. A pattern of enmity with Baghdad and outside patronage, especially at that time from Iran, emerged that would be repeated again in the 1980s as the Iran-Iraq War got underway.

Thus, at the point before it decisively split into two parties, a number of strategic interests and predilections can be noted with the KDP. The organization was clearly able and determined to project military force and be held responsible for its own security. Meanwhile, the particular threat emerging from Baghdad under Saddam Hussein would be confirmed again and again over the following two decades, leading

right up to the 1990s. The Baghdadi government's practice of using demographics, Arabization, as a weapon to thwart Kurdish ambitions, especially in the oil-rich region of Kirkuk, as well as its ruthless military tactics, saw the Kurds double down on security and ethnic issues as fundamental interests. The KDP meanwhile developed certain defensive, and offensive, strategic cultures too. In particular, the tendency to seek outside support in its pursuits, which in turn left it open to manipulation by foreign powers. Exemplary of this was the KDP's historical relations with Iran, that sought to use the Kurds to keep rival Iraq in a constant state of disarray. During the 1970s the United States, at the time an ally of Iran also brought Iraq's Kurds into its orbit.[128] Israel also proved itself as a benefactor. Nevertheless, the main threat, and incentive to ally, emanated squarely from Baghdad, a perception that had only been reinforced come the beginning of the 1990s after two decades of conflict with the regime of Saddam Hussein. Despite the split in the KDP after the war of 1974-75, the essential elements of this strategic culture would have been shared by both the Talabani and Barzani factions.

As we have seen Iraqi Kurds came to see outside patronage as a crucial tool in their strategic arsenal. Iran, Israel, and the United States. The United States, a global power, brought with it, its influence on regional states, among them a close neighbour, seemingly hostile but largely untested for Iraq's Kurds, the Republic of Turkey.

Turkey chose to engage primarily with Baghdad in its dealings with Iraq, and while it certainly saw Kurdish autonomy across the border as red line not to be crossed, it kept its interactions with the Kurdish authorities there minimal, preferring an exclusive relation with Baghdad. While it did intervene various times in Northern Iraq, the interventions were focused on Kurdish separatist groups active in Turkey and not necessarily allied to either the KDP or PUK. Therefore, it can be assumed that while Iraq's Kurds certainly felt hostility from Turkey, it only saw them as a threat in the context of territorial Iraq. In as much as Baghdad took care of the issue they would be left alone. Nevertheless, Turkey's balanced relations with Baghdad would have indicated to the Kurds that it was not a player to be ignored, a vital potential actor in the region, whether as an opponent or benefactor.

[128] Charles Tripp, *A History of Iraq*, Cambridge University Press, 2007 (p. 203)

As the Kurdish Front came together after Anfal, Turkey's role in the region was ever clearer for Iraq's Kurds. Sixty-three thousand refugees had sought shelter across Turkish borders, relations were straining with Saddam Hussein, while a charismatic Turkish prime minister seemed determined to take an entirely novel approach to his own country's Kurdish unrest.

With these last minute developments in mind Iraqi Kurds would enter the 1990s with a strategic culture based on historic enmity with Bagdad, a heightened sense of physical security and sensitivity to ethnic and demographic issues, as well as population displacement. At the same time they would have a well tried sense of the crucial benefits and potentially serious pitfalls of engaging regional and international patrons, albeit displaying a predilection to take the risk anyway.

3.4 Conclusion

This chapter has provided background on the structural and internal context that governed Turkey and Northern Iraqi relations in the 1990s, and the historical strategic culture that developed on each side.

On the structural global level it has shown how the Cold War had been the major determining factor. At the regional level it investigated peculiarities to the dynamics of the Middle East that need to be taken into account, and also the historical relations of Turkey and the emerging Northern Iraqi Kurdish authorities with other players in the region. I explained why some issues, energy, trade, and migration might need special attention as distributions of power that have particular effects on players' strategic calculations. We saw that Turkey's main orienting factor has been its place in the Western, anti-Soviet alliance, that it has tended to prioritise this drive over deep engagement with its Arab neighbours. In some instances, there are exceptions, for example when the region became coupled with wider Soviet threat as during the 1950s, or in connection to the internal threat of Kurdish separatism that intensified relations with Iraq. Later too, trade and energy relations provided another reason to explore closer relations with Middle Eastern states. Iraq's Kurdish groups found themselves at various times caught up in patron-proxy relations with the superpowers, as well as with regional powers. Their quest for autonomy, dependent on the will of these powers, has only been responded to in as much as it serves those powers' interests.

The second part of the chapter turned to the domestic historical context for foreign policy making in both players. In line with the considerations set out in the previous chapter, this investigated strategic culture and the effects of other cognitive processes on threat perception, and also gave an outline of the traditional make-up and balance between influential players within the FPE. For Turkey, a picture emerged of a well-established strategic culture, based on historical experience, and at times mediated by influential personalities such as with president Turgut Özal starting in the 1980s. As we will see in the next chapter contestation over foreign policy goals would intensify in the 1990s. On the Iraqi Kurdish side, I explained that it would be impossible to speak of an FPE as a distinct determiner of foreign policy in the 1990s as the two main Kurdish parties engaged in a civil war. Nevertheless, I outlined who these players were and how they emerged on the world stage as representatives of a nascent Kurdish government in Northern Iraq and the implications this experience had for strategic culture.

Having covered strategic culture and given a basic outline of traditional FPE players for both sides of the relationship as historical background in this chapter, I will turn to the FPE's internal coherence, its main players and main turning points in the domestic configuration for both sides throughout the 1990s in Chapter 4 before addressing structural change during the decade.

4. INTERNAL FACTORS AND STRUCTURAL CHANGE AND EFFECTS ON TURKEY-NOTHERN IRAQ RELATIONS IN THE 1990s

This chapter will investigate the effects of internal and structural changes in the 1990s on relations between Turkey and Northern Iraq. It will start with an appraisal of domestic conditions on both sides, relating to FPE coherence. Here and especially in the following section on structural change the implications of the strategic culture laid out in the previous chapter will be kept in mind.

After dealing with FPE coherence in the 1990s I will turn to structural change and outline the major events and changes at the global, regional, and issue based levels. The general effects of these changes on the actors involved will be analysed, as well as their specific effects on the attitudes of Turkey and Northern Iraqi authorities toward one another. At each level I have selected the major events or developments that concern both Turkey and Northern Iraq throughout the decade of the 1990s. This decade begins with the end of the Cold War and first Persian Gulf War, and ends before the events of 11 September 2001 that led to the second Invasion of Iraq of 2003.

4.1 FPE coherence in the 1990s

4.1.1 Turkey

Turkey's domestic politics during the 1990s, were characterised by "chronic governmental instability", with no single party winning an overall majority in three elections in 1991, 1995, and 1999.[129] This contrasted with the period of relative stability experienced under Turgut Özal and his Motherland Party (ANAP) which retained majority in parliament from 1983 until 1991. Özal's tenure marked the end of a long period of overt military suzerainty in Turkey that had resulted in coups in 1960, 1971 and 1980. Having served as undersecretary to Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel, responsible for economic reform, Özal was appointed Deputy Prime Minister after the

[129] William M. Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy, 1774-2000*, Frank Cass, 2001 (p. 196)

coup, again responsible for economy. He excelled in this position and brought his penchant for economic liberalisation into his tenure as Prime Minister when his newly formed ANAP party won a surprise majority in the 1983 elections, the first since the military coup. Özal's success in reviving Turkey's economy, a constant strain on political stability, was not the only reason he was able to consolidate his grip on government over the next decade. Commentators cite his overbearing personality, determination and shrewd realism[130], but also, his willingness to recognise cultural and political movements that had long been underrepresented in Turkish politics. His own personal Muslim faith and belief that the Turkish state, while remaining secular, should show greater tolerance toward religion, and his similarly open attitude toward Kurdish identity within Turkey, were novel at the top level of Turkish government. Over the years of his tenure he was also able to secure an unprecedented measure of independence from military oversight.[131] Indeed Özal went from having his first choice of foreign minister vetoed by the general then-president, Kenan Evren, to himself blocking the military's plans to appoint Necdet Öztorun as chief of general staff in 1987.[132] Ali L. Karaosmanoğlu cites this as a major turning point in civil-military relations, an unprecedented acceptance of civilian supremacy by the military.[133] Nevertheless Özal's relative strength vis-a-vis the military was by no means an indication of their retreat. He was, after all, their creation, having been appointed to revamp the economy after the 1980 coup and then unexpectedly leading his new party to victory. Irked as they were by him, the military faced with his obstinacy and recognising his success in the economic sphere seemed willing to forgo drastic measures. Thus his success in crafting a coherent centre of government and indeed foreign policy was due to a combination of factors; popular support, personal ability, economic success and the military's initial backing.

In terms of foreign policy making, the Turkish FPE, during the period of Özal's prime-ministership and presidency, which began in the 1980s and lasted until 1993 upon his

[130] See for example: Cengiz Çandar, "Turgut Özal Twenty Years After: The Man and the Politician", *Insight Turkey*, Vol. 15, No. 2, 2013, pp. 27-36 (pp. 28-30), Philip Robins, *Suits and Uniforms: Turkish Foreign Policy Since the Cold War,* Hurst & Company, London, 2003, (pp. 53-61), Hugh Pope, *Turkey Unveiled: A History of Modern Turkey*, The Overlook Press, 2011, (pp. 158-179)
[131] Philip Robins, *Suits and Uniforms: Turkish Foreign Policy Since the Cold War,* Hurst & Company, London, 2003, (pp. 54-55)
[132] Ali Balcı, *Türkiye Dış Politikası: İlkeler, Aktörler, Uygulamalar*, Etkileşim Yayınları, 2013 (p. 187)
[133] Ali L. Karaosmanoğlu, "The Evolution of the National Security Culture and the Military in Turkey", *Journal of International Affairs*, Vol 54, No 1, 2000, pp. 199-216 (pp. 211-212)

death, can be equated with a more or less coherent executive, comprising Özal himself and the standard organs of policy creation, most notably the Foreign Ministry. According to Ali Balcı, whereas he had previously ceded to the security establishment in foreign policy, the period after 1987 saw Özal exert an ever more determining influence.[134] In any case, Turkey during this period did not seem to suffer from significant obstruction in implementing the foreign policies determined by the FPE, whether dominated by the security establishment or the president. Turkey in the Özal period was able to respond effectively and rationally with regard to the Iraq-Iran war, where the policy of 'positive neutrality' served Turkish security and economic interests. Economic gains were also found in Turkey's response to the early opening up of the Soviet Union after 1984 with numerous energy and trade agreements between the erstwhile geopolitical rivals.[135] This foreign policy efficiency would also coincide with the major global and regional turning points of the early 1990s; the fall of the Soviet Union as a world super power and the Gulf War of 1991. This contrasts starkly with later periods in the 1990s where foreign policy formation, let alone implementation was arguably severely restrained by internal incoherence.

Philip Robins sees in the latter years of Özal's presidency a diminished role for the president, especially after his ANAP party lost its majority in elections in 1991. Nevertheless, the period from 1991-1994 can also be characterised as a period of relative coherence in the formulation and implementation of foreign policy. This was not so much due to the overbearing energy of a charismatic figure dominating an otherwise conflictual FPE, but, according to Robins, to the "collegiate bureaucratic approach" of the FPE as a whole. While Özal remained as president, his party was replaced in government by a coalition between Erdal İnönü's Social Democratic Populist Party (SHP) and Süleyman Demirel's True Path Party (DYP). Demirel assumed the office of prime minister. With Özal still in the presidency, a bureaucratic and political compromise emerged as key people he had appointed in the foreign ministry remained, a member of the junior SHP party assumed the role of foreign minister, and Demirel, while setting pragmatic guidelines for foreign policy, allowed the traditional organs to regain formal control. According to Robins, this foreign policy

[134] ibid. (pp. 186-189)
[135] Philip Robins, *Suits and Uniforms: Turkish Foreign Policy Since the Cold War,* Hurst & Company, London, 2003, (pp. 56-59)

management team' held quiet grip on the levers of policy and prevailed into the first year of Tansu Çiller's premiership.[136]

The next period, from 1994-1999 was one of weak coalition governments. This was also the period of the most pervasive influence of the security establishment on foreign, and indeed domestic, policy. It coincided with the 'weak, fragmented, competitive' period of domestic politics from 1994-1999,[137] which witnessed an "increasing ideological clash between the old Kemalist forces, led by the military, and political Islam"[138]. From the removal of Hikmet Çetin until Ismail Cem assumed the post of foreign minister in 1997 there were seven foreign ministers, an extremely high turnover that severely weakened the capacity of the professional diplomacy to function effectively. On the political side the coalition between Demirel's DYP and the SHP collapsed in 1995, and after elections in December the DYP formed a coalition with ANAP, and then again in June 1996 with the Welfare Party (RP) of Necmettin Erbakan. This last coalition, Turkey's first Islamist government, only compounded the political divisions, exacerbating underlying ideological tensions. Ironically, the dominant RP party did not embark upon any overtly ideological policies but the animosity and scrutiny of other actors in the FPE, ever cautious that it would take Turkey down an 'Islamist' path, further complicated the process of efficient foreign policy formulation and implementation. Ali Balcı says the combination of weak coalitions in government, the threat of PKK and Islamist movements on the domestic level combined with instability in the Balkans, Caucasus and Middle East (which also involved PKK terrorism) externally, brought security to the top of the agenda, ensuring that the security establishment held firm reign over foreign policy. Balcı points out one notable effect of this – at a time when integration into Europe finally seemed a real possibility, Turkish foreign policy veered rather toward Israel as a more accommodating security partner for the security establishment's liking.[139]

After 1999 and until 2002, Turkey's domestic politics and foreign policy, entered a new phase. Ali Balcı calls this the 'European Union oriented' period. It was marked by a return to a more efficient and traditional foreign policy formation process with

[136] ibid. (p. 63)
[137] ibid. (p. 77)
[138] ibid. (p. 64)
[139] Ali Balcı, *Türkiye Dış Politikası: İlkeler, Aktörler, Uygulamalar*, Etkileşim Yayınları, 2013 (pp. 213-226)

Ismail Cem, the foreign minister appointed in 1997, at the forefront. While the focus turned toward Europe after Helsinki in 1999, it should be noted that many of the hard security issues were no longer so pertinent. In 1999, the PKK's leader was captured and from the security establishment's perspective at least, further threat from Islamist politics seemed put to rest after the banned Refah party morphed into the far more marginal Fazilet party. The 1990s ended with natural disaster, soon followed by economic crisis and then geopolitical shock as the events following September 11th 2001 unfolded. The 1990s ended and a new era for Turkey, domestically and abroad, was ushered in.

This appraisal of FPE's coherence throughout the 1990s would seem to highlight three main considerations in terms of Turkey's ability to effectively and efficiently formulate and implement foreign policy. Firstly, the unique influence of Turgut Özal early in the decade, with his decisive and direct input into foreign policy. Second, was the latter effect of weak coalition government on the foreign policy making process. The FPE's efficiency appears to have survived Özal's loss of majority power in 1991 and it continued to function well, on its traditional basis. However, coalition politics after 1993 seemed to have a negative effect on the balance within the FPE, tilting it greatly in favour of the security establishment but ensuring a fiery contest among players. That this coincided with grave security concerns both internally and in the surrounding regions, only strengthened the military's ability to influence foreign policy throughout the rest of the decade.

4.1.2 Northern Iraq

The contours of a Kurdish state in Northern Iraq would only come into relief after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and the subsequent US intervention in 1990-1991. Simultaneous, although not coordinated with a Shi'a uprising in the South, the Kurdistan Front planned and launched a large scale uprising just after the Saddam Hussein regime signed a ceasefire with the United States and coalition partners to end the Gulf War. The results of this 'intifada' were immediately disastrous for the Kurds, as the regime launched another intense crackdown in the North (and in the Shi'a south too) that, so soon after Anfal, once again turned the Kurdistan region into a humanitarian catastrophe. However, a second set of results were more fortuitous for Iraqi Kurds. Egged on by Turkish demands that something be done about the

humanitarian situation that threatened Turkish borders, the United States and its allies implemented a no-fly zone in the North of Iraq to stop the excesses of the Iraqi regime which relied on its air force to combat in the difficult Kurdish territory. By the end of 1991 the regime had in fact withdrawn all of its forces, leaving a military and indeed political vacuum for the Kurds to fill.[140]

Nevertheless, Baghdad continued to sponsor various local collaborators in an attempt to sabotage Kurdish attempts to consolidate control in the territory. Iraqi Kurds also suffered alongside the rest of Iraq from international sanctions placed on the country as a whole, as well as the blockade placed on the Kurdish regions by the Iraqi central government. Despite the first free (without central government intervention) Kurdish elections in history taking place in 1992, and the formation of a government for the region (KRG), the most striking feature of the 1990s was the battle for dominance between the Talabani and Barzani groupings. By 1996, the two sides had engaged in an armed civil war, effectively two states within the state, each with its own leaders, armed forces and territory – the KDP centred around Dohuk and Erbil, and the PUK around Suleimani and Diyala. This period has become known as the Kurdish Civil War, and involved each side in a perilous network of alliances with regional and international powers; Turkey, Iran, the United States, and the Saddam Hussein government itself. The fighting came to an end when the United States, with the Iraqi regime in its sights, intervened to negotiate a power sharing truce between the two parties and placated both – first with a share of Oil-For-Food benefits, and then with direct military aid as opposition groups to the Saddam regime.

The newly established government of Iraqi Kurds faced numerous challenges which made for a divided decade in the 1990s. As a Chatham House report points out, during the decade,

> "Internecine rivalry between the KDP and PUK, along with external intervention and the use of Kurdish groupings as proxies by Iran and Iraq, tore the nascent KRG apart."[141]

Notwithstanding, a number of functions were established in the realm of foreign policy that pertained directly to the new government. These may have been ineffective at first but they were of significance for later developments. Having foregone the idea of

[140] ibid., (pp. 197-202)
[141] Jane Kinninmont, Gareth Stansfield and Omar Sirri, "Iraq on the International Stage: Foreign Policy and National Identity in Transition", *Chatham House*, Special Report, July 2013, (p. 18)

creating a new constitution for the KRG, out of deference to international concerns and potential retribution from Baghdad, there was no outright ministry of foreign affairs; rather, a Department of Foreign Relations was created with a ministerial rank director. Over the decade foreign representative offices were also opened in key Western capitals.

Nevertheless, foreign affairs were truly run in a parallel and dual structure, administered directly by each of the main parties, the KDP and PUK. As the Chatham House report states:

> "In effect, the KDP and PUK maintained strong diplomatic missions and empowered their officials to represent Kurdistan's interests abroad, and to pursue foreign policies that were ostensibly of the Kurdistan Region but were usually very heavily coloured by partisan concerns - particularly during the civil war period."[142]

Compounding the internal divisions and constraints on foreign policy making was an important external consideration. No external state as yet had been willing to unambiguously recognise Iraqi Kurds as an international player. While great progress had been made allowing Kurdish leaders such as Jalal Talabani and Masoud Barzani to meet and hold talks with foreign leaders in London, Paris, and Washington, and while their diplomatic passports had been issued by Turkey,[143] all of these countries were officially committed to the unity of Iraq as a state, and moderated any relations with the KRG with constant pronouncements to that effect.

Thus the structured analysis of the FPE undertaken in the previous section on Turkey has to be foregone for Iraqi Kurdistan in the 1990s. In terms of coherence and efficiency in foreign policy formation and implementation the region was severely constrained, both by internal and external factors. Chief among the the internal factors was the implacable division between the parties that reigned for most of the decade (although moments of unity can be witnessed in the early decade following the formation of the Kurdistan Front and also after the civil war was brought to an end by outside mediation in 1998). At the same time, to speak of a process of strategic adjustment occurring between the two parties in forming a united foreign policy would be utterly misleading. Effectively, each had its own, often competing foreign policy as evidenced in the array of contradictory alliances each party formed. Both were also

[142] ibid. (p. 18)
[143] Philip Robins, *Suits and Uniforms: Turkish Foreign Policy Since the Cold War,* Hurst & Company, London, 2003, (p. 331)

dependent almost entirely on their two charismatic but antithetical leaders, Masoud Barzani and Jalal Talabani. Even a shared baseline policy of securing autonomy seems elusive but might be attributed to the emasculated KRG government. However, in the 1990s, this interest was generally trumped by the competing interests of the parties.

4.2 Structural Change in the 1990s

At the global level, two major dynamics stand out, both beginning at, or even before, the beginning of the decade. The end of the Cold War, and the collapse of the Soviet Union had profound effects on states across the world, not least those 'frontline states' such as Turkey. At the same time the now unimpeded rise of the United States as the world's only superpower caused states to re-examine their relations with the perceived hegemon. At the regional level, in the Middle East, no other event had as much impact throughout the 1990s as the Persian Gulf War. The sudden shock to the regional balance of power and the unsettled aftermath forced states to adjust policy continually throughout the decade. The vacuum left in Northern Iraq by the retreat of Saddam Hussein's security forces also had major implications, not least for Turkey and its struggle with PKK terrorism. At the issue-based level there were important developments in energy and trade, as the prevailing relationship between Turkey and Iraq was revised in response to the war and subsequent sanctions. And finally, the punishing assault by Saddam Hussein's forces on Northern Iraqi Kurds after the American intervention caused Turkey's largest refugee crisis to that time. Each of these events or developments, and the effect on the policies of Turkey and Northern Iraqi authorities toward each other, will be analysed in separate sections throughout this chapter, divided under the headings of "global", "regional", and "issue based" structural change.

4.2.1 Changes in the Global Power Structure

Writing in 2000, one decade after the proclaimed end of the Cold War and with it, the bipolar world order, Kenneth Waltz seemed concerned to defend the analytic capacity of structural realism[144]. The realist assumption that a bipolar system was inherently more stable than any other had already been under attack for years. John Mearsheimer

[144] Kenneth N. Waltz, "Structural Realism after the Cold War", *International Security*, Vol. 25 No. 1, Summer 2000, (pp. 5-41)

had defended the idea in 1990, predicting an increase in violent conflict in Europe as the balance of power between the two blocs in the region disintegrated. Many critics of the optimal balance theory attacked the premise that the bipolar system of the Cold War had limited violent conflict, pointing to the seemingly endless history of conflict in the Third World and "periphery" throughout the 20th century. Neither Waltz nor Mearsheimer seem to answer this particular criticism, having already established the important caveat that bi-polar systems reduce conflict only between great powers.

Waltz however, in 2000, does address the major alternative theory to realism and source of its criticism - the increasingly influential liberal school of international relations. He takes issue with the liberal interpretation of the end of the Cold War, which hailed the benefits of 'globalisation', 'democratisation', 'interdependence', and 'institutionalism' as new bastions of stability in the international system. Fundamentally, he argues, none of these represent a "change of" the anarchic, self-help system among states, that causes competition and war. The only significant change is the "change in the system" – from bipolar to multipolar. It is the consequences found in the drive toward a new balance that will be of significance, not ideals about a new globalised world order. In what has turned out to be a rather prescient paper he states the case for a (historically) brief bout of US hegemony, parallel to the inevitable rise of China, Russia, Japan, and the European Union as balance seeking super-powers. While the emergent super-power balance is beyond the scope of this thesis, and its timing and shape is according to Waltz impossible to predict, the effects of the collapse of the previous balance on Turkey, Iraq and its Kurdish North have been more measurable and will be analysed in the first subsection below. After that, I will discuss the behaviour of the United States as apparent global hegemon throughout the 1990s and finally, the effects of both of these developments on the relations between Turkey and Northern Iraq will be discussed.

4.2.1.1 The end of the Cold War: an upset balance

When, in 1989, the Warsaw Pact failed to intervene in Poland, then Hungary, and finally East Germany, it became clear that what balance had existed between world powers was now seriously in peril. Even for allies within the prevailing "Western" bloc this did not necessarily mean a more secure world. They could no longer rely on their utility to superpowers to guarantee protection in regional conflicts. As Baskin

Oran points out, those states that had relied on the balance of power between the Soviet Union and the United States for their own security, Turkey included, were stepping into a new and more difficult world.[145]

Before the Gulf War, as the Cold War drew to an end, Turkey had confronted the question of continued relevance in the Western bloc that, alongside its geographic position as a frontline state, defined its security outlook. Turkey's role in NATO and the future of her foreign policy orientation were under intense debate. Policy makers at home feared Turkey would be abandoned, while those in Western capitals feared a drift away from the West. As it turned out, such fears were exaggerated, William Hale writes,

> "The Western military alliance acquired new missions to replace those of meeting the Soviet challenge, in which Turkey could play an important role. Moreover, NATO was only one of a number of institutional and ideological bridges between Turkey and the West. Other non military links, such as that with the European Union, and Turkey's continued commitment to political and economic liberalism meant that there was a fairly high degree of continuity between its Cold War and post-Cold War orientations."[146]

While the intense alignment between the US and Turkey of the Cold War may have been the exception and not the rule[147], all the elements were in place for a continued strong alliance. For the United States, Turkey remained important, as William Hale says, "mainly in the Middle Eastern context - a perception primarily deriving from its role during the Gulf crisis of 1990-91 and subsequent developments in the region."[148] Turkey thus reacted to the Gulf War in a manner that, from the realist perspective, could be termed as classic 'bandwagoning' - complying with requests to use its air bases for attacks on Iraq and amassing its forces along the border to distract the Iraqi army during the invasion. These concessions were made domestically on Turgut Özal's insistence, and depending on who tells the story, were motivated by a range of factors, from the generous; geopolitical prescience, to the absurd; a megalomaniac urge to reintegrate Mosul into Turkey.[149] Whatever the case may be, it would seem prudent policy. With UN endorsement, Turkey could establish its continued value to the United States, and at least set aside some of the anxiety caused by the end of the

[145] Baskin Oran, Türk Dış Politikası, İletişim Yayıncılık, 2010, (p. 209)
[146] William M. Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy, 1774-2000*, Frank Cass, 2001, (p. 191)
[147] Joshua Walker, "The United Sates and Turkey in a Changing World" in Kerem Öktem, eds., *Another Empire: a decade of Turkey's Foreign Policy under the Justice and Development Party*, Istanbul Bilgi University Press, (p. 147)
[148] William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy, 1774-2000*, Frank Cass, 2001, (p. 194)
[149] William Hale, *Turkey, the US and Iraq*, Saqi Press, 2012, (p. 46)

Cold War. Nevertheless, classic bandwagoning also carries classic risks - the wagon's forward roll may lead the bandwagoner into unforeseen predicaments. Over the decade, Turkey would face a radically altered regional dynamic as a result of the Gulf War, causing it by necessity to change long standing principles of regional foreign policy.

The disintegration of the Soviet Union represented for Turkey an urgent incentive to reassess its role in the global security balance. Yet it also had consequences closer to home as a new frontier of independent states in Central Asia, the Caucuses and the Balkans opened up. While not directly relevant to relations with Iraq or its Kurds, this meant the decade was one of intense change in Turkey's surrounding regions, adding to the confusion caused by an unsettled domestic situation and critical events in Iraq. The Soviet threat had retreated but it left in its wake daunting challenges for Turkey. Relations with Russia itself, despite competition over influence in the newly independent states, continued apace, building on the economic links developed in the 1980s. Economic ties strengthened, and Russian gas exports to Turkey through the Bluestream pipeline, initiated in 1997 were set to boom.

Iraq, at the end of the Cold War, witnessed the collapse of its biggest military supporter, in terms of arms supplies and training, and the only bulwark against the United States' designs. Saddam entreated Gorbachev to "redeem his nation's status as a superpower"[150] and stand by the regime, only to see it undersign the United States' aggression at the United Nations. For Russia itself, the Gulf War represented perhaps the biggest international challenge outside of the collapse of the Union. Gorbachev, committed to perestroika and facing crisis at home, towed the international line, condemning Iraq's actions in Kuwait and endorsing the UN resolutions that granted the US and its allies international legitimacy in the intervention. Meanwhile the Soviet military looked on as the US turned Iraq into a testing ground for its capabilities facing Soviet supplied weapons systems. Not only was this damaging to the reputation of Soviet arms but also, as Russia stood by the invasion, it was damning to its reputation as an ally, supplier of arms and training, an important economic and security consideration. Beyond that, seemingly undeterred by its limited UN mandate, the United States proceeded to establish a permanent arc of bases across the Middle

[150] Graham E. Fuller, (2016, June 11). Moscow and the Gulf War. Retrieved June 11, 2016, from https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/russia-fsu/1991-06-01/moscow-and-gulf-war

East.[151] While Russia took steps throughout the decade to remain involved in Iraqi affairs[152], we are only now perhaps seeing the lessons learned from the Gulf War develop into a fully reinvigorated Middle East policy.

Europe's direct influence on the actors in this thesis is also more pronounced much later, beginning at the end of the 1990s. Nevertheless, it is worth noting the early convergence with Turkey over the refugee crisis that followed the intervention, as Europe and Turkey's combined diplomacy nudged the United Sates into taking actions that would establish the no-fly zone. It is also worth noting, in anticipation of later changes in relations with the EU, that despite Turkey's strengthened desire to join the European union, Europe over the decade was perceived more and more as a challenger to Turkish policy; not just over Cyprus but also in the highly securitised realm of human rights, mostly in relation to the internal Kurdish issue. Despite lobbying from the United States, Turkey was unable to convince the EU to accept its candidacy for membership. This seemed to change after the Balkan wars of Bosnia and Kosovo, as Senem Aydın-Düzgit and Nathalie Tocci point out, the EU now recognised, "the imperative of seeking ways of cooperating with and integrating Turkey in the context of the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy"[153] and granted candidacy at Helsinki in 1999.

4.2.1.2 The rise of US hegemony

According to Waltz, certain patterns are to be expected in the behaviour of dominant powers, and could indeed be observed in US policy in the 1990s. The hegemon, without opposition, will often think of itself as "acting for the sake of peace", or at least its own interpretation of it. Furthermore, with the absence of significant threat to focus strategy, policy becomes 'capricious'[154]. This leaves other states, especially those allies that had relied on the United States' backing in regional conflicts, uncertain about the value of its security guarantees. Conversely, non-allied, and antagonistic states may fear that the lone superpower, no longer restrained by an equal adversary,

[151] ibid.
[152] For example, in its role in negotiations over sanctions relief for Iraq. Charles Tripp, *A History of Iraq,* Cambridge University Press, 2007 (pp. 252-253)
[153] Senem Aydın-Düzgit and Nathalie Tocci, *Turkey and the European Union*, Palgrave, New York, 2015, (p. 18)
[154] ibid. (p. 29)

will take vindictive action against them, leading to desperate and rash measures in policy both domestic, and foreign, in the target state.

All of these reactions to the perception that the United States had emerged from the Cold War as the world's sole superpower were registered in the actors in this thesis. The new US policy seemed to reflect a strategy of pre-empting future challenges through intervention and the establishment of favourable regional configurations. This strategy was particularly relevant in the Middle East where the United States was concerned about the Arab-Israeli conflict, Saddam Hussein, oil, and other vital security interests. Having experimented in Nicaragua, the United States launched its first full-scale intervention with the Gulf War, then bolstered by the apparent success, an important vindication of military prowess after Vietnam[155], went headlong into Somalia, only to rethink its intervention policy, until, in the final hour it was reinvigorated by domestic concerns (elections), to intervene in Bosnia. A 'capricious' foreign policy to say the least. While each of these interventions and others (Haiti, Kosovo, etc.) may, or may not, have had their merits from the perspective of the US national interest, from the perspective of other states they were only a few of a bewildering array of international interventions the United States undertook immediately following the end of the Cold War. According to Richard Lock-Pullan, in a study of change in US intervention policy, "the 1990s saw 108 foreign operations in 53 countries, compared to 19 in 14 countries in the 1980s"[156]. Of course Iraq, under Saddam Hussein, come 1991, needed no statistical comparisons to be convinced of the intervention threat posed by the United States.

The war, so early in the decade, represented an important precedent of change in policy across the board in the 1990s. For the United States it was a vindication of its hegemonic status as a military power, but one that would, in hindsight, also serve as a reminder of the problems created when military goals are detached from political ones. Ostensibly the aim had been to neutralise the Saddam Hussein regime, possibly even leading to regime change. While his containment may have been effective from the US perspective, the policy left others wondering. For Iraqi Kurds, the Gulf War left the immediate impression that the United States could be an important patron in their

[155] Richard Lock-Pullan, *US Intervention Policy and Army Innovation: From Vietnam to Iraq*, Routledge, New York, 2006, (p. 121)
[156] ibid. (p. 145)

struggle against the Baghdad government. However, this impression was sharply jolted as the United States instigated, or at least condoned, and then failed to support, a Kurdish insurgency after the war that resulted in heavy retribution from Saddam Hussein. When the no-fly zone was finally implemented they could again be thankful to the United States, as well as for its continued implementation. However, in Kurdish eyes, the United States and its allies were caught between using Iraqi Kurds, "as a tool for weakening Saddam and keeping up the pressure against him" and wanting, "to keep [them] too weak to jeopardize Iraqi unity or have a 'negative' influence on Kurds elsewhere in the region, especially in Turkey".[157] From the US perspective, the Kurds' utility was also limited by their disunity, a consideration that eventually contributed to the mediation efforts that ended the Kurdish Civil War in 1998.[158]

The United States' military response to Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait and repression of the Kurdish uprising had already annulled the old policy upholding Baghdad's full territorial sovereignty. As policy over the decade moved toward severe containment, and then regime change, the United States was forced to engage with the Kurds, a formidable opposition group to the regime. Here the superpower played a decisive role in forging unity among the two fighting PUK and KDP factions. Starting in 1995, and accelerating in 1996 with concerns that Masoud Barzani's KDP had begun to negotiate with Saddam Hussein, the US launched a number of initiatives to facilitate reconciliation. These, having added wider diplomatic legitimacy to the Kurds in their frequent international appearances and access to Washington, came to fruition in 1998. The so-called "Washington Agreement" committed both sides to a number of points, important among them: reestablishment of a unified administration; equal sharing of all public revenues; elections, and; with a nod to Turkey, a commitment to deny Iraqi Kurdish territory to the PKK.[159] The Kurdish peace granted the United States a formidable client inside Iraq as the stage was set for the second major intervention, part of the the superpower's latest foreign policy caprice – the War on Terror.

[157] Ofra Bengio, *The Kurds of Iraq: Building a State Within a State*, Lynne Rienner, 2012, (p. 224)
[158] ibid.
[159] ibid., (pp. 260-265)

4.2.1.3 Global structural change and effects on relations between Turkey and Northern Iraq

The end of the Cold War had a profound effect on three of the main actors that would shape relations between Turkey and Northern Iraq: Turkey, Iraq (and by extension its Northern Kurdish region), and the United States as a global and regional superpower. Turkey was forced to reassess its role in global security, and although relations with Russia improved apace, the collapse of the Soviet Union had left it surrounded by new volatile regions. It was also intensely affected by the actions of the United States in the Middle East, forced to bandwagon with it in the invasion of Iraq. As we saw in the previous chapter, these massive changes took place during the early presidency of Turgut Özal, while he still had an inordinate amount of influence on foreign policy. According to Cengiz Çandar (a journalist and writer who was at Özal's side most of this time and also acted as an adviser), Özal was quick to recognise the changed landscape after the Cold War, and advocated a vigorous re-engagement with the "Turkic World" and former Ottoman domains, which included the Middle East. While recognising opportunities available for Turkey, Çandar also notes that Özal was keenly aware of the huge role the United States would begin to play in the region, and the implications for Turkey, especially in Iraq.[160] Thus the most important influence on Turkey for most of the decade at the global level was the United States, although by the end of the 1990s other powers such as the EU began to have influence on specific issues. Iraq felt the loss of a powerful patron in the collapse of the Soviet Union, and the immediate destruction that could be wrought by its victor, the United States, as well as the continued effects of containment and sanctions. By the same token Iraq's Kurdish authorities met the United States as a patron powerful enough to provide the autonomy they had so long coveted. The United States, apparent hegemon in the Middle East, if not globally, exhibited its new appetite for intervention immediately with the Gulf War and remained extremely relevant to both Turkey and Iraq's Kurds across the board with regard to one another throughout the decade.

[160] Cengiz Çandar, "Turgut Özal Twenty Years After: The Man and the Politician", *Insight Turkey*, Spring 2013, Vol.15 No.2 pp. 27-36 (pp. 31-33)

The United States, as hegemonic world power in the 1990s, had definite effects on the relations between Turkey and Northern Iraq. The creation of the basic conditions for Kurdish autonomy was the most important, if indirect, consequence of US policy in the Middle East. Turkey's decision to bandwagon with the United States in the intervention in Iraq, and the subsequent need to deal with the humanitarian consequences that were seen as a security threat to Turkey, caused it to reverse several mainstays of its foreign policy that had a direct effect on relations with Iraq's Kurds. These were; the policy of non-involvement in Middle Eastern affairs, the policy of upholding a united Iraq, and the policy of opposing Kurdish autonomy wherever it may be in order to prevent knock-on effects within Turkey. There is no doubt that Özal's role was crucial, yet his preference was also buttressed by the structural reality. The end of bipolarity, and the new superpower's apparent willingness to intervene in a neighbouring state required a decisive response from Turkey's FPE, especially in the context of UN resolutions. While other factions may have had their doubts, Özal had found a not unreasonable response in joining the coalition. Philip Robins says,

> "Once Ankara permitted the US-led multinational coalition to use the Incirlik air base to initiate an air campaign against Saddam Hussain's Iraq on 16 January 1991, a series of events was triggered over which Turkey was to have little or no control."[161]

The Gulf War, the no-fly zone, and the creation of Kurdish autonomy (or a security vacuum) in Northern Iraq, and the rise of Iraq's Kurds as an international entity, were clearly events triggered at the structural superpower level. However, the consequences for the rest of the decade would be felt mostly within the region.

4.2.2 Changes in Regional Power Structure in the 1990s

In this section, which analyses structural change at the regional level, the United States will continue to be a major actor in its position as regional hegemon. However, this is also in the context of a new configuration emerging among regional powers that will be discussed in the first sub-section. The second subsection will deal with the effects of the major regional event of the 1990s, the Gulf War and its immediate aftermath, on regional powers, especially Turkey, and developments in Northern Iraq. After that I will analyse the effects of the 'power vacuum' that emerged in Northern Iraq after the war, and its significance to Turkish policy, especially in relation to the PKK threat.

[161] Philip Robins, *Suits and Uniforms: Turkish Foreign Policy Since the Cold War,* Hurst & Company, London, 2003, (p. 318)

I will also analyse how this crucial security issue was aggravated by the civil war between Kurdish parties in Northern Iraq as well as by regional competition. The final subsection will summarise the effects of regional structural change on Turkey and Northern Iraq and their relations with one another.

4.2.2.1 A new regional configuration in the Middle East

By the 1990s, the role the United States envisioned for itself in the Middle East had long been evident. With Iran no longer contributing to a favourable regional balance, the United States had made its hegemonic intent clear with the Carter Doctrine in 1980. Essentially, the doctrine expressed a US claim to the right to define regional order according to her interests, as well as to prevent other outside powers from interfering. If the United States' intent for regional dominance had become apparent in the 1980s, in the 1990s with the Gulf War, they were beyond doubt. US interests in the region were plenty, ranging from geopolitical to economic. The region was uniquely placed as a strategic military base location and as a major supplier to the world economy's fundamental oil market.[162] The United States was clearly a major regional player.

Once the early hopes for internally instigated regime change following the intervention in Iraq were dashed, the United States settled for a policy of "aggressive containment". With its equally damning assessment of Iran in mind, policy evolved into the "dual containment" strategy announced by the National Security Council under Clinton in 1994.[163] Viewing hostile Iran and US ally Saudi Arabia as opposing regional poles, the United States was keen to capitalise on Iran's relative weakness after the war with Iraq, as well as the absence of Soviet deterrence to establish the sanctions regime against Iran. While stopping short of military intervention, the United States wanted to keep Iran as weak as possible to prevent her from benefitting from unrest in Iraq and decisively upsetting the balance with Saudi Arabia.

The regional balance of power was thus evolving from the Cold War. What had been a confrontation of conservative monarchies and pre-revolutionary Iran versus socialist republics became a constellation of US allies led by Saudi Arabia balanced against Iranian ambitions on the one hand, and Iraqi ones on the other. Saudi Arabia, generally pragmatic and seemingly content with the commitment of the United States, was now

[162] Baskin Oran, *Türk Dış Politikası*, İletişim Yayıncılık, 2010, (p. 254)
[163] ibid., (pp. 272-273)

far more threatened by Iraqi aggression than by a weakened and ostracised Iran. The same could be said of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), of which Kuwait was a key member. Just two years after Iraq's perceived victory over rival Iran, Saudi Arabia became directly involved in the US invasion of Iraq and opened up its territory to US forces.

A new three-way balancing dynamic was emerging in the region that expanded the key relations beyond the Arab core of the past. On one side were Saudi Arabia and the GCC, then Turkey, Israel, Jordan and Egypt, also US allies, and on the other side, Iran and Syria. The split among the US allies reflected the Saudi and GCC unwillingness to be seen too close to Israel to avoid giving Iran the lead in the ideological realm of the Palestinian struggle. Meanwhile the focal point of this new configuration was Iraq.

On the other side of the balance of power, Iran and Syria's positions were moderated by the United States. The United States had led efforts to isolate Iran and was now the sole relevant arbiter in Syria's territorial dispute with Israel - a major factor in the Syrian decision to support the US coalition against long time rival Iraq. Although Syria continued diplomatic relations with the United States, its alliance with Iran continued apace based on mutual interests in Lebanon and Hezbollah.

Turkey and Israel enjoyed perhaps the highpoint of their historical relations during the 1990s. Israel had long sought to bolster its regional position through various incarnations of the "Peripheral Pact" that brought it into alliance with other regional outsiders (Iran, Turkey, Ethiopia, and even Iraqi Kurds) to balance against the hostile Arab core of states. For Turkey, the new global configuration meant it had less to worry about from open relations with Israel, from whom it had long benefitted in terms of trade, intelligence and military cooperation. In 1991 full diplomatic relations were established, and in 1993 a bilateral trade agreement was signed and later in the same year a "Strategic Cooperation Agreement". Turkey also had pressing security reasons to intensify its relations with Israel. Apart from balancing against Iran, Syria and indeed Iraq at the regional level, the major consideration was PKK terrorism, which had become an increasingly pressing issue during the 1990s. Turkey considered Israel a more willing partner than the US or EU, willing to provide arms and technological

expertise but also sharing concerns over Syria and Iran, who from the Turkish perspective were complicit in supporting PKK activities.[164]

As we saw in the last chapter, apart from regional conflict, Middle Eastern states were also beset by numerous problematic internal characteristics, which tend to contribute to the causes of regional instability. In Iraq, we see a state suffering from many of the ailments that were outlined. A minority regime under Saddam Hussein enforced its rule through absolute control over economic resources and patronage as well as through a massive and ruthless security apparatus. Meanwhile the population was highly disenfranchised. Beyond the direct beneficiaries of the regime and the Sunni Arab minority which had arguably been coopted; the Shia South and Kurdish North, (roughly 50 and 20 per cent of the population respectively), represented a constant source of concern (in the case of the Shia) and actual threat (in the case of the Kurds) to the regime's control of the entire national territory. Boosted by oil revenues throughout the 1970s, the Iraqi state built itself up to impose "all encompassing totalitarian structures of control"[165] on its citizens. The strategies ranged from patronage to brutal repression, all overseen by "a vast network of informers and pervasive secret police".[166] While the deft use of Pan-Arab ideology and material patronage had staved off a Shia uprising during the Iran-Iraq War, the problem of 'nation to state imbalance' was not so easily solved in the Kurdish North where the KDP, and by the end of the war, the PUK, were fighting alongside Iran against the Iraqi regime.[167] Externally, the colonially imposed borders, and a disappointing settlement with Iran in 1975 had left parts of that country and, indeed, the whole of Kuwait excluded from what in Iraqi state canon was believed to be its own legitimate territory. Kuwait came into focus again after the war with Iran as it threatened Iraq's economic stability with demands for loan repayments, as well as flooding the oil market and imperilling Iraqi oil profits (as did Saudi Arabia).[168] The war with Iran in the 1980s had left the state with a formidable war machine and, bolstered perhaps by

[164] Mustafa Kibaroğlu ed., *Turkey's Neighborhood*, Foreign Policy Institute Ankara, 2008, (p. 161)
[165] Raymond Hinnebusch, *The International Politics of the Middle East*, Manchester University Press, 2003, (p. 208)
[166] ibid.
[167] Bengio (p. 171)
[168] Raymond Hinnebusch, *The International Politics of the Middle East*, Manchester University Press, 2003, (p. 218)

a false sense of international indifference, Saddam Hussein's Iraq embarked on the invasion of Kuwait.

4.2.2.2 The Gulf War and its consequences

Raymond Hinnebusch argues that the United States response was predetermined by a range of domestic factors to dismiss any form of peaceful resolution to the Kuwait crisis. What followed was, according to Hinnebusch:

> "… a rationally calculated 'preventive war' by men imbued with the zero-sum national security ethos fostered by the Cold War. […] It was far better for the US to deal with Saddam while it had the coalition and the UN behind it and before Iraq got the nuclear deterrent that would prevent such action."[169]

The Gulf war marked the beginning of the story of Turkey's relationship with northern Iraq as a distinct entity. The US led military invasion sparked a series of events that would lead to the creation of no-fly zones in southern and northern Iraq. In northern Iraq, the absence of Saddam Hussein's military forces allowed for the establishment of a Kurdish-led quasi state that increasingly took charge of security and administration in the zone. Turkey, under Turgut Özal, allowed US forces to use the Incirlik air base as a staging ground for the invasion of Iraq, and also actively supported the creation of the no-fly zones, again providing basing rights. The primary motivation, as we saw in the previous section, was to bandwagon with the United States in the face of what Özal correctly perceived as their determination to proceed with a military resolution to the Kuwait crisis.

The United States' military action had two phases. First, on 10th August 1990, five days after and in direct response to the Iraqi invasion and occupation of Kuwait, Operation Desert Shield was launched. This "wholly defensive" mission, which saw US forces amassing along the Iraqi border inside Saudi Arabia, was meant to prevent Iraq from invading the country, and was in response to a request from the Saudi King. When it became clear that Saddam Hussein had no intention of withdrawing from Kuwait, the United States began to build up offensive capabilities in the region, including naval and air forces, and turned to the UN to build legitimacy and form a coalition for military action against Iraq.[170] Faced with Saddam's threat to Saudi

[169] ibid. (p. 221)

[170] Özal, who had been heavily involved in the diplomatic lead up to the war, and was in regular direct contact with President Bush, and even alerted President Bush to Saddam's imminent threat to Kuwait, made sure that the Turkish government took the necessary steps to ensure Turkey's readiness for

Arabia and other Gulf states, and the passing of a UN deadline for the withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait, an international coalition[171] was formed and Operation Desert Storm, the opening air campaign, was launched on 17th January 1991.[172]

By 28th February, when US president George H.W. Bush declared an end to hostilities, Saddam Hussein's forces had been purged from Kuwait, routed back to Baghdad by coalition ground and air forces and severely degraded. Apart from the financial and trade sanctions imposed by the UN Security Council at the beginning of operations, the United States hoped that the war would weaken Saddam Hussein's regime so much that an internal coup would overthrow the regime. While the coalition stuck to the objectives of its mission and ruled out military overthrow, US actions (including radio broadcasts by President Bush) seemed to encourage mass uprisings, especially among Iraq's southern Shi'a, and northern Kurdish populations. When these responded and launched simultaneous uprisings in the South and North of the country, Saddam Hussein's forces (relying on helicopters that the ceasefire agreement with the US had condoned) retaliated in full force. This would set into motion a new series of events that would lead to the United States' continued military involvement in Iraq, in the form of enforced no-fly zones in the South and North of the country.

The Gulf War and the subsequent no-fly zone in Northern Iraq that led to Iraqi forces withdrawing completely from the North, required two actors to come into US orbit. One was Turkey, which could provide the ideal base ground for launching the Gulf War and forced containment of Iraq in the north. The other, as Baskin Oran says, were the Iraqi Kurds who would represent the justification for continued implementation of sanctions and containment.[173]

Turgut Özal, dominant in this period in Turkish foreign policy making, was more than willing to oblige the United States and support its actions. According to Baskin Oran,

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involvement. In the draw up to UN sanctions he ordered the Kirkuk-Yumurtalik pipeline to be shut down and by September 1990 he had secured a parliamentary resolution authorising the deployment of foreign troops on Turkish soil, key for the US plans to launch air campaigns from Incirlik. See: William Hale, *Turkey, the US and Iraq*, Saqi Press, 2012, (p. 40) and, Baskin Oran, *Türk Dış Politikası*, İletişim Yayıncılık, 2010, (pp. 156-157)

[171] The coalition included major troop contributions from Saudi Arabia, the United Kingdom, France, Egypt, and even Syria, apparently trying to offset its loss of Soviet patronage.

[172] Iraq had attempted to stave off the invasion by accepting a Russian brokered ceasefire, however the United States effectively rejected this.

[173] Baskin Oran, "Kalkık Horoz-Çekiç Güç ve Kürt Devleti", *Avrasya Dosyası*, (Kuzey Irak Özel Sayısı), Cilt 3, Sayı 1 (1996), p. 155-172 (p. 157) The book should also be here.

Özal saw a chance to affirm Turkey's place in international affairs; improve economic and trade relations with the United States; gain points for membership in the European Union; and assure economic advantages and an important say in the new Middle Eastern configuration that the war would create. The United States basically had three requests from Turkey, all of which Özal supported. Firstly, to allow airpower to use Turkish territory as a base to launch attacks on Iraq; secondly, to amass Turkish forces along the border with Iraq to lure Iraqi forces away from Kuwait; and thirdly, to support the invasion with actual military means by sending troops to join the forces building up in Saudi Arabia.[174] In the end, Özal was able to deliver on two of these requests but not the third. There is no doubt that he imposed his view on the other traditional decision makers in the FPE – the foreign ministry, security establishment, and government – bypassing the foreign ministry with his "telephone diplomacy" and cutting out key members of the security establishment by foregoing protocol.[175] The Chief of General Staff, Necip Torumtay resigned, accusing Özal of harbouring plans to annex the Iraqi provinces of Mosul and Kirkuk. However, in the end Özal was unable to overcome the National Security Council opposition to involving Turkish forces in the invasion itself. Apart from being deeply suspicious of US motives and military planning, the NSC seemed to be specifically concerned that Özal was also pushing for a ground invasion into Northern Iraq, which they opposed, not just on operational grounds but also for the effects it would have on Turkey's struggle with PKK terrorism and regional security.[176] Here we see the prevailing effects of structural change and Özal's recognition of the structural incentives for Turkey to play a role in the invasion. At the same time Turkey's longstanding strategic culture comes into play through the military's resistance. In a sense both are vindicated. While it is possible the NSC saved Özal from taking one gamble too many, the landscape had changed drastically and Turkey was already sufficiently implicated, tied to the United States and unable to backtrack from its involvement.

Like Turkey under Özal, Iraq's Kurds were willing partners to the United States but it was only after the war that the feeling was reciprocated. As far back as 1976, when they had received US support funnelled through Iran to back them against Saddam

[174] Baskin Oran, Türk Dış Politikası, İletişim Yayıncılık, 2010, (p. 255)
[175] Cengiz Çandar, *Mezopotamya Ekspresi: Bir Tarih Yolculuğu*, İletişim Yayınları, 2012 (pp. 94-98)
[176] These are the main reasons given by the Chief of Staff Necip Torumtay after his resignation. See: Baskin Oran, Türk Dış Politikası, İletişim Yayıncılık, 2010, (p. 256)

Hussein, the KDP realised the potential of US patronage in its bid for an autonomous Iraqi Kurdistan. Mullah Mustafa Barzani had declared he was willing to "become America's 51st state".[177] However, subsequent events and the ambiguous relationship established during the Iraq-Iran war (where the United States had backed Iraq and Iraqi Kurds had sided with post-revolutionary Iran), left US policy makers wary of engaging with the Kurds.[178] Despite suffering from the lack of US support during and following the Iraqi army's Anfal campaign that had decimated the Kurdish population of Iraq so recently, the KDP, PUK and other smaller parties had at least emerged with a modicum of unity. They formed the Kurdistan Front and exhibited this unity in the uprisings that followed the Gulf War.[179] I was only because the Iraqi army could still use helicopters under the ceasefire agreement that it was able to fight back in the North.[180] The army made the most of this, and after crushing the Shi'a uprisings in the South, causing an estimated 300,000 deaths, turned to the North and had retaken Kirkuk, Sulaimaniya, Dohuk, Zakho, and Erbil by 3rd April 1991. The violent crackdown by Iraqi forces triggered another wave of panic stricken refugees, up to a million heading towards Turkey, and half a million towards Iran.[181]

Turkey's reaction to this will be discussed in further detail in the section on refugees and migration later, but the upshot was a UN sanctioned relief effort supported by the United States. Shortly afterwards, on Turkish insistence, the creation of an enclave in Northern Iraq for Kurdish refugees to return and remain protected from further violence was put to the United States. With key backing from the United Kingdom and France, the proposal was implemented. Launching air operations from Incirlik and ground operations from Silopi in Turkey, US, British, French and Turkish forces organised aid airdrops into Northern Iraq and created a "safe haven" on the ground around the city of Dhako for returning Kurdish refugees. Iraq was also warned by the US, UK and French governments to keep all aircraft from flying north of the 36th Parallel or risk attack.[182] Once the safe haven was established the operation, dubbed

[177] Jim Hoagland, "The Kurds Gird for Another War," *Washington Post*, June 24, 1973
[178] Baskin Oran, "Kalkık Horoz-Çekiç Güç ve Kürt Devleti", *Avrasya Dosyası*, (Kuzey Irak Özel Sayısı), Cilt 3, Sayı 1 (1996), p. 155-172 (pp. 157-158)
[179] The Kurdistan Front was born of an Iranian effort to unite Iraqi opposition groups at a conference in November 1986. See: Ofra Bengio, *The Kurds of Iraq: Building a State Within a State*, Lynne Rienner, 2012 (p. 173)
[180] Ofra Bengio, *The Kurds of Iraq: Building a State Within a State*, Lynne Rienner, 2012, (p. 224)
[181] Kerim Yildiz, *The Kurds in Iraq: The Past, Present and Future*, Pluto Books, 2004 (p. 36)
[182] Baskin Oran, "Kalkık Horoz-Çekiç Güç ve Kürt Devleti", *Avrasya Dosyası*, (Kuzey Irak Özel Sayısı), Cilt 3, Sayı 1 (1996), p. 155-172 (p. 161)

"Provide Comfort" was ended and a new operation was launched which aimed to prevent repeated aggression by the Iraqi army against the Kurds. Provide Comfort II began on 24th July 1991 and was continued uninterrupted until 1997 when it would be replaced by a similar programme, Operation Northern Watch.[183]

In October 1991, with the no-fly zone in place, after a period of further conflict in certain areas of the North, and then stalled negotiations between Saddam Hussein and the Kurdish political parties as to an autonomy agreement, Iraqi forces completely withdrew from the region and imposed an internal siege on the Kurds. As Kerim Yildiz writes:

> "Iraqi forces were withdrawn from the three northern governorates of Erbil, Dohuk and Sulaimaniya and the Kurdish region was placed under economic siege. Salaries to civil servants were cut off, and an embargo imposed preventing foodstuffs and fuel from crossing the front line that now separated the 'autonomous' north from the rest of the country."[184]

While they were severely weakened after Saddam Hussein's onslaught and the embargo, for the Kurdish parties this represented an unprecedented chance to pursue autonomy. For Turkey, in one stroke, the carpet was pulled from under its longstanding policy towards Iraq, upholding its territorial integrity and the central control of Baghdad would no longer ensure a non-threatening Kurdish north. Now Turkey would have to take unprecedented steps if it was to avoid the resulting "power vacuum" and its potential to be abused, especially by the PKK.

4.2.2.3 Northern Iraq as a power vacuum and the PKK in the region

Iraq's Kurdish parties harnessed the unity they had built in the Kurdish Front and the shared experience of two brutal onslaughts from the Iraqi army and seized the opportunity that the Iraqi army's retreat granted them to create the fledgling institutions of an autonomous government. First, they tried to negotiate a compromise with the central government, drawing on previous declarations and agreements with Baghdad over autonomy, which since 1974 had granted them their own elected assembly.[185] But when compromise proved elusive, and as the army retreated from Kurdish territory they pushed ahead alone. On 19 May 1992 the first independent and free elections were held for a Kurdish legislature in Northern Iraq. According to Ofra

[183] In August 1992, the United States and its allies imposed a similar no-fly zone below the 32nd, and then 33rd parallel in the South of Iraq.
[184] Kerim Yildiz, *The Kurds in Iraq: The Past, Present and Future*, Pluto Books, 2004 (p. 42)
[185] Ofra Bengio, *The Kurds of Iraq: Building a State Within a State*, Lynne Rienner, 2012, (p. 203)

Bengio several factors contributed to the coming together of Iraqi Kurdish parties to condone and participate in genuine elections. These included the absence of the regime from key Kurdish areas, the need to obtain the goodwill of the West and its continued military umbrella, and the desire to avoid another Baghdad imposed regional legislature.[186] In the event only the KDP and PUK secured seats, almost exactly split down the middle, with the KDP fractionally ahead. In June 1992 the National Assembly held its first meeting and formed a governing cabinet, with 16 ministers, including one for the Peshmerga military, and one each for the provinces of Erbil, Sulaimaniya and Dohuk. The new Kurdish government revised its stated national goal from the autonomy that had once been condoned by Baghdad to federation which it vehemently opposed. This was viewed not just by Iraq as an act of separatism, but worried all neighbouring countries, and caused cautious responses from the West where it was felt necessary to stress a commitment to Iraqi unity. In any case as Ofra Bengio writes, the Kurds had achieved unprecedented advances in the creation of a governing structure, united under the two leaders of the KDP and PUK respectively:

> "On the political level, unlike the single leadership of Mulla Mustafa Barzani in the 1960s and early 1970s, a dual leadership emerged of Mas'ud [Barzani] and [Jalal] Talabani. Although neither had the stature of Mulla Mustafa Barzani, together they managed to create a more or less functioning leadership team – at least for a short time. The overall impression created was one of greater cohesion within the Kurdish national movement than during the preceding ten years and the beginning of coalescence of a central Kurdish government."[187]

There were divisions within the Turkish FPE as to the correct position towards the Iraqi Kurds. Özal had long been for bringing them under Turkish sway, and had even had secret meetings with Talabani and a representative of Masoud Barzani in February 1991. As he had put it to Cengiz Çandar, "Everybody else is speaking to them, why shouldn't we?"[188] On the other hand, the military establishment and the government of Demirel were staunchly against the emergence and recognition of any form of Kurdish autonomy in Iraq. In the end the declaration of federation was too much provocation and the Turkish government hosted a summit with representatives from Syria and Iran, ending in a statement declaring that all three held up the territorial integrity of Iraq. Nevertheless, the new reality in Northern Iraq could not be ignored.

[186] ibid.
[187] ibid. (p. 203)
[188] Cengiz Çandar, quoted in William Hale, "Turgut Özal, the Middle East and the Kurdish Question", *Journal of Business Economics and Political Science,* Vol:3, No:6, December, 2014, pp. 9-33 (p. 25)

In dealing with the new Kurdish authorities, the most pressing issue for Turkey concerned the effect of such developments on its own Kurdish issue, which had become increasingly securitised in the 1980s and 90s. In 1992, the same year as the Kurdish Regional Government was formed, the Turkish *National Security Policy Document* named Kurdish separatism (i.e. the PKK) as the most important source of threat to national security.[189] In this respect Turkey's main concern was that a power vacuum left by the retreat of central government forces and increasing in-fighting between Kurdish groups, or the vindication of a group with overtly anti-Turkish policies could create a powerful incentive for the PKK to intensify its terrorism in Turkey and gain ground in Iraq at the same time. During the 1980s, Turkey had benefitted from the Iraqi government's authorisation of "hot pursuit" operations against PKK forces operating out of Northern Iraq. Now, as a major partner in Operation Provide Comfort, Turkey was able to continue similar operations with US condolence and launched a military sweep of PKK camps in Northern Iraq as early as October 1992. Both the KDP and PUK, realising they could not afford to antagonise Turkey, also engaged the PKK on Turkey's behalf, attacking the organisation even before Turkish forces moved in. The KDP, prime beneficiary of trade along the Iraqi-Turkish border which had been cut by PKK activities, and threatened by PKK proclamations against traditional leadership, was more naturally opposed to the PKK. The PUK, was more ambiguous, a fact that was not lost on Turkey, which seemed to trust the KDP more. It has even been suggested that the PUK's early attack on the PKK, and the latter's subsequent surrender, had been a façade designed to ingratiate Turkey.[190]

In any event, recent gains against the PKK in Iraq, and the new relationship with the KDP and PUK caused Özal to pursue a hitherto unexplored avenue with regard to the PKK threat. This involved the unprecedented recognition, not just of a "PKK terrorism problem" within Turkey but also that of a "Kurdish problem". Alongside his push for cultural reforms to accommodate Kurdish demands Özal also engaged Jalal Talabani as a go-between with the PKK, in a process that eventually led to the PKK's first ever

[189] Gencer Özcan, "Turkey's Changing Neighbourhood Policy," *Turkish Yearbook of International Relations*, 35 (2004), pp. 1-15 (p. 3)
[190] Michael M. Gunter, "Turkey and Iran Face off in Kurdistan", *The Middle East Quarterly*, Vol. 5 No. 1, March 1998, pp. 33-40 (p. 36)

ceasefire declaration on 16 March 1993.[191] However President Turgut Özal was to die the very next day. The political upheaval that followed in Turkey, and the separate lead-up to armed conflict among the KDP and PUK in Iraq would make an already alarming situation more tense for Turkey.

The immediate question for Turkey's FPE was the policy of continuing to authorise the deployments for Provide Comfort II. Many in the FPE, especially within the government and security establishment, were deeply suspicious of the effect the coalition deployment was having on Turkey's security. From rumours of a Western plan to enact the Treaty of Sevres, to more realistic claims that coalition forces were empowering PKK militants with (allegedly accidental) arms and aid airdrops within Iraq, the suspicions grew. Still, without fail the Turkish parliament continued to ratify the continuation of the operation right up until 1997,[192] and neither did the security establishment (which as we saw began its dominance of Turkish foreign policy in the coalition period) act to override the decisions. According to Baskin Oran, apart from US diplomatic pressure, the main reason Turkey continued to support the operation, despite widespread misgivings, was the PKK terrorism issue. On the one hand, the aim was to extinguish the PKK from Northern Iraq, and on the other it was to empower Iraqi Kurdish groups to fill the power vacuum before it could be taken advantage of by the group. The PKK already had a history of operating out of Northern Iraq and Turkey feared that the retreat of central government forces would encourage further attacks from across the border and allow the PKK to set up bases in the region. Turkey's security thus depended on the ability to strike against the PKK across the border, whether through hot pursuit or security sweeps. This would require permission, or at least the turning of a blind eye by the United States, and that in turn would require continuing the mandate for its operation.[193] On the other hand, Turkey worked to enable the Iraqi Kurdish authorities by supporting the provision of electricity to the

[191] Cengiz Çandar, "Turgut Özal Twenty Years After: The Man and the Politician", *Insight Turkey*, Spring 2013, Vol.15 No.2 pp. 27-36 (p. 33)

[192] The operation was deeply opposed by the parties of both Bülent Ecevit and Necmetin Erbakan, who would both be prime minister. Even still extensions on the operation were granted by both governments. In 1997 the operation was replaced by a smaller programme called Operation Northern Watch but continued to be regularly extended until 2003. See: Henri Barkey, "Hemmed in by Circumstances: Turkey and Iraq since the Gulf War", *Middle East Policy*, Volume 7, Issue 4, October 2000, pp. 110-126, (pp.115-117)

[193] Baskin Oran, "ABD'nin ve Türkiye'nin Irak ve Kürtleri politikası" , *Birikim*, Vol. 168, April 2003, pp. 10-25 (p. 17)

region, supplying arms, and granting Turkish diplomatic passports to the leaders Barzani and Talabani, so they could drum up international support; and also, by granting access to countless NGOs to operate across the border and assist the Kurds in their reconstruction and development efforts.[194]

When the rival parties of Massoud Barzani's Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) and Jalal Talabani's Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) engaged in a full blown civil war in 1994, Turkey's worst fears were realised. Neither could they rely on Baghdad for security in Northern Iraq, nor on the warring Kurdish parties. Immediately, there were "marked warmings" in the relationship with Baghdad as Turkey explored the possibility of the central government's reassertion in the North.[195] Realising this was not going to happen, Ankara developed the dual tactic of increasing its own military influence in northern Iraq through a number of large scale operations, ostensibly against the PKK, while at the same time posing as a mediator between the rival Kurdish factions.

In January 1995 Turkey launched its first attempt at mediating between the KDP and PUK, holding meetings with both sides. Turkey also supported the US endorsed mission of David Litt, which attempted to deal with the conflict in the context of the wider Iraqi National Congress opposition movement. Neither initiative convinced the Iraqi Kurds to give up arms against one another and the Litt initiative, which implied regime change in Iraq through supporting the wider opposition, was not an ideal solution for Turkey either.[196]

On 20 March 1995, Turkey launched Operation Steel, a huge incursion of around 35,000 troops into Northern Iraq against PKK positions. The operation was criticized for its heavy-handedness on all sides, by the European parliament, the Iraqi Kurds (especially the PUK), and by the United States which urged Turkey to an early withdrawal of troops.[197] Other regional powers were also becoming wary of Turkey's increasing recklessness in its interventions in Northern Iraq.

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[194] ibid.
[195] Philip Robins, *Suits and Uniforms: Turkish Foreign Policy Since the Cold War,* Hurst & Company, London, 2003, (p. 331)
[196] ibid. (p. 334)
[197] ibid. (p. 335)

Iran responded by shoring up its relations with the PUK, opposed to Turkey's favoured KDP. Iran also deployed over 5,000 Badr Brigade fighters into PUK controlled territories of Northern Iraq. These backed up the PUK in its territorial struggle with the KDP, and even pushed the KDP to seek help from Baghdad and Saddam Hussein, allowing the Barzani faction to retake Erbil which had been captured by the PUK.[198] The Kurdish Civil War was thus also turning into a regional proxy war between Iran, Turkey, and Iraq. Iran became ever more vociferous in its denunciations of Turkey after 1996, as Turkey intensified its relations with Israel, and continued large-scale interventions into Northern Iraq, including sending up to 50,000 troops across the border towards Erbil and Kirkuk in May 1997, aiming to degrade PKK positions as well as prop up the KDP against the Iran-backed PUK. Turkey meanwhile accused Iran of assisting the PKK and supplying them with material support, most crucially the heat-seeking missiles which the PKK had used to down two Turkish helicopters operating in Northern Iraq.[199]

Turkey's relations with Syria also deteriorated in this period. In the early part of the decade Turkey had tried to minimise Syria's negative influence on the PKK issue by offering concessions. These related to water supply, as Turkey controlled the down-flow of the Euphrates towards Syria and had had serious disputes with it, especially after the controversial Greater Anatolia Project (GAP) dam project was launched. Thus Turkey had offered concessions on water supply in exchange for Syria's abandoning the PKK. When such incentives failed to produce results, Ankara had turned to other measures. Apart from its increasing ties with Israel, which in itself represented a threatening development for Syria, Turkey also gave overt warnings that made it clear that continued Syrian support of the PKK would lead to military consequences. This pressure eventually led to the expulsion of the PKK's leader Abdallah Öcalan from Syria, and his subsequent capture by Turkish special forces in Kenya. Turkey and Syria signed a Memorandum of Understanding on 20th October 1998.[200]

Tension with Iran, also seemed to improve after 1999. While Turkey continued its incursions into Northern Iraq in pursuit of the PKK, Iran backed out from direct

[198] Michael M. Gunter, "Turkey and Iran Face off in Kurdistan", *The Middle East Quarterly*, Vol. 5 No. 1, March 1998, pp. 33-40 (p. 37)
[199] ibid. (pp. 36-38)
[200] Gencer Özcan, "Turkey's Changing Neighbourhood Policy," *Turkish Yearbook of International Relations*, 35 (2004), pp. 1-15 (pp. 6-8)

involvement in Northern Iraq. Turkey's relationship with Israel and the United States weighed in her favour, as did the United States' renewed appetite for regime change in Iraq after Operation Desert Fox in December 1998.

Parallel to the ebb and flow of its relations with regional powers Turkey was involved in various attempts to settle the civil war between the KDP and PUK in Northern Iraq. By July of 1997 Ankara's attempts, which it had hopefully named the "Ankara Process", had collapsed with the withdrawal of the PUK from negotiations. Peace was eventually brokered with US mediation under the "Washington Agreement" with the KDP and PUK agreeing on revenue and power sharing in the Kurdistan region. Not long after this, PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan was captured in Kenya, a positive development in terms of Turkey's fight with the PKK, but it also put the spotlight more on Iraqi Kurdistan, amid substantiated fear that the PKK would regroup there. This was equally worrisome to Massoud Barzani and the KDP, bringing his faction closer to Ankara in coordinating military actions. Barzani visited Ankara and met officials numerous times and economic relations intensified.[201] By early 2000, with the regional balance now emerging in favour of Turkey and peace established between the Kurdish parties, even the PUK had realised the importance of Turkish patronage to politics in Iraqi Kurdistan, and by the end of the year had launched a full-scale offensive against its onetime partner the PKK.

Nevertheless, Turkish policy toward the emerging KRG remained contrary to any form of Kurdish autonomy. According to Henri J. Barkey, Turkey had established a number of red lines that governed policy:

> At different times, Ankara has articulated what it deems as its "red lines" in Iraq, which have had a great deal more to do with the disposition of northern Iraq than anything else. At first, these "red lines" were declared in opposition to any Kurdish federal arrangement in Iraq. Subsequently, they were refined to include three unacceptable outcomes: the creation of an independent Kurdish state in Iraq; the incorporation of the city of Kirkuk – deemed to be a Turkmen city by Ankara – into a Kurdish federal (or independent) state; and increased vulnerability of the Turkmen living in Kirkuk.[202]

The Turkmen issue, as Barkey points out, was a relatively new concern in Turkish foreign policy spheres, one that allowed Turkey to rally to the support of its ethnic kin in northern Iraq over and against Kurds.

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[201] Ofra Bengio, *The Kurds of Iraq: Building a State Within a State*, Lynne Rienner, 2012 (p. 256)
[202] Henri J. Barkey, "Turkey and Iraq, The Perils (and Prospects) of Proximity", United States Institute Of Peace: Special Report, 141, July 2005 (p. 5)

All in all, Turkey was loathe to let any absolute gains experienced by the KRG in their relationship in terms of security and trade go unbalanced by not keeping check on autonomy. Nevertheless, the positive factors were not lost on the Iraqi Kurdish side as "the KDP and later on the PUK managed to turn Turkey into a springboard for forging relations with the outside world and thus reinforce their national project".[203] This complex and contrary relationship had clearly not produced in the minds of Turkish foreign policy makers any logical conclusions and it continued unchanged up until, and to an extent, beyond the fateful events of March 2003.

4.2.2.4 Regional structural change and effects on relations between Turkey and Northern Iraq

In the above sections I analysed three important events and developments in structural change at the regional level that affected relations between Turkey and the emerging Kurdish authorities in Northern Iraq. First I looked at the new configuration among regional powers that emerged after the major global changes outlined earlier and the Gulf War. As at the global level, the United States was a major determiner of the new regional balance, pitching Arab, Turkish and Israeli allies against Iraq on one hand, and Iran and Syria on the other. Iraq, an already unstable state, provoked a major regional crisis with the invasion of Kuwait and gave the United States the pretext to inflict a huge military blow and economic and political restrictions.

The Gulf War had unforeseen consequences for Turkey. Despite Özal's ready solution to the refugee crisis, the controversy over continuing the safe zone was a major indicator of the anxiety Turkey's FPE felt over developments in Northern Iraq. However, the confluence of US pressure and the overbearing threat that the PKK take advantage of the situation evidently persuaded the FPE to retain what influence it could by keeping Turkey involved in the operation. Turkey supported the development of a fledgling government among the Kurdish Parties in Northern Iraq and began to cultivate relations with the only ground forces in the region that could legitimately prevent a power vacuum. When the Kurdish parties engaged in a civil war, Turkey resumed direct intervention into Iraq in pursuit of the PKK and began to deepen its relationship with the KDP, the Kurdish party with which it shared most common

[203] Ofra Bengio, *The Kurds of Iraq: Building a State Within a State*, Lynne Rienner, 2012 (p. 258)

interests. Here competition with Iran over influence in Northern Iraq, and with Syria over support for the PKK, also flared. However, with the overbearing influence of the United States and Turkey's favourable regional position, Turkey continued to intervene in Northern Iraq at will. The regional conflict remained a proxy one and helped to strengthen Turkey's affinity for the KDP over and against the PUK. This was due to a number of factors, but most importantly the shared economic interests because of the geographic proximity of KDP areas to Turkey, and the KDP's political and ideological opposition to the PKK. Nevertheless, as the decade drew to an end and a power sharing agreement was reached between the two Iraqi Kurdish parties, the PUK also began to normalise relations with Turkey. With the capture of Öcalan in 1999, and EU candidacy, Turkey had more reason to de-securitise its view of the emerging authorities in Northern Iraq, although remaining deeply wary of endorsing autonomy.

4.3 Changes in Issue based power structure

In Chapter 3, I introduced a number of specific structural issues that could be seen to have an inordinate effect on the development of relations between Turkey and Northern Iraq in the 1990s. These related to structural changes which affected specific aspects of the actors' lot in the distribution of power. These were energy, trade, and refugee issues. In the above sections some of the events associated with these changes have been mentioned, for example, the sanctions and economic embargo placed on Iraq, the cutting of oil pipelines to Turkey, the emerging trade relations with the KRG, and the refugee crisis that led to the creation of a "power vacuum" in Northern Iraq.

In the following sections I will investigate each of these issues and associated events in further detail and evaluate the relevance of changes at these levels as major determiners of changing attitudes and policies between Turkey and the nascent KRG's authorities.

4.3.1 Energy

As mentioned in Chapter 3, Turkey has long been a net importer of energy. From the 1970s onward Turkey began to increase energy imports, especially oil and gas, which

rose from under 20 percent to over 70 percent, drastically.[204] By 1990, Iraq had become Turkey's main source of oil, supplying up to 60 percent of imports. A pipeline between Kirkuk in Iraq, and the Turkish port of Ceyhan was built in 1976 to supply Turkish domestic demand and facilitate Iraqi exports to the wider world. In 1984 the pipeline was expanded and in 1987 a parallel line was built, significantly increasing transportation capacity. Apart from allaying domestic demand, the pipelines transported one third of Iraqi oil production to the world market and supplied Turkey with around $400 million yearly in transit fees, a significant part of the $2 to $3 billion worth of total yearly trade.[205]

Energy had thus been the backbone of the economic relationship between Turkey and Iraq, another pillar of status-quo preferred by the two states, alongside maintaining the regional balance of power, and opposing Kurdish nationalism. As the infrastructure and political and economic, and infrastructural framework for this energy relationship broke down in the early 1990s, so too did the value of the status quo. In August 1990, Özal had ordered the Turkish part of the pipeline to be shut down, anticipating international sanctions on Iraq after its invasion of Kuwait. Economic relations with Iraq had already been troubled following the Iran-Iraq war when Saddam Hussein accused Turkey of taking advantage of his country economically.[206] Nevertheless, Özal certainly hoped sanctions would be lifted once Iraqi forces retreated from Kuwait. In the face of US and international pressure to maintain the sanctions alongside the no-fly zones and Kurdish enclave, Turkey had to adapt to the new situation. The imperative to resume oil trade meant Ankara would push to reinstate the pipeline, but it also forced Turkey, to explore new arrangements dealing with the newly autonomous Kurdish authorities that now controlled Turkey's entire border with Iraq.

In terms of energy, Turkey did not give up on Iraq, although it was forced to seek new suppliers of oil, as Iraq dropped behind Saudi Arabia, then Iran, the United Arab Emirates, and Libya as the main suppliers. In 1994 an agreement was reached between Turkey and Iraq which proposed the flushing of the Kirkuk-Ceyhan pipeline, with Turkey paying for the resulting oil through a UN scheme to help Iraq import

[204] Source: World Bank World Development Indicators
[205] Gary Clyde Hufbauer, Jeffrey J. Schott, Kimberly Ann Elliott, *Economic Sanctions Reconsidered: History and Current Policy*, Volume 1, Institute for International Economics (U.S.), 2009, (p. 294)
[206] Henri Barkey, "Hemmed in by Circumstances: Turkey and Iraq since the Gulf War", *Middle East Policy*, Volume 7, Issue 4, October 2000, pp. 110-126, (pp. 111-112)

foodstuffs. The move did not go ahead, however, as Iraq refused to accept UN conditions for the delivery of funds. In 1996 the two sides came together again to look into preparing the pipeline for possible UN endorsed oil exports. In December 1996 the "Oil-for-Food" programme was initiated, which allowed Iraq to export oil in exchange for food, medicine, and humanitarian items that were not under sanction. Most of the oil thus exported went through the pipeline to Ceyhan through Turkey.[207]

Although better than nothing, these openings in oil trade with Iraq did little to reinvigorate the energy relationship between Turkey and Iraq that had flourished before the Gulf War. This was compounded, as we shall see in the next section, by the economic losses Turkey suffered as a result of sanctions. However, the most important effect of the structural changes in the energy relationship was that Turkey could now envision a region where Iraq, or at least the regime of Saddam Hussein, was no longer a major pole of its energy supply infrastructure. As the decade wore on and energy relations with other states, Saudi Arabia and Iran developed, this perception set in. Toward the end of the decade, as it became clear that the United States had no intention of allowing the regime to remain, let alone lift sanctions, the impression only intensified. Meanwhile, first in the realm of trade, but also in the realm of energy supply, Iraq's Kurds were gaining a place in the picture.

Ironically for Iraq's Kurds the massive restrictions on the country's oil export structure were the source of increasing autonomy. On one hand a percentage (13%) of all revenue from the oil-for-food programme was earmarked for humanitarian projects in the Kurdish safe zones.[208] On the other, the Kurds, and especially Massoud Barzani's KDP, were able to benefit from illicit smuggling of oil across the border to Turkey. Allegedly, at its peak this illicit oil trade saw up to 500 trucks carrying diesel fuel cross the border a day.[209] While illicit trade can hardly be counted as a part of a new structure of energy relations for Turkey, it did highlight the value of energy trade with Turkey to the Iraqi Kurds. Even on the Turkish side, the potential of Iraq's Kurds becoming formal energy suppliers was recognised, although negatively. The question of Kirkuk, which contained a large part of Iraq's oil resources became a controversial issue on the agenda. Not wanting to allow the oil wealth of Kirkuk to fund an independent Kurdish

[207] *The Middle East and North Africa*, Taylor & Francis Group, 2003, (p. 500)
[208] Kerim Yildiz, *The Kurds in Iraq: The Past, Present and Future*, Pluto Books, 2004 (p. 71)
[209] Vivian C. Jones, *Iraq's Trade with the World: Data and Analysis*, CRS Report for Congress, 2004, (p. 18)

state, Turkey intensified its formal support for the region's Turcoman population as a counterbalance to Kurdish claims on Kirkuk.[210]

While changes in the structure of energy relations may not have had a direct effect on the level of cooperation between Turkey and Northern Iraq's Kurds beyond its role in wider structural changes in trade and economic relations, it did set the ground work for later developments. Most importantly this relates to Turkey's retreat from the status quo that held the Baghdad central government as the only partner to deal with in securing energy supply from Iraqi territories. Later this would allow Turkey to consider Iraq's Kurds as potential partners in establishing new energy security regimes and infrastructure. While in the 1990s the Kurdish authorities in Northern Iraq were not recognised as partners in energy, they were to recognised as partners in trade.

4.3.2 Trade

If the pipeline infrastructure and economic agreements were the backbone of economic relations between Turkey and Iraq before the Gulf War, and the flow of oil was the blood that kept it alive, then the fleet of more than 40,000 trucks that transported goods daily between Turkey and Iraq were the "oxygen in the blood".[211] Prior to the war Iraq had been one of Turkey's major trading partners. Direct trade reached around $3 billion per year, and this was supplemented for Turkey with fees of about $1 billion on transit of goods destined to Iraq from Turkish ports.[212] Owned by locals along the Iraqi border, the above mentioned trucks, were also an important part of Turkey's south eastern economy, which it had made efforts to improve during the 1980s with initiatives such as the South Eastern Anatolia Project (GAP), and the Ataturk dam. The dam had already contributed to the tension with Iraq and had affected economic relations in the years before the Gulf War. Both Syria and Iraq were opposed to the project as it significantly affected water flow into their countries. From 1990 onward, when the newly-inaugurated dam was filled, Iraq regularly complained that the water supply agreement that had been agreed in 1987 was being violated by Turkey.[213] This

[210] Carol Migdalovitz, *Iraq: The Turkish Factor*, CRS Report for Congress, 2002, (p. 4)
[211] Amikam Nachmani, *Turkey: Facing a New Millennium: Coping with Intertwined Conflicts,* Manchester University Press, 2009, (p. 24)
[212] Vivian C. Jones, *Iraq's Trade with the World: Data and Analysis*, CRS Report for Congress, 2004, (p. 18)
[213] Mark Dohrmann and Robert Hatem, "The Impact of Hydro-Politics on the Relations of Turkey, Iraq, and Syria", *Middle East Journal*, Volume 68, No. 4, Autumn 2014, pp. 567-583, (p. 568)

significantly added to the tension between the two governments, and by 1995, as Turkey became more involved in Northern Iraq with military incursions and intensified relations with Kurdish authorities, Iraq moved to downgrade diplomatic relations and requested that Turkey remove its consulate from strategic Mosul, where it also had contact with the Turcoman population.[214]

Despite all this, the main structural impediment to the restoration of trade with Iraq was the sanctions regime imposed on the country by the international community. Turkey, by cutting the pipeline had anticipated the first round of sanctions, based on UN Resolution 661. However, these sanctions made reference to UN Resolution 660, and would be lifted if its conditions, complete withdrawal of Iraq from Kuwait, were met. A second round of sanctions, responding to Resolution 687, extended their validity beyond Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait, and tied them to the issues of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction and the full recognition of Kuwait's sovereignty and right to compensation. These sanctions, which prohibited Iraq from selling oil and other products on the international market, were to continue until 2003. As we saw previously, overall Turkey was willing to make sacrifices for its privileged position vis-à-vis the United States as major actor in the region. One of these sacrifices was the acceptance of the sanctions regime against Iraq which would so badly affect once prosperous trade relations. Moves were made to compensate Turkey for some of its losses, but these did not come near to compensating for the economic loss caused by sanctions.[215] The provisions of the Oil-for-Food programme stated that the 'larger share' of the oil exported would be done through Turkey. The United States also turned a blind eye to the cross border trade that developed between Turkey and Kurdish Northern Iraq.[216] While this trade was no replacement for fullscale economic relations with wider Iraq, it served Turkish interest in a number of ways.

Establishing trade with Iraqi Kurds had three main motivators for Turkey. One, the need to protect the strategic and delicate South Eastern economic development project from PKK attacks, both for obvious security and economic reasons, and in order to

[214] Robert W. Olson *eds*., *The Kurdish Nationalist Movement in the 1990s: Its Impact on Turkey and the Middle East*, University Press of Kentucky, 1996, (p. 109)
[215] These included textile export incentives from the US, as well as investments in military modernization, and defense funding from rich Arab US allies. See: Baskin Oran, *Türk Dış Politikası*, İletişim Yayıncılık, 2010, (pp. 257-258)
[216] Philip Robins, *Suits and Uniforms: Turkish Foreign Policy Since the Cold War,* Hurst & Company, London, 2003, (p. 318)

blunt the societal support for the PKK in the south east, an approach which was even more incentivised later as the EU urged de-securitisation of the "Kurdish problem". Addressing these security and economic issues required addressing the main developing arena of PKK threat, Northern Iraq, which in turn involved filling the power vacuum with amenable local forces (Iraqi Kurds), as we saw earlier. Secondly, in its mission to counter the PKK in Northern Iraq and fill the power vacuum, Turkey realised the value of patronising local armed Kurdish parties. Most valuable to it was the KDP, which represented a militarily capable, powerful party that was clearly against the PKK and controlled the border region with Turkey. The KDP was also intermittently fighting the PUK, which itself had been more ambiguous about the PKK and was supported by regional rival Iran. Lastly, by the end of the decade, Turkey needed to recognise that beyond its own deteriorating relations with Baghdad, the United States clearly wanted another wholesale change in the region, so exploring trade relations, which were beneficial on so many levels, with new entities such as the Iraqi Kurds, was certainly not a bad idea. In August 1995, the Habur border crossing was reopened, which allowed legitimate export of food and medicines but also illicit smuggling of oil back into Turkey. This empowered the KDP, who controlled the Iraqi side of the border crossing to collect large amounts of money paid in customs fees.[217]

For the KDP, as for the whole Kurdish region, any extra source of revenue was more than welcome. The region had been under embargo from Baghdad since the creation of the safe haven in 1991. All government funds were cut, as were shipments of goods and fuel to the region. Saddam Hussein's government even attempted to sabotage the currency in the Kurdish region by withdrawing a banknote widely in circulation without allowing Kurds to exchange it. In the end the currency held its value in the parallel Kurdish economy.[218] When the Oil-for-Food programme guaranteed a portion of profits for the Iraqi Kurds they found some relief. However, these funds mostly went directly to NGOs operating in the region, much to the chagrin of the Kurdish parties.[219] Clearly they also did not help these parties fund their civil war, and therefore such trade relations as enjoyed by the KDP with Turkey were highly valued, as were other forms of support, as enjoyed by the PUK vis-à-vis Iran.

[217] ibid., (p. 333)
[218] Kerim Yildiz, *The Kurds in Iraq: The Past, Present and Future*, Pluto Books, 2004 (p. 42)
[219] ibid., (p. 72)

As with the structure of energy relations, the most important change in the 1990s in trade relations was not the creation of particularly strong ties between the Turkish and Iraqi Kurdish sides. But, the 1990s did see important change in the destruction of the structural ties that had existed between Turkey and Iraq as represented by the Baghdad central government. As the decade wore on, the permanent nature of this change became clear, and finally the ground work in relatively small scale trade patterns was set for the Kurds to emerge later as partners in a new and structurally significant relationship with Turkey. It would take more than another decade for that to happen, but the significance of energy and trade relations as important structural influencers on relations seems equally apparent in the 1990s.

4.3.3 Refugee issues

As we have seen over this chapter, structural changes at the global, regional, and economic levels produced the unprecedented development of relations between Turkey and Northern Iraq's Kurds, with both sides moving towards closer cooperation as the decade wore on. First this brought Turkey closer to the KDP. Then the PUK, after the parties settled the civil war, also began to recognise Turkey as an important partner. For Turkey this development represented the unprecedented modification of a number of foreign policy mainstays. The most important of these to change, the *sine qua non* of relations with an autonomous Kurdish entity in Northern Iraq, was the apparent abandonment of the commitment to Iraqi territorial integrity and the central control of the Baghdad government. As we saw earlier, this was not a policy change that Turkey actively pursued, rather it was the inevitable result of a number of other developments that had taken place in Iraq and required swift responses from Turkey. Chief among these was Turkey's response to the refugee crisis that saw up to half a million Kurdish refugees mass along its border with Iraq in 1991. We saw that Turkey refused to admit the bulk of the refugees, arguing that the situation should be dealt with on the Iraqi side of the border, an insistence that eventually led to the creation, and subsequent long-term implementation of a safe zone in Iraqi Kurdistan and would create the conditions for Iraqi autonomy with the withdrawal of central government troops. In this section I intend to investigate the reasons why Turkey responded to the refugee crisis in such a way that triggered events necessitating a wholesale revision of its long standing Iraq policy, which also reflected its longstanding strategic culture. The question here is why the refugee crisis caused a decision that would so rapidly

lead to consequences that would necessitate Turkey to uproot a mainstay of its regional foreign policy.

The basic conundrum facing the Turkish FPE in April 1991 was whether to allow the half million Kurdish refugees that headed toward the Turkish border into Turkish territory or not. The humanitarian implications of each decision are beyond the scope of this thesis, but it is likely the Kurds would have faired better if they had been allowed to cross the border, if at least to alleviate the panic that had built up among those fleeing. Turkey would also most likely have received international support to set up refugee camps. However, the Turkish FPE's decision to keep the border closed reflected other concerns. According to Baskin Oran there were three main reasons. First, the precedent set by Saddam Hussein's Anfal campaign in 1988 which had triggered a similar refugee crisis. Despite accepting tens of thousands of refugees Turkey had suffered from instense international criticism, while at the same time feeling the international community had done very little to assist, economically or otherwise. Second, the Turkish FPE feared that refugee camps, or any settlement of Iraqi Kurds in Turkey would create potential bases for the PKK to abuse. This, according to Oran was a common perception in the government that was also rooted in the experience of the 1988 refugee crisis. It should be noted that in that crisis, as in 1991, there were also peshmerga fighters among the refugees. Therefore, the possibility of indeterminate armed camps popping up was not far fetched, whether peshmerga regrouping, or PKK. The third concern, according to Oran, was that a "Gaza" style permanent refugee settlement would arise, compounding the above problems.[220]

The decision not to allow the refugees across the border reflected threat perceptions that were shared by all players in the Turkish FPE, economy, and hard security, especially in the face of PKK threat. However, the set of events that the decision triggered, would require Turkey to take further decisions that raised many of the same alarm bells. It would require a unique force in the FPE to push these through. Again Turgut Özal's role was instrumental. Turkey had immediately started supplying the Kurds across the border with aid material, and Özal pressured President Bush to support aid efforts, mandated by the United Nations, and supported by the European

[220] Baskin Oran, "Kalkık Horoz-Çekiç Güç ve Kürt Devleti", *Avrasya Dosyası*, (Kuzey Irak Özel Sayısı), Cilt 3, Sayı 1 (1996), p. 155-172 (pp. 159-160)

Union too. While the relief operation had UN mandate, the imposition of the no-fly zone was instigated by the United States, with support from Britain and France. For the United States a new, and possibly long-term method of containing Saddam had been discovered. As Baskin Oran's says, "the United States had discovered the Kurds utility".[221] As we saw earlier it was due to US pressure to continue the operation, and the desire to maintain a major role in developments in Northern Iraq that Turkey continued to ratify its support for the Kurdish safe haven.

Securing Turkey's initial participation required a feat of political acrobatics on Özal's behalf. The international coalition would maintain the operation from Turkey, stationing foreign troops on Turkish soil. Unless required as a matter of diplomatic courtesy, or as part of an existing treaty, the stationing of foreign troops would require parliamentary approval according to the Turkish constitution. Nevertheless, Turkish participation in the operation was announced without any such explicit parliamentary approval, although Özal was able to argue, supported by a compliant prime minister, that previous parliamentary decisions provided enough precedent.[222] The events took place during the period where Özal's overbearing influence on foreign policy was most pronounced. At the same time, even those who would presumably most have opposed the policy, the security establishment, allowed the operation to continue, even when they had significantly regained influence within the FPE. Once again, it seemed a case of Özal's initiative pushing through a policy that while not irrational, could not be countenanced, let alone initiated, by others in the FPE. In this case it would prove to be one of the most decisive decisions to shape the course of relations with Northern Iraq. At the same time this crucial decision was sparked by the Turkish FPE's particular assessment of a refugee crisis, clearly a significant determinant of policy in this context.

4.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, after charting the domestic configuration and important milestones for each side throughout the decade, I analysed the major structural changes that affected relations between Turkey and Northern Iraq in the 1990s. As we have seen, the relationship developed from almost non-existent, to a grudging acceptance by Turkey

[221] ibid. (p. 161)
[222] ibid., (pp. 162-163)

of Iraq's Kurds as a cooperative partner in key aspects of national interest. For the Kurds, by the end of the decade Turkey was clearly a powerful and potentially beneficial patron, both in terms of their struggle against Baghdad, and in terms of gaining security, economic, and political benefits. We saw how developments and events at the global, regional, and issue-based levels caused this relationship to develop, often requiring longstanding foreign policy principles to be changed, especially on the Turkish side. I also investigated how domestic variables played into these changes to produce the results discussed.

Developments at the global level caused a particular response to Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait, otherwise a regional event. US hegemony was asserted, and for the rest of the decade, all players would find themselves under the sway of the United States. The new regional dynamics, centred on Iraq, saw Turkey face a number of unprecedented developments. In the aftermath of the Gulf War, Turkey faced the creation of a Kurdish safe zone. This safe zone soon turned into a permanent feature of the regional configuration, and a potential 'power vacuum' emerged as the Kurdish parties that aimed to create an autonomous government in the zone descended into civil war. Turkey was forced to deal with the consequences, both in terms of the regional balance, and in terms of security threats emanating from inside Turkey but extending into Northern Iraq, namely the PKK. Here we saw how a stronger relationship emerged between Turkey and one Kurdish party in particular, the KDP. However, by the end of the decade, given Turkey's favourable position in the regional balance, backed by the United States, both Kurdish parties were turned toward cooperation with Turkey. For Turkey the relationship was also furthered by the collapse of the previous status quo, that saw Baghdad as the sole partner in security and economic issues. This was backed up at the issue based level, as important energy and trade relations collapsed while tentative economic relations with Iraq's Kurds signalled the potential for a different future. We also saw how one particular issue, a refugee crisis and the Turkish FPE's assessment of this event, had an inordinate effect on the course of events.

5. CONCLUSION

In this thesis I set out to investigate the factors affecting the development of relations between Turkey and Northern Iraq and their increasingly cooperative nature. I chose to focus on the decade of the 1990s as this is when relations first emerged, and the trend towards cooperation began. As outlined in Chapter 2, I adopted a neoclassical realist approach that prioritises structural change, while allowing for influence from domestic factors too, as the major determinants of foreign policy choices. In Chapter 3, I outlined the historical structural context at the global, regional, and issue based levels as well as the internal peculiarities of the Turkish and Iraqi Kurdish FPEs in relation to traditional strategic culture and the role of the main players within the FPE. I then applied this approach to an analysis of relations in the 1990s, which stands as a decade of important structural change, investigating how these changes contributed to the development of cooperative relations between the two parties, while at the same time controlling for the received effects of strategic culture and important developments on the domestic level. By doing this I hoped to define the most important structural factors affecting those relations, as well as any notable internal factors that contributed. The 1990s represent the background to what has, over the following decade, become a strong and cooperative relationship between Turkey and Northern Iraq. Therefore, it should be possible to investigate the continued relevance of the structural factors that determined policy in the 1990s, as well as any significant changes in domestic configurations. After I summarise the findings of the thesis below I will attempt to draw some conclusions as to their relevance in light of subsequent developments.

Before turning to the historical background and analysis of structural factors in the 1990s, I outlined the theoretical considerations that would influence my approach. In doing so I explained why I chose neoclassical realist theory as a framework. This was because of its placing structural factors, in the neorealist sense, as the main motivators of foreign policy among states. At the same time, it allows for the incorporation of domestic variables, an essential consideration when analysing a specific case of

relations. I explained how this idea of structural change is envisioned, primarily following the neorealist model of the effects of global distributions of power on how states act, and I introduced further levels of structural analysis in regional and issue based distributions of power. I then outlined and discussed the main domestic factors which neoclassical realist scholars have proposed as intervening variables between structural change and foreign policy response. In the final part of Chapter 2, drawing on the review of domestic factors, I proposed that two main avenues needed to be investigated with regard to domestic influences for the actors analysed in this thesis. First, the general strategic culture and specific domestic actors' influences on the process of threat assessment. Second, the coherence of the FPE and the balance of power among domestic actors within it.

In Chapter 3, I gave background to the structural context within which relations between Turkey and Northern Iraq would take off in the 1990s. At the global level, we saw the enduring effect of the Cold War, which had been so crucial in determining Turkish foreign policy until it ended at the beginning of the decade. At the regional level we saw some dynamics of the Middle East that need to be taken into account, the tendency for internal state instability and intra-state conflict, as well as the prevailing balance of power among key regional states. Then I explained why some issues, energy, trade, and migration might need special attention as distributions of power that have particular effects on players' strategic calculations. In terms of the domestic context for foreign policy making, in both players I outlined the strategic culture and the effects of other cognitive processes on threat perception, and also the traditional make-up and balance between influential players within the FPE. For Turkey, a picture emerged of a well-established strategic culture, based on historical experience, and at times mediated by influential personalities, such as president Turgut Özal beginning in the 1980s.

In Chapter 4, turning first to the question of FPE coherence on both sides throughout the 1990s, we saw that the weak coalition period of government which followed after Özal somewhat weakened the ability to implement efficient foreign policy, but certainly empowered the security establishment, that already enjoyed huge influence, and became the main determiner of threat assessment, heavily weighted toward security concerns, especially emanating from Kurdish separatism. On the Iraqi Kurdish side, I explained that it would be impossible to speak of an FPE as a distinct determiner

of foreign policy in the 1990s as the two main Kurdish parties engaged in a civil war. Nevertheless, I outlined who these players were and how they emerged on the world stage as representatives of a nascent Kurdish government in Northern Iraq.

The main part of Chapter 4 then turned to the crucial structural changes and events of the 1990s, that not only disrupted the previous status quo but caused the initial emergence and development of relations between Turkey and Northern Iraq as a distinct entity. Structural change at the global level, that came about with the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the rise of US hegemony was undoubtedly the change of largest magnitude, and set into motion all subsequent developments. Nevertheless, it would seem that the regional fallout of these events had a more direct effect on the course of relations between Turkey and Northern Iraq. Saddam Hussein's reckless invasion of Kuwait, the United States' response, and the consequences of the Gulf War were crucial. Here we saw how the war, supported by Turkey attempting to reassert its position as a key ally of the regional and global superpower, brought about new regional realities that threatened key interests and bastions of Turkish foreign policy. The containment of Saddam Hussein brought to an end a cautions yet key relationship with Baghdad, based on security, energy and trade. The creation of a 'power vacuum' in Northern Iraq after the retreat of Saddam Hussein's forces not only created the conditions for Kurdish autonomy, but also touched one of the rawest nerves in Turkish threat perception. The possibility of the vacuum being exploited by PKK militants turned it into an immediate priority for Turkey, which in turn caused it to seek partners within Northern Iraq. Here the KDP reciprocated, more amenable to Turkey's view of the PKK and geographically set to benefit more from cross border trade with Turkey. For Turkey too, the KDP whose territory comprised most of the border region was a more reliable security partner than its rival, the PUK. Meanwhile the Kurdish parties were turned into proxies for a regional competition over influence in Northern Iraq, mainly between Turkey and Iran. However, Turkey with backing from the United States was undeterred in its insistence on pursuing PKK targets within Northern Iraq, and by the end of the decade had impressed upon both Kurdish parties the realisation that it was the decisive neighbour in determining their future. Thus Turkey had overturned a number of major bastions of its previous foreign policy. Firstly, emboldened by the United States' implacable drive to punish Saddam Hussein it had renounced previously cordial relations with Baghdad and allowed important

energy and trade relations to collapse. Here we saw the role of President Özal as an important facilitator of these massive changes in foreign policy. However, I also noted that while Özal's policies were formed unconventionally, they were also mostly rational responses to the considerable changes that were happening. Secondly, Turkey had accepted if not *de jure*, then *de facto*, the emergence of a degree of Kurdish autonomy in Northern Iraq that went far beyond what would have previously been tolerated. Again this was mainly due to the grudging acceptance that the region must have some sort of local authority capable of preventing PKK abuse of a power vacuum. Although the consequences, *de facto* Kurdish autonomy in Iraq, was already an inconceivable occurrence for Turkey's FPE, this consideration was trumped by concern over the PKK, which had been identified as the major source of threat by Turkey's security establishment, the leading player in the FPE for most of the decade.

In summary, the development of relations between Turkey and Northern Iraq was driven by major changes initiated at the global level but played out in the region. Furthermore, specific issues contributed to openings and cooperation among the two sides. The United States' drive to invade Iraq and contain the regime of Saddam Hussein ensured that the basic conditions of Kurdish autonomy were met, forcing Turkey to engage in Northern Iraq. Regional rivalries, and more importantly the PKK threat, caused Turkey to engage with the Kurdish authorities and establish a cooperative relationship, first with the KDP, and then PUK. The United States continued influence through the decade ensured that Turkey's position was reinforced over and against its regional rivals, and that it became a necessary partner for Iraq's Kurdish parties in their quest for autonomy and economic sufficiency. The breakdown of important structural energy and trade relations with Iraq meant that Turkey, by the end of the decade, was in a position to explore new relations in these fields, and one avenue for this opened up in Northern Iraq, especially in terms of trade.

Many of these structural changes remained salient throughout the next decade. Indeed, we have witnessed a further deepening of relations. The 2003 Invasion of Iraq, reinforced American hegemony in the region, at least until its 2009 withdrawal. Up until 2009 Turkey remained cautious about granting further recognition to the Iraqi Kurds. Turkey continued to lobby the United States for rights to intervene against the PKK in Northern Iraq, and insisted on treating Baghdad, after regime change, as the only legitimate counterpart in Iraq. However, changes were under way. Particularly

the EU ascension process, which the AK Party enthusiastically embraced after negotiations began in 2005, created incentives for de-securitising the Kurdish issue and rolling back the military's influence in government. The AK Party came to recognise the confluence in these projects, as changing the approach to the Kurdish issue from one based solely on security and military means would help win the Kurdish vote while at the same time decreasing the military's influence. Thus while Ankara hoped to adopt a less militaristic approach to the PKK at home, it was in a sense outsourcing the conflict to Iraq, relying ever more on its relations with Erbil, and especially Massoud Barzani to see that the PKK were contained there too. Added to this was increasing recognition of the importance of trade relations with northern Iraq, both in terms of energy, whether or not this involved Baghdad, and in terms of other economic activities that held huge potential for Turkey, and especially its restive South East. Finally, Ankara, in the lead up to the 2010 Iraqi elections, became increasingly concerned at the direction that the central government was taking under Nouri al-Maliki.

Cross border trade has increased steadily since the lifting of sanctions on Iraq in 2003. Iraq represents Turkey's second or third largest trading partner, and up to 80 per cent of that trade is with the KRI itself. Eighty percent of consumer goods available in the KRI are of Turkish origin. There are currently over 1000 Turkish companies operating in the KRI, engaged in construction, engineering, transportation, retail, banking and of course energy.[223]

Turkey has experienced the fastest growth in energy demand among OECD countries over the past two years. Its energy use is projected to double over the next decade. Most of this growing demand has been met with imports from Russia and Iran. Ankara has long been keen to diversify away from Russian gas in order to gain wider foreign policy leeway toward that country. With regard to Iran, the main problem has been the unreliability of supply as Iranian gas is often cut off during winter in response to domestic demand peaks. Turkey has also struggled to find ways to pay for its purchases

[223] Bill Park, "Turkey-Kurdish Regional Government Relations After the U.S. Withdrawal from Iraq: Putting the Kurds on the Map?", *Strategic Studies Institute and U.S. Army War College Press*, March, 2014 (p. 12)

from Iran due to international sanctions on Iran' financial sector.[224] In this context the KRI's energy resources represent a source of energy security for Ankara.

Turkey's approach to the KRI during the 2000s, building on the relations established in the 1990s and based on geopolitical prudence, mutual security interests, and economic relations have assured that Iraq's Northern region has remained an asset and not a liability for Turkey. Questions remain, related to the internal affairs in the KRI, that Turkey must address with caution, namely the political future of the dominant KDP party, and the rise of opposition that may not be so amenable to Turkey's interests. Also the potential that a new global and regional era has begun with Russia's reassertion in the Middle East and the collapse of order in Syria. Here, one should be cautious drawing parallels between Turkey's involvement in Syria and the story of Northern Iraq. While the escalation of PKK terrorism, and Turkey's concerns over the group's links to newly powerful Syrian Kurdish groups, affirms the important place of the PKK threat in Turkish perception, the situation is otherwise greatly different. Unlike in the case of the emergent Kurdish authorities in Northern Iraq in the 1990s, the current dominant factions among Syrian Kurds are directly, formally linked to the PKK. Also for further study it would be necessary to investigate the effects of the last two decades of history on the strategic culture of Turkey, and whether any important changes have taken place in the longstanding make up of the FPE, especially with regard to civil-military relations.

But most important as a conclusion is to note the ultimately consistent approach in Turkish policy to the KRI from the 1990s until the present that has brought positive results and has been reinforced over twenty years of relations. While structural change continues to demand new policy responses from both sides to events across the region, as yet, nothing has occurred to alter the course that was set with the major structural changes of the 1990s.

[224] Massimo Morelli and Constantino Pischedda, "The Turkey-KRG Energy Partnership: Assessing Its Implications", *Middle East Policy*, 21/1, Spring, 2014 (p. 111)

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