The Impact of Domestic Politics on Foreign Policy Decision-Making in Turkish-American Relations

Sevda Ceren Ozgur
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Thesis Advisor: Professor Jacqueline Braveboy-Wagner

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Abstract

This study is an analysis of the impact of public opinion on the foreign policy decision-making process in Turkish-American relations. The aim of the study is to understand the construction and the mobilization of public opinion, and its impact on the decision-makers. Turkey and the United States have a long history of friendship dating back to the late 18th century. Public opinion has had a substantial influence on Turkish-American relations. There are various actors, such as lobby groups and the media, involved in the construction and the mobilization of public opinion in both countries. Understanding how they work and how they interact with each other is crucial to comprehending influence of public opinion on foreign policy making. In this study, three cases are analyzed to highlight this influence: the Cyprus Problem, the Armenian Question and the Turkish accession to the European Union. In looking at these cases, it is argued that in the United States public opinion is generally constructed and mobilized by the elites on issues in which a subgroup of the nation has a special interest. On the other hand, in Turkey, public opinion is mostly a reaction derived from the relatively more nationalistic identity of the Turkish public which is also shared by the policy makers. Thus, in Turkey the flow of public opinion to the policy makers is comparatively more direct. The analysis concludes that my hypothesis is correct with respect to the United States but there are mixed results with respect to Turkey.
Chapter 1: Rationale for Studying Public Opinion

Turkey and the United States of America have a long history of friendship dating back to the late 18th century. Although these two countries are geographically far away from each other, and have different identities, they generally have good relations with each other because of their common interests. Their contemporary relationship began with the agreement of March 12, 1947, which implemented the Truman Doctrine which is an economic and military aid program that aimed to provide US support to Greece and Turkey to prevent them falling into the Soviet sphere.\(^1\) Since that day, Turkey and the United States have had mainly good relations with some fluctuations. Some of these fluctuations have been caused by the actions of the US executive or legislature which have alienated the Turkish leadership and public. Examples include the infamous “Johnson Letter,” a telegram sent from the US President Johnson to Turkish President Inonu in 1964 asking Turkey in a threatening manner to stop any possible Turkish intervention into Cyprus,\(^3\) and then recognition of the “Armenian Genocide” by the US House Committee on Foreign Affairs.\(^4\)

In my thesis, I will look at the way public opinion influences foreign policy

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1. Although the relations date back further than this date, I prefer to use this starting point given by the official website of U.S. Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs (2010) Background Note: Turkey. Retrieved October 1, 2010, from: [http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3432.htm#relations](http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3432.htm#relations)
4. The United States House Committee on Foreign Affairs approved House Resolution 106 (HR106), a bill that categorized and condemned the Ottoman Empire for the Armenian Genocide, on October 10, 2007. In response to the decision, Turkey ordered their ambassador to the United States to return to Turkey for "consultations."
responses in Turkish-American relations. In both of these democracies, public opinion has had a substantial influence on the decision-making process, but there are differences in the way public opinion has been constructed and expressed. I will use as examples three cases which have generated public reactions in both countries: the Armenian Question to show the influence of the Armenian lobby in the United States, the Cyprus Problem to analyze the competition between Turkish and Greek lobby groups in the United States, and Turkey's accession into the European Union to observe the influence of different lobby groups seeking to increase or diminish US support for Turkey's accession bid. In all these cases, the Turkish side will also be analyzed in terms of the reaction of groups and the public in Turkey. The rationale I used in the selection of these cases is that there has been strong influence of public opinion in all three cases.

In traditional international relations thinking, dominated by state-centric realism, public opinion is not counted as one of the factors affecting foreign policy. Realism suggests that the most important concern of a state is survival in the anarchical order of international relations. For this survival, the most crucial policy area is security which is called “high politics” by classical realists. “High politics” should be separated from “low politics” which refers to non-security issues. In foreign policy analysis, however, public opinion has long been considered as an influence in decision making, even though classical realists felt that foreign policy should be left to the specially educated elite, and kept away from disputes of domestic politics.  

In the past, the “Almond-Lippmann Consensus” based on the ideas of two scholars Walter Lippmann and Gabriel Almond, was accepted by scholars as a broad

agreement on three propositions about public opinion: (1) public opinion is highly volatile; (2) it lacks coherence or structure; but (3) at the end of the day, it has little if any impact on foreign policy. These pessimistic ideas about public opinion in the United States started to change with the Vietnam War. During and after the war, various studies and surveys of public opinion about the war were made. The results of these showed that public opinion is not “moody” as the consensus suggests. Scholars such as Benjamin Page and Robert Shapiro, belonging to the “revisionist” school, challenged the consensus and suggested that public opinion is not volatile, but rather it tends to be stable and rational. Any changes are rational responses to international and domestic changes. Although the Page and Shapiro approach has come to dominate foreign policy scholarship, both schools have strengths and weaknesses and this study draws from the ideas of both to show that while public opinion changes under different conditions, it does not change radically but stays within a predictable range. Although, today, there is still a debate about the limits of the influence of public opinion on foreign policy, there is no debate at the issue of whether public opinion has some influence on foreign policy. It is important to understand how it is shaped and how it flows from the public to the policy makers. Although sometimes the “masses” directly influence policy-makers, it is usually the “elite” who aggregate and articulate mass opinion. I will therefore consider both the role of the mass public as well as that of the “elites.” Elites are bureaucrats, writers, opinion leaders, lobby groups, interest groups, national groups, NGOs, and advocacy

7 Ibid., p.445-446
8 "Collective policy preferences of the American public are predominantly rational, in the sense that they are real, coherent, and that when collective policy preferences change, they do so in predictable ways." Benjamin I Page, Robert Y. Shapiro (1992) The Rational Public, Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1992
Turkey is a country located between Europe and Asia, and possessing territory on both continents. The Republic of Turkey was established in 1923 as a secular and constitutionally democratic country after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. Although Turkey has strong historical, cultural and religious ties with the East, mostly because of its predominantly Muslim population, from the beginning of its establishment it aimed to be a part of Western world. Turkey is a strong regional power. The United States, as a global superpower having interests in Europe and especially in the Middle East, has important relations with this regional power. The United States has a very different identity, which is predominantly Christian.

The Armenian Question is a very important case showing how lobby groups can draw attention to a problem, and affect domestic and foreign policy-making. Armenians claim that in 1915, they were killed, tortured and deported from the Ottoman Empire. They see these actions as a deliberate and systematic attempt to destroy the Armenian population in the Empire, so they want the incident to be referred to as a “Genocide.” Meanwhile, the Turkish side claims that in 1915, the Empire was involved in World War I. Different nations under the weakening Empire were trying to gain their independence by rebellions; the Armenian population was one of them. In 1915, Armenian Volunteers joined the Russian Army and started to fight against the Ottoman Empire.\footnote{Richard G. Hovannisian (1968) “The Allies and Armenia, 1915-18” Journal of Contemporary History, Vol. 3, No. 1, pp. 145-168} The Turkish side claims that in the various revolts, people from many nations were being killed or tortured, not only Armenians but also Turks, Kurds, and Arabs. They deny that there was a deliberate and systematic effort to destroy the Armenian population. In this problem, the
most important issue is the use of the term “Genocide” which is a crime under international law with serious consequences. Turkish advocates oppose the use of the term saying that this term was defined and became a crime under international law after the United Nations Convention on the Crime and Prevention of Genocide was passed by the General Assembly on 10 December 1948.\textsuperscript{10} Thus, it can not apply to any incident which happened before this date. The Turkish public is strongly against the Armenian claims. In the United States, at the same time, there is a general support of the Armenians as an extension of the sympathy Americans feel toward all nations being wronged.

The Cyprus Problem is the second case chosen for analysis. Cyprus, an island located in the Eastern Mediterranean, has been an area of conflict from the very beginning of its history. Today, what is called the “Cyprus Problem” is a territorial dispute between Turkish and Greek Cypriots. Turkey and Greece are stakeholders in this problem as nationally bound states. The United States has been involved in attempts to resolve the case. In this case, Turkish public opinion is strongly nationalistic, and it is against any foreign intervention in the issue. US public opinion, in this case mostly created and led by lobby groups, has had an effect on US decision-making on this issue.

Cyprus has been an important issue in US-Turkish relations since the Johnson Letter was sent, which is considered a diplomatic mistake by scholars such as Nasuh Uslu because it caused widespread criticism and demonstrations against the United States in Turkey.\textsuperscript{11} The Turkish government at that time did not stop the operation in order to show that they did not accept any intervention in their foreign policy; they let the military start


the Cyprus Peace Operation. The Turkish operation led to a US military embargo on Turkey in 1974, strong protests in the United States against the Operation, a UN proposal called the Annan Plan and a referendum held in Cyprus. Among the groups leading public opinion in this case were advocacy groups such as The American Hellenic Institute and The American Turkish Council, which sought to create a favorable public opinion to gain US support for their positions.

The last case analyzed is the accession of Turkey into the European Union. Turkey's accession bid is an important issue in Turkish-American relations. The United States has supported Turkey's bid and issued several statements on this issue. In the United States, the Turkish Lobby works to maintain US support. Meanwhile, some advocacy groups in the United States, such as the Armenian-American Community and Greek Lobby are trying to reduce this support for Turkey's accession. In Turkey, public opinion on the issue is articulated by elites, mostly by the business elite.

In the rest of the thesis, I first review my research design and literature, then provide background on Turkish-American relations and the three cases I have selected. I then specifically analyze the role of public opinion in each case for each country. I conclude with a summary of my findings.

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Chapter 2: Public Opinion Research

The main question asked in my thesis will be “How does public opinion influence the decision-making processes in Turkish-American relations?” To answer this question, I hypothesize that public opinion has a substantial influence on foreign-policy decision-making processes in Turkish-American relations. However, although in both Turkey and the United States public opinion affects decision-making, it does so in different ways.

In the case of Turkey, public opinion appears generally as a response to a phenomenon driven by values, culture and nationalism. Because this reaction derives from the national a nationalistic identity, its flow is often directly from public to the leaders who share nationalistic public values and identity, and therefore are sensitive to mass opinion. The elites will obviously tend to share these nationalistic values as well.

In the case of the United States, public opinion is the outcome of a more complex process. The elites are more effective in the creation of public opinion. The elites channel the heterogeneous values and opinions of the people to the decision-makers. By the elites, I mean the media, lobbies and interest groups. In my thesis, I do not include Congress members as elites, as some studies do, but rather as decision-makers. Because of the sheer size of the country and the diversity of the nations living together, it is not possible for the masses to influence the leadership directly except through relatively rare demonstrations on issues of major interest. (see Figure 2.1)

In order to support my hypotheses, I will analyze three cases: the Armenian Question, the Cyprus Problem and Turkey's accession to the European Union. However, I will first discuss the literature and the main debates *Ibid.* the role of public opinion. I will start by defining what public opinion is. Then, I will look at the relationship between
public opinion and foreign policy. In the last part of this chapter, I will look specifically at the actors who create and mobilize public opinion in Turkey and the United States.

**Definitions and General Concepts**

If we agree with Pierre Bourdieu that “public opinion does not exist,”¹³ we think that it is simply an illusion supported by polls and surveys which do not mean anything but the numbers. Or we can agree with Susan Herbst and accept public opinion as a “socially constructed” reality created by our shared model of democracy in contemporary

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society, and actually just a reflection of the media.14 However, the literature on foreign policy takes the role of public opinion seriously.

In the literature, although there are various views Ibid. the characteristics of public opinion, it is nearly impossible to find a single definition of public opinion itself. At a minimum public opinion can be described as the sentiment shared by a number of people in a country Ibid. a political or social phenomenon. Although the opinion of the people cannot be homogenous, the dominant attitude is generally accepted as potentially influential public opinion. There are various reasons for the creation of this common ground such as history, culture, education, influence of elites (media especially), and religion.

This definition itself creates the need for further explanations. “Attitude” has countless definitions, but we can simply say that it is a response to objects based on prior knowledge or experience of the person, the public in this situation.15 According to Norrander and Wicx, attitudes have three main components: (1) a cognitive element that links the object to the information; this may even be a wrong belief but it shows what the individual believes as the truth/reality; (2) an affective element that links the object to an evaluation or emotional reaction; this is the element which makes us angry, happy, relaxed Ibid. that object, and (3) a conative element that may link the object to actual behavior; this element mobilizes the public to take action such as sending e-mails, and joining protests.16 By looking at these components, we can say that any opinion without an action is not a part of influential public opinion. However, unmobilized public opinion

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14 Ibid., pp.2-3
16 Ibid.
can also be important.

In the book, the *Anatomy of Public Opinion*, Jacob and Michal Shamir argue that public opinion is a system with four major premises. First, public opinion is a collective social system that mediates and accommodates social change with the knowledge of the very existence of others who share values, beliefs, and concerns. They emphasize that awareness of others and likeness of minds are crucial. Second, public opinion is a multidimensional phenomenon, which cannot be reduced to any single expression. With various different facets, public opinion is a dynamic social entity that often preserves the status quo but sometimes causes change. Third, they argue that public opinion always evolves on different dynamic paths. And finally, the nature of the information environment is a major factor in determining which dynamic will be set in motion. This information environment is mostly created by the elite.

Under the most simplistic definition, the elite is a relatively small but dominant group of people in a society. This small group has a privileged status, and is separated from the “masses” by their education, culture and influence over politics. Writers, media, lobby groups, and interest groups form part of elite. The rest of the public is generally called as the “masses.” The elite is seen as holding “opinion leadership” because of its education. The masses at the same time are generally seen as less educated and more subject to thinking emotionally. Thus there are three main groups interacting on policy matters: the elites, the masses and the decision-makers.

The general assumption follows Benjamin Page's theory of “elite-mass gaps”

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which states that there is an intellectual gap between the elite and the masses.\textsuperscript{18} While the elite has knowledge and ability to create change, ordinary citizens, the masses, follow them because of their limited information.

Of all criticisms made on public opinion, perhaps Walter Lippmann was the harshest modern critic.\textsuperscript{19} For Lippmann and his followers, “the informed and politically competent citizens of traditional democratic theory simply did not exist- not because most people were innately incapable of understanding the world of politics and public affairs but rather because they just did not have the time or energy to invest in learning the issues, policies, and other political matters that were remote from the practical concerns of their daily lives.”\textsuperscript{20} A public made up of politically informed citizens is “the unattainable ideal” for him. He claims that the public does not show interest in any subject unless it directly affects them.\textsuperscript{21} Lippmann was also against the acceptance of the results of surveys or polls as public opinion, because he believed that an uninformed public could not have a sound opinion just because it is asked to express its opinion often.\textsuperscript{22} Behind his criticism, Lippmann explains that his purpose is not to burden every citizen with expert opinions, but to push that burden away from him towards the responsible administrator.\textsuperscript{23}

\textsuperscript{18} Justin Lewis (2001) \textit{Constructing Public Opinion}, New York: Colombia University Press
\textsuperscript{19} Benjamin Page and Robert Shapiro (1992) \textit{The Rational Public}, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, p. 4
\textsuperscript{20} George F. Bishop (2005) p. 4
\textsuperscript{21} Walter Lippmann (1927) \textit{The Phantom Public}, USA; Transaction Publishers, pp.12-29
\textsuperscript{22} Page and Shapiro (1992) pp. 4-6
Public Opinion and Foreign Policy

In the realist world of international relations, public opinion was in the past seen as an unimportant detail with limited, if any, influence on decision-makers. Traditional IR thinking was dominated by state-centric realism, and this realist tradition was deeply skeptical of the public's contribution to an effective foreign policy. Realism suggests that in the anarchical order of international relations, the most important concern of a state is survival. This survival is accepted as more important than any other concerns such as the well-being of the citizens. For survival, the state needs to create a balance of power with rivals in the anarchical international order. The classical realists considered the statesman's role as crucial in creating this but neo-realists did not include either the statesman or any domestic conditions.

Most realists would distinguish between foreign policy and other public policy issues. The public might be informed enough to deal with domestic issues that affect their daily lives, but foreign affairs are too remote from their interest, knowledge and experience, and generally they have little interest in becoming more informed Ibid. such complex and complex issues. In this separation, foreign policy is called “high politics” which is mainly focused on security. “High politics” should be separated from “low politics” which refers to domestic politics. “High" does not signify the importance only, but also the untouchable character of foreign policy, which should be left to the specially educated elite, and kept away from disputes of domestic politics. Ordinary citizens with limited knowledge were expected to deal with only the “low” areas of domestic politics.

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This view leaves no place for public opinion in security decision-making processes.

For realists, public opinion is generally “an obstacle in the definition of vital national interests and in the implementation of appropriate foreign and defense policies to pursue those interests”\(^{26}\) because of the moral burden it brings. The only role realists think that public opinion can play is as a powerful force for persuasion of friends, allies, and interested parties.\(^{27}\) But here, realists do not favor public opinion “inside” the country but as a “insider enemy” in the other country, as a tool playing an indispensable role in legitimating and sustaining long-term efforts to pursue and protect vital interests. This can create also a fear of public opinion which is open to influences from outside.

Although the realists dominated the literature, there is a long, liberal-democratic tradition, dating back at least to Kant and Bentham. Liberals believe that governments act on behalf of the people. Popular preferences are taken into account in policy making. They also note that the inclusion of public opinion makes foreign policy more peaceful and stable. This idea is a part of the “democratic peace theory” which states that the public can play a constructive role by constraining policy makers in their decision-making process in democratic countries. Liberals assume that people can stop wars by their democratic participation, and they would because they are the ones adversely affected by the conditions of a war. Thus democratic countries are less likely to solve their conflicts by war.\(^{28}\)

The longstanding debate between the realists and the liberals came to a peak in World War I. WWI can be counted as the first war of public relations because of the

\(^{27}\) Scott Burchill et al. (2009) p.50
\(^{28}\) Ole R. Holsti (1992) p.440
efforts of both sides to influence and persuade the “world public” to believe the rightness of their aims. Along with war on the battlefield, there was an intense war of propaganda going on. President Wilson was leading the way for liberals and repeatedly talking *Ibid.* his hope for a peaceful and democratic postwar era in which the peoples of the world would live happily ever after. Wilson had a belief in democracy and the constructive influence of the people on decision-making. On the other hand, scholars such as Walter Lippmann were talking *Ibid.* the daily worries of the ordinary people who had no knowledge *Ibid.* and interest in foreign policy. This debate was interrupted by the rise of World War II, and the skeptics of public opinion increased.29

The end of WWII opened a new era in public opinion studies with the initiation of a growing number of polls and surveys seeking to understand public opinion on major issues of foreign policy. These surveys made by major polling institutions gained a reputation and increased in number in these years. Two scholars dominated the literature on public opinion at that time, Gabriel Almond and Walter Lippmann.

As noted in Chapter 1, the “Almond-Lippmann Consensus”30 was accepted as a broad agreement among scholars on three propositions *Ibid.* public opinion. The first proposition was that public opinion is highly volatile and thus provides inadequate and dubious foundations for a stable and effective foreign policy. Scholars started to believe that the public was neither informed nor interested in foreign affairs after many polls and surveys showing the public's attitude to world affairs. The attitudes of the people were subject to rapid and random change, which did not make sense to these scholars. The

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30 Although Walter Lippmann and Gabriel Almond did not even live at the same period of time, their ideas about public opinion are called as “Almond-Lippmann Consensus” in public opinion literature. It is important to mention that, this consensus is a product of the WWII period.
second proposition claimed that public opinion on foreign affairs was lacking in coherence and structure. Almond said that “foreign policy attitudes among most Americans lack intellectual structure and factual content.”31 This proposition was mostly supported by the findings of Philip Converse. Converse found that the masses had no ideological structure which might provide some coherence to political thinking; all attitudes were subject to change in time because of their unstructured nature. Thus mass attitudes might be described as “non-attitudes.” Meanwhile, elite attitudes were a little more structured and thus, more coherent. The third proposition was that at the end of the day, public opinion has little if any influence on foreign policy decision-making.32 This “consensus” was supported by the writings of various thinkers such as Thomas A. Bailey, Hans J. Morgenthau and George F. Kennan who thought that if public opinion had an influence, it would be a barrier to thoughtful and coherent diplomacy.33

Until the outbreak of the Vietnam War, the consensus was dominant in the literature but later on, new studies of public opinion were started. One of the first of these studies was made by Sydney Verba who focused on American policies toward Vietnam. Verba and his colleagues found support for the policies of the government but also unearthed approval for alternative policies to end the conflict.34

Holsti calls this era with new findings of independent surveys as the “Renaissance of the interest in public opinion.”35 Various new studies challenged the consensus, one of the most important of these being done by Benjamin Page and Robert Shapiro. In their

33 Ibid., p.443
34 Ibid., p.445
35 Ibid.
book, *The Rational Public*, Page and Shapiro claim that public opinion is not volatile as the consensus claims but rather it generally favors a stable and peaceful foreign policy. According to them, the “capricious change” is a myth, and the collective policy preferences of Americans are quite stable. If there is a shift taking place in attitude, it is not that unexpected and random; rather it is reasonable, event-driven and modest in magnitude.\(^{36}\) Page and Shapiro found that all shifts taking place were related to social, economic and political circumstances, so the shifts “made sense.” Actually none of the studies done in that period was based on any new information supporting the idea that public is more informed or educated; rather they analyzed the same less-informed public, using nearly the same questions used by the critics. They asked the same questions to the public repeatedly over substantial numbers of months and years, and finally they found out that the public has a more rational and event-driven way of thinking than previously thought.

Scholars also started to challenge Converse's findings on public attitudes which stated that the public does not have an ideological basis for their opinion, thus making their attitude less coherent. Although there was no consensus on the publics attitude, scholars started to claim that “poorly informed” people had a general way of thinking which makes their opinion coherent.\(^ {37}\) This “way” is generally constant and it is derived from the culture and traditions of that nation.

The most difficult and also the most important question was now whether or not public opinion is important and influential on foreign policy. If it is influential, there are new questions rising such as: “How does public opinion get to the policy-makers?” or


“What are the means the public uses to influence foreign policy?” As I explained above, public opinion was assumed to be ineffective and unimportant in the policy-making process until the 1960s. Even when the impact of public opinion seemed clear, scholars and politicians did not accept the idea that there was an independent influence of public opinion.\(^{38}\) Instead, they continued to see the public as under the total control of the elite. Other scholars such as Page and Shapiro supported the role of collective public opinion in foreign policy decision-making, contending that it is rational in the sense that “real, stable, differentiated, consistent, coherent; reflective of basic values and beliefs; and responsive (in predictable and reasonable ways) to new information and changing circumstances.”\(^{39}\) In the book *Vietnam and the Silent Majority*, Rosenberg, Verba and Converse claim that public opinion is very important, and in the mass democracies of today, elections are very important in the transaction of public opinion to the policy-makers.\(^{40}\)

There are various efforts but not yet a single convincing study on the public-policy relationship. Actually the hardest part is to build causality between opinion and action. Page talks *Ibid.* this problem: “When opinion and policy correspond, it is extremely difficult to sort out whether public opinion has influenced policy, or policy has influenced opinion, or there has been some mixture of reciprocal processes; or, indeed, whether an outside factor, by affecting both, has produced a spurious relationship.”\(^{41}\)

Various scholars used various different techniques to find out this causal

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\(^{38}\) *Ibid.*

\(^{39}\) Benjamin Page and Robert Shapiro (1992) p.172


relationship between public opinion and policy making. In the 1960s, the creative research by Miller and Stokes on representation in Congress proved inconclusive because of causal ambiguity. Miller and Stokes simply could not be sure whether constituents were influencing members of Congress or vice versa.\footnote{Ibid.} Bob Erikson, in 1978, made a very significant study by using demographic data on congressional districts to simulate constituency policy preferences, and at the end, Erikson found a large influence of opinion on policy.\footnote{Robert S. Erikson (1978) “Constituency Opinion and Congressional Behavior: A Reexamination of the Miller-Stokes Representation Data” American Journal of Political Science 22:511-35.} The technique Erikson used lessened the possibility that reciprocal influences from policy to opinion were exceeding the estimates of opinion's impact. But there was a problem because of redistricting: members of Congress may affect the demography of their districts over the years. Also, the use of demographic variables can be vulnerable to false results: third parties such as religious organizations, agricultural and industrial corporations associated with district demography, can influence policy directly. It can create a false appearance that demography operates through opinion to affect policy.\footnote{Benjamin Page (1994) pp. 27-29}

In these years, Achen, Jackson and others were also trying to show that corrections for measurement error in surveyed policy preferences from the very small congressional district samples also led to much larger estimates of the effects of opinion on policy.\footnote{Ibid.} But all those methods and techniques had their own problems in proving a causal relationship between public opinion and policy-making. One of the most ambitious studies made by Page and Shapiro in 1983 used a mixed cross-sectional and time-series
design. They found that changes in collective opinion were, *Ibid.* two-thirds of the time, followed by parallel policy changes within a year or so. Although Page and Shapiro were proud of their study, they also encountered some problems in technique. They could not be sure *Ibid.* the order of the influence because policy may have moved before opinion, and probably influenced it, in nearly half the cases. Also, Page and Shapiro did not count other factors affecting opinion and policy change, such as world events, activities of the elite (especially media and interest groups), and other affective factors.46

Although it is a complex process to set the causality between public opinion and policy-making, it is not possible to ignore the influence of public opinion on policymakers. I think instead of just qualitative research, quantitative methods should also be used to understand the ties between opinion and policy. A nation's identity, the relationship between policy-makers and the masses, the political and sociological culture of that country, and also the general conjecture of the world politics are all important to analyze the influence of public opinion on the policy-making.

Chapter 3: Creation and Mobilization of Public Opinion in the United States and Turkey

In this chapter, first, I will be looking at the creation of public opinion in Turkey and the United States, which have different historical, political, social and cultural backgrounds. Then, I will look at the flow of public opinion in these countries. But before I analyze these countries, I will look at public opinion creation in general and at its ties to national identity.

As noted in Chapter 2, public opinion is the sentiment shared by a number of people in a country about a political or social phenomenon. People from various backgrounds share similar opinions, and form a response. There are many factors that create this commonality such as history, culture, education, and religion. These factors and many others build a national identity. National identity is one of the most important determinants of the reactions people have that is it contributes in the constitution of public opinion.

There is a strong correlation between national identity and the policy preferences of the people. According to Deborah J. Schildkraut, “national identity is an abstract symbolic attachment and demonstrates that abstract symbolic attachments are often strong predictors of policy preferences. These attachments are a mechanism through which people determine what they want, what is possible, what to fear, and who they are.” In other words, identity creates a basis for public opinion by determining what people value, what they want, and how they want to live. This identity base, before any 47

information is known about a phenomenon, creates an attitude towards it. History, traditions and the political culture of a country are very important in the determination of this attitude.

There are also other factors that are effective in the creation of public opinion such as the role of the elite. The media, lobbies and interest groups are the main elite actors. According to Page, the media can be counted as a political actor which can directly influence decision making by working as an interest group, or it can indirectly affect the policy-makers by using publications or broadcasts to influence and change the beliefs and policy preferences of both mass and other elite audiences. This indirect way of affecting policy making might be especially attractive to the media organizations because of their special positions as the key carriers of political information. Here, Page assumes that the media can be a political actor if it works purposively and in a unified way to influence policy change. On the other hand, the media can also have a role as a carrier of the opinion of the masses to the elite and the decision-makers.

Lobby groups are also important actors in the creation of public opinion. Especially in a large country with a diverse population like the United States, lobby groups play a significant role in attracting the attention of the policy-makers to a subject. These lobby groups are sometimes national or ethnic groups in a country working for the well-being of their nationals in that country and in their home country. They generally represent the minorities and their interests.

Lobby groups might be counted as interest groups, but the two can also be distinguished from each other. “Interest groups,” are advocacy groups defending special

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interest organizations such as national or international corporations or business groups. Kenneth T. Andrews and Bob Edwards define advocacy organizations as groups that “make public interest claims either promoting or resisting social change that, if implemented, would conflict with the social, cultural, political, or economic interests or values of other constituencies and groups.”\textsuperscript{49} These engage in have a five-step process in influencing policy-making processes: (1) agenda setting; (2) access to decision-making arenas; (3) achieving favorable policies; (4) monitoring and shaping implementation, and (5) shifting the long-term priorities and resources of political institutions.\textsuperscript{50} These groups are specifically important because they have direct communication with the groups they are defending. Lobby groups are generally financed and supported by people wanting to raise their own voice. In the cases I will be analyzing, it will be clearer how they work and how they influence the public and policy-making processes. Lobbyists working in these organizations are generally highly educated and interested in the issues they defend or oppose.

Business groups want to have an influence over policy making in most countries. Interest groups can have influence directly or indirectly over the decision-makers. Directly, they can lobby and join campaigns, support political actors and make demands on them. On the other hand, because they are the part of the elite, they can try to influence mass opinion and create a reaction to a case.

There are two ways for public opinion to reach decision-makers, directly from the masses to the policy-makers, or through the elite. Direct reach can occur in two different ways. First, it can happen naturally through the shared identity of the masses and elite

\textsuperscript{50} \textit{Ibid.}
with the policy-makers. This way of flowing can be seen in smaller and less diverse countries like Turkey. Second, the masses can reach the policy-makers through large demonstrations. This is less likely to occur in both countries studied in my thesis. The reasons differ in each country. In Turkey, civil society is not strong and because of the use of force by the police, people hesitate to go to demonstrations. In the United States, on the other hand, only major policy changes can unite the diverse population.

Opinions can also flow through the elite. It is important to recall that the elite is also a part of the public, and they might have their own separate opinions from the masses. The elite, can play a significant role in the articulation of the opinions of the masses to the decision-makers. In this transference, lobby groups are particularly important because they have direct communication with the people whose voice they try to raise. The media is also an important actor. The role of the media as the voice of the people is generally underestimated because it is generally seen as an actor that shapes opinion in its own desired direction. But, especially with the developing technology, there are many new media tools through which people can express their opinions. New social media tools using the Internet are becoming more and more effective, and in the near future, it is expected that the use of social media will reach and pass the use of the conventional media sources such as newspapers, radio or television.

**The United States**

In this section, I will be looking at the creation and transference of public opinion in the United States. To understand this creation process, I will look at the American identity, and the relationship between the elite, the masses and the policy-makers in the
There is a growing interest in studying American identity. According to Schildkraut, this trend is driven by “(1) real and dramatic changes in the ethnic makeup of the U.S. Population, (2) the mid-1990s surge in nativist sentiment and legislation, and (3) the maturation and normalization of the rights revolutions that started in the 1960s.”

Stanley Renshon claims that we are in a new era in identity politics and it is the second big challenge American identity has faced after the Civil War. But unlike the Civil War, this time the danger lies in conflicts between races, heritages, religions and cultures. But in the end, Renshon concludes, American national culture has, overall, been "decoupled from ethnicity, separated from religion, and detached even from race."

Traditionally, American identity has been defined by white Protestantism rooted in Northern European heritage and ancestry. This ethnoculturalism has been criticized widely but still it is powerful enough to shape what people, even the non-white people

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53 Ibid., p.258
living in the United States, think of as an “American.” Yet, although this definition still has influence, it is obvious that it is not valid and helpful in truly understanding American identity today.

Incorporationism is a way of thinking about American identity based on the immigrant legacy and cultural diversity. It does not focus on the similarities between different religious, racial or ethnic groups, but it emphasizes the differences and celebrates all cultural diversities. It is a very difficult but rich position for a country because what is meant here is not a melting pot, but a heterogeneous togetherness under law. There are many opponents of this idea of identity. Renshon believes that immigrants should be assimilated in order to keep the traditional American values, and he claims that in the end it is better for the immigrants because they came to the United States for these values.

In a public opinion survey done by James Davis, Tom Smith and Peter Marsden in 2004, people were asked about the characteristics of being “truly American.” According to the results of the survey, a true American should be born in the United States, English speaking and Christian. But more than half of the people also emphasized respect for American political institutions and laws.

According to the same survey, more than half of the population is in favor of assimilation policies in order to have a better community: This was gleaned from answers to the following question, “Some people say that it is better for a country if different

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56 Ibid.
57 Stanley A. Renshon (2001) pp. 7-9
racial and ethnic groups maintain their distinct customs and traditions. Others say that it is better if these groups adapt and blend into the larger society. Which of these views comes closer to your own?\textsuperscript{59}

According to Census2010 data (Table 3.1),\textsuperscript{60} nearly 65 percent of the American population is white alone, and around 80 million people are non-white. This number is more than many countries' populations in the world. It is important to say that “white” is not a homogenous group. There are various different races, religions and origins in the

\begin{center}
\textbf{Chart 3.1:} The major religions in the United States and Christianity Segments
\end{center}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{chart3.1.png}
\caption{The major religions in the United States and Christianity Segments}
\end{figure}

\textbf{Source:} Operation World

white group. Chart 3.1 shows the religious diversity of the United States.\textsuperscript{61} By looking at these data, we can see that there are various groups of people living in the United States, and it is natural that they will be sensitive to the issues concerning their origin or religion.

Other than origin or religion, there are also many other factors affecting the American identity such as the culture and traditions created by people living together under US laws. According to the study of Davis, Smith and Marsden, the great majority

\textsuperscript{59} James A. Davis, Tom W. Smith and Peter V. Marsden (2007) p.1842
\textsuperscript{60} Taken from the official website of Census 2010: \url{http://factfinder.census.gov/} retrieved on March 19, 2011
\textsuperscript{61} The Official website of the Operation World Organization is accessible at \url{http://www.operationworld.org} retrieved on May 8, 2011
of the population feel themselves American, and they are proud to be American citizens. Again, more than half of the people think America is a better country than any other country in the world. When they are asked about the areas they are proud of, more than half answered history, the way democracy works, economic achievements, the armed forces, political influence in the world, technological achievements, and achievements in art, sports and literature.\textsuperscript{62} These areas are creating commonalities between the various groups living together, thus building a common identity. Again in the same survey, more than half of the American citizens thought that America is and should be influential in world politics.\textsuperscript{63} At the same time, in the same survey, there was opposition to international organizations and their involvement in American foreign policy. More than half of the population favors the idea that America should not follow the decisions of international organizations but also not ignore them totally.\textsuperscript{64}

These data sets provide us with a basic idea about the national characteristics of American people. The American people support American involvement in world politics, and its role as a leader in world politics. They are not in favor of following the international organizations' decisions in foreign policy but they are not completely against the organizations. This outcome can create a framework for public opinion preferences. We can say that the American people support government leadership in world politics, and they may push government to take action by their expectations.

The media play a very important role in shaping American public opinion because it is highly followed by the masses. Although the press is also highly influential over the masses, TV has a special position in American way of life. There is even an ironic

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{62} James A. Davis, Tom W. Smith and Peter V. Marsden (2007)}
\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{63} Ibid., pp.1832-1840}
\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{64} Ibid., pp.1858-1859}
nickname, “TV Nation”, used for the American nation. According to Patrick O’Heffernan, the mass media play distinct roles in shaping American foreign policy by being a source of rapid information about policy decisions, an agenda setter for US citizens, a proxy for diplomats, and a tool used by non-governmental organizations even by terrorists.

The media influence on public opinion and foreign policy has been called by the name “CNN Effect” for years. The CNN effect is a term which originated in the 1991 Gulf War, and it refers to the ubiquity of the news channel that ensured all sides had the same information at the same time. Starting from that time, this phrase became “the generic term for the ability of real-time communications technology, via the news media, to provoke major responses from domestic audiences and political elites to both global and national events.” Just after the Cold War, while Americans were celebrating their victory, there was hope in the world about the “new world order” in which all the citizens of the world would be protected everywhere by the great community of the world. In those days, the Gulf War started as a response to the Kuwait invasion of Iraq. In that war, CNN was broadcasting 24/7 from Iraq, and carrying stories of the casualties to the homes of the people. Americans were watching the bloody operations of the US Army and they started to react. Later on this effect became visible in other humanitarian interventions of

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65 This term was used by the director Michael Moore in his newsmagazine television series, and then became commonly used to emphasize ironically the impact of media, especially TV, on American nation. Also, there is book written by Michael Moore and Kathleen R. Glynn in 1998, Adventures in a TV Nation, which tells the stories behind of this TV series.
68 Ibid.
the West such as Somalia, Haiti and former Yugoslavia. Since then, TV has played an important role in American politics: in a survey done in 2001, just after the 9/11, 81 percent of the surveyed Americans said that TV is their main source of information and news, because it is easier to follow and more convenient because of videos and images used as proof.

Scholars such as Wright Mills think that Americans are isolated individuals who receive information and opinion from the mass media. The members of the press, especially columnists, are also important opinion leaders but not as much as television newscasters and commentators. Still, writers are respected intellectuals and they play an important role in building mass and elite opinion—the public opinion. The headlines and the news selected are important tools in setting the agenda. Newspapers can influence the agenda of the public and create favorable public opinion in the direction they wish. V.S. Yarros emphasizes this influence by saying that “The newspapers make and mar political fortunes. They ‘create’ great men out of next to nothing and destroy the reputations of men truly fit for leadership. They decide questions of war and peace. They carry elections. They overawe and coerce politicians, rulers, and courts. When they are virtually unanimous nothing can withstand them.”

Lobby and interest groups are also very influential in public opinion creation. There are various interest groups working to influence American politics. According to a study done by Washington State University, there are more than four hundred advocacy

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70 *Ibid*. p.5
groups and 17,000 lobbyists working on different issues in the United States.\(^\text{73}\) In sum, the flow of public opinion from the mass to the decision-makers is a complex process in the United States. The United States has a diverse population in which there are various ethnic and religious groups. It is not possible for the general public to be informed and interested in every subject that different groups are concerned about. Thus, there is a strong elite leadership, which articulates mass opinion to the decision-makers.

**Turkey**

Turkey, or the Turkish Republic, is a young country with a very old heritage. It was established in 1923 after a national independence war between 1919-1922. It is a national republic with a mostly Turkish and Muslim population. According to a survey on ethnical origin, 76 percent of the population is Turkish. Actually, ethnic identity is a problematic issue for Turkey. State nationalism does not accept any ethnic origins of people except Turkish. In the Article 66 of the Turkish Constitution, the tie between

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\(^{73}\) The study and a list of advocacy groups in alphabetical order can be found at http://pag.vancouver.wsu.edu/alpha.html
citizenship and ethnicity is defined by saying that “everyone bound to the Turkish state through the bond of citizenship is a Turk.”\textsuperscript{74} Even though the state does not recognize any other ethnic identity, there are various ethnicities in the population (Chart 3.2).\textsuperscript{75} The debate about who is a Turk continues today, “following on the late Ottoman contestation of subjecthood around secular Ottomanism, Turkism, or Islamism. The choice of ‘Turk’ or Turkish as the stamp of identity, seized on by Ataturk, served as an apt icon of the young republic.”\textsuperscript{76} This identity has been challenged by many identities but most importantly, in the last decades, Kurds have emerged to challenge the idea of Turkishness as a republican identity. Even though the state try to show being Turkish as an upper identity, 45 percent of the population thinks that a true “Turk” should be “Turkish” originally (see Chart 3.3).\textsuperscript{77}

Turkey is a secular country so there is no official religion of the state, but a large

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
Sects of Islam in Turkey & Table 3.2 &
\hline
Sünni Hanefi & Sunni-Hanafi & 81.96
\hline
Sünni Şafii & Sunni-Shafi & 9.06
\hline
Sünni Diğer & Other Sunni & 0.4
\hline
Alevi & Alawi & 5.02
\hline
Nusayri & Nusayri Alawi & 0.1
\hline
Şii & Shi‘ite & 0.71
\hline
Diğer Müslüman & Other Muslims & 2.1
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Religions in Turkey}
\end{table}

\textbf{Source}:
\begin{itemize}
\item Operation World, 2010
\item Konda, 2006
\end{itemize}

\begin{itemize}
\item Turkish Constitution can be found at http://www.anayasa.gov.tr/ retrieved on March 24, 2011
\item Konda Research and Consultancy Agency, Turkey Social Structure Survey, 2006
\end{itemize}
majority of Turkey is Muslim (Chart 3.4). Although Islam is not the state's religion, it is automatically written “Muslim” on every Turkish state id, unless they have a proof of another religion to change it. In Turkey, there are different sects are Islam believed by people, but the dominant sect is Sunni Hanefi by more than 80 percent of population (See Table 3.2).

These data sets show us a country with a more homogenous identity than we see in the United States. Actually, looking at these data sets does not help us to understand Turkish identity. In Turkey, Turkish Islam is tied up with Turkish nationalism in a unique fashion derived from the secular nationalism of the Turkish state. Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, the “founder of the Turkish Republic,” left a state with a Western constitution and secular institutions. Today secular nationalism is known as Kemalism. “Although the Kemalist state had purged Islam from the state and left it to society, it did not allow Islam to have an autonomous life in the hands of social actors. Instead, the Turkish state opted to ‘étatize’ Islam, and built the Directorate of Religious Affairs (Diyanet Isleri Baskanligi).” The reason for this institution was to protect secularism in a mostly Muslim population. Kemalist state elites and the army have a special position “guarding” the secular democratic structure of Turkey. In the end, Turkey has an exceptional position in the Islamic world with its secularism and western state system.

Turkey has a very unique identity, which can be defined as “in the middle of the

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78 The Official website of the Operation World Organization is accessible at http://www.operationworld.org retrieved on May 8, 2011
79 Konda Research and Consultancy Agency, Turkey Social Structure Survey, 2006
82 Ibid.
west and the east.” Although nearly all of its population is Muslim, Turkey is a country with strong ties with Christian Europe, and it has a claim to Europe's cultural identity that reaches back more than 2,000 years mostly because of its geography. Turkey's involvement in European affairs was inherited from the Ottoman Empire. This tradition of deep involvement in European affairs illustrates the way in which Turkey, while never quite being seen as a component of Europe's cultural family, always played the role of a European power. At the same time, Turkey's relations with the Islamic world have always been problematic starting from the declaration of the secular republic and continuing with Turkey's involvement in western organizations such as NATO and the Council of Europe.

If we look at the construction of public opinion in Turkey, we see that public reaction does not generally occur as an intellectual response. It generally appears as a “natural” extension of nationalism and the highly statist culture of Turkish people. National and religious problems, without a prior intellectual knowledge, can create public reaction. This reaction generally can be “felt” by politicians and decision-makers before any kind of protests erupt because of the homogenous structure of the society as I indicated above.

The media and the elites are less effective in Turkey than in the United States. The most important reason for the difference in media influence is the fact that the Turkish do not benefit from it as much as the American people. TV is, as in the United States, the most followed media instrument in Turkey. In a survey by Konda in 2008, it was found that 66 percent of the adult population read newspapers. In the same survey, it was found that

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84 Ibid.
that 69.8 percent of the population does not read books.\textsuperscript{85}

Turkish civil society is the most developed among all the Muslim states of the Middle East and their numbers are growing.\textsuperscript{86} But, it is not possible to say that civil society is powerful enough to pressure policy makers. The flow of public opinion is normally very direct: from public to the decision-makers. But this direct flow does not mean that public opinion is very powerful in every aspect of decision-making. Actually in domestic policy decisions such as decisions on the minimum wage, public health, or military operations public opinion has a really limited influence. But on issues that provoke nationalism, public opinion can have a strong influence over domestic policy. In Turkish culture, sovereignty of the state is very important. So any sign of foreign intervention may cause public reactions.

Although public opinion generally is constructed “naturally” as I indicated above, there is still room for elite influence The position of elites in Turkey should be understood before the elites are accepted as actors in the creation of public opinion. As inherited from the Ottoman Empire, the Turkish elite was generally a small group of well-educated people with western values. But although there are similarities, there are also differences between the elites in the Ottoman Empire and the elites of the Turkish Republic. Kemalist elites of the modern republic saw the establishment of the republic as a radical break from the past and did not accept any ties with the Ottoman heritage.\textsuperscript{87}

The elites are “state-elites” because traditionally the elites were involved in

administration and politics. They have not necessarily been the rich but rather the educated and politically powerful. There is a large gap between state-elites and the general public. The elites’ western, modern and less-religious life is different from the general public's eastern and religious life style. The elites have been the reformist and the revolutionist groups of the society. They have been the “suppliers” of the rights, so they feel they have the right to draw the limits of these rights. This elite has had strong ties with the military, which is counted as the founder and the defender of the modern and secular Turkish Republic. Thus, the elites in Turkey have not play an effective role in the transference of the opinion to the policy leaders.
Chapter 4: History of the US-Turkey Relations

Starting from the early 1920s, Turks and Americans have had good relations. The newly established government of the Turkish Republic, in Ankara, was less suspicious about the United States than other western powers such as Britain and France because the United States was not a traditional enemy of the Ottomans. The relationship between the Turkish and American elites was also warm. American elites such as Admiral Mark Bristol and Julian Gillespie, who were American officers at that time, gained the respect and friendship of the Ankara circles. Similarly, representatives of the new Turkish government, especially Munir Ertegun, the Turkish ambassador in Washington, were welcomed in Washington Ertegun had established himself in President Roosevelt's circle.  

A sharp change in the Turkish-American relationship started when the Soviet Union tried to dominate its neighbors and extend its power. This change was what brought Turkey and the United States into an alliance. The alliance came into existence with the Truman Doctrine, a policy of the United States to support Greece and Turkey with economic and military aid to prevent their falling into the Soviet sphere in 1947, and this alliance was formalized with Turkey's entry into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1952 as a country in the Western bloc.  

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89 Ibid.
The Turkish-American Alliance

According to scholars such as Ian O. Lesser, the United States and Turkey are not natural allies. The countries are divided by distance, culture, and the natural differences in perspective between a global and a regional power.\(^91\) In the previous chapter, I have also argued that there are identity differences between the United States and Turkey. So, what makes these two geographically remote and identically distinct states ally? To answer this question, I will look back to the years when this alliance was first established, and review the literature on alliances.

Turkey and the United States had different reasons for initiating an alliance in the beginning. According to Nasuh Uslu, Turkey aimed to protect its security, to obtain military and economic aid, and to strengthen its Western style state structure. The United States, meanwhile, wanted to become allies with Turkey because of its strategic importance for US interests in the Middle East and because of its global policy of containing the Soviet Union.

A common external threat to the security of states is one of the primary sources of alliances. In particular a weak state under threat seeks an alliance with a powerful state, more powerful than the threatening state, to maintain its security. In the meantime, the powerful state also benefits from making an alliance with a weak state by preventing its adversary from gaining resources and advancing its influence.\(^92\) In this case, the common external threat was the Soviet Union. Russians have always been seen an potential threat

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\(^92\) Robert L. Rothstein (1968) *Alliances and Small Powers*, New York: Colombia University Press, pp.24-25
for the Turks since the rivalry began between the Ottomans and the Russians.\(^93\) This rivalry turned into a serious threat when the Soviet Union abolished the Treaty of Friendship of 1925, sought the revision of the Montreaux Convention of 1936 on the Turkish Straits to the advantage of the Black Sea countries, and made some territorial demands in eastern Anatolia.\(^94\) Turkey immediately began to seek the military and diplomatic support of the United States, and became willing to pay any expense to secure its involvement in the Western alliance, a counter force against the Soviet Union.\(^95\) From the security perspective, Turkey was an important part of the American global policy of containing Soviet expansion, so the United States decided to extend its military and economic aid to Turkey to block Soviet influence or aggression.\(^96\)

Economic and military needs can also be a factor forcing a weak state to seek an alliance with a more powerful state. Turkey's need for military and economic assistance and America's positive response to it played an important role in the formation of the Turkish-American alliance.\(^97\)

There are also strategic reasons for this alliance. Ole Holst et al. claim that when a weaker country needs an alliance with a great power, it often prefers a geographically remoter one.\(^98\) However, this alliance with a distant power can be less reliable because it might be difficult to agree on a common reaction to regional or local conflicts, or distance can cause a less certain military commitment in case of attack; the weak state may be

\(^{93}\) Nasuh Uslu (2003) p.14  
\(^{94}\) Ibid.  
\(^{96}\) Nasuh Uslu (2003) p.14  
\(^{97}\) Ibid., p.15  
\(^{98}\) Ole R. Holsti, Terrence Hopmann and John D. Sullivan (1973) *Unity and Disintegration in International Alliances: Comparative Studies*, Wiley, p.13
stuck in the period between an attack and the arrival of aid.\textsuperscript{99} Turkey had a very long frontier with the Soviet Union, and it was in the zone of Soviet natural influence and expansion. While it is geographically so close to the Soviet Union, the reason Turkey wanted to continue its alliance with the United States was not only the distance between them but also the belief of the Turkish policy-makers that the United States was the only country that could balance the Soviets.\textsuperscript{100}

Scholars such as William C. Olson and Ole R. Holsti, consider a common or similar ideology to be of secondary importance in making an alliance, after important security needs.\textsuperscript{101} Although ideology is not one of the primary reasons for making alliances, alliances established by countries which have similar, ideological and cultural values are more durable and effective, and they generate more cooperation and fewer problems.\textsuperscript{102} Turkish politicians and state elites have always claimed that Turkey is a democratic and secular state sharing common values and culture with the Western world.\textsuperscript{103} Turkish scholars, such as Faruk Logoglu, think that the relationship between Turkey and the United States rests on a solid foundation in terms of common values and shared ideals. According to Logoglu: “Commitment to and respect for democracy, the rule of law, human rights and freedom, economic prosperity, and national security bind the two nations strongly together. Both are dynamic societies that seek their golden age not in the past, but in the future.”\textsuperscript{104} According to Logoglu, it is these shared values and

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{99} Robert L. Rothstein (1968) p.118
\bibitem{100} Nasuh Uslu (2003) p.16
\bibitem{101} Ibid., pp.16-17
\bibitem{102} Ibid.
\bibitem{103} Ole R. Holsti, et.al. (1973) p.90
\end{thebibliography}
attitudes that have kept the two countries close together, enabling the relationship to withstand the vicissitudes and tests of time.\textsuperscript{105} Clearly, Turkey assigned more importance to the ideological dimension and expected its alliance with the United States to help it maintain better relations with the West and to pursue westernization policies at home. The United States, however, was more interested in US national interests than ideological similarity.

States, especially weaker ones, may also enter into alliances in order to ensure domestic stability and to cover up failures in their domestic politics. Obtaining the political, economic and military support of a powerful state such as the United States and/or internationally respected alliance such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), strengthens the position of the government and increases its prestige in the eyes of the national and international public. Especially for Turkey, this aspect of the alliance was very important because Turkish policy-makers saw their alliance with the West as an assurance of Turkey's political and democratic process as a “civilized” part of the Western world.\textsuperscript{106}

From the Turkish perspective, their alliance with the United States was a result of their long-pursued efforts at Westernization and they attributed a great importance to becoming an important member of the Western world. Thus, this approach led them to be very anxious to fulfill the requirements of this alliance without hesitation and to show their loyalty to the alliance.\textsuperscript{107}

The United States had a more realist perspective than the Turkish side. For them, this alliance meant the protection of mutual economic and military interests rather than

\textsuperscript{105} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{106} Nasuh Uslu (2003) p.17
\textsuperscript{107} Ibid., p.22
ideological closeness. In the US perspective, both sides had to make sacrifices in order to get some gains because a classic alliance relationship between two states, aims at maximizing gains. Although they had a more realist point of view, US policy makers repeatedly emphasized the importance of having similar ideological principles as two democratic states.\textsuperscript{108}

**Historical Background**

In the 1940s, foreign policy was the preserve of the elites in both the United States and Turkey. In the United States, Congress followed the president without serious conflict. The only opponents were the isolationist members of the Congress who questioned the importance of Turkey for the United States. In Turkey, the prime minister made foreign policy with only a small number of advisers.\textsuperscript{109} Leftist groups were against any alliance with the United States, supporting instead an alliance with the Soviet Union.

In the first years, the military aspect of the alliance was the key aspect although Turkey was also seen as a model country in terms of the westernization of the Middle East. The differences in religion were not major considerations in the two countries. According to George Harris, the secular structure of the Turkish Republic dimmed the consciousness of the religious differences with the West for the Turkish elite. Harris continues: “The religiosity of the populace at large in Turkey had little effect on policy, and the outward display of the religion was discouraged in the urban centers, so that even members of the Turkish elite, as well as Western observers, were likely unaware of its

\textsuperscript{108} Ibid., p.23

\textsuperscript{109} George S. Harris (2003) pp.67-68
continuing power.”

Actually the main focus was on Turkey's geography and its joining the NATO which is by the very name a regional organization. However, Turkey's accession into NATO in 1952 was a very important step in Turkish-American relations. The Turkish government paid the price of entry by sending soldiers to the Korean War. The government in Ankara saw NATO as an extension of the United States so they saw the acceptance into NATO as a sure sign of their strong friendship with the United States and their acceptance into the Western world.

The military and economic aid coming from the United States to Turkey fed a belief by Turkish elites that Turkish and American interests were entirely harmonious. According to Harris, until the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962, the relationship between these two countries was like a happy honeymoon. The Cuban Missile Crisis was a confrontation between the Soviet Union and the United States started by the Soviet building a number of nuclear missiles in Cuba. As a response to the Soviet Union, the US government started to use as an object of negotiations the nuclear missiles, which had been deployed on Turkish territory with the ability to strike Moscow. Turkey became a target for a Soviet nuclear attack because of the American bases and nuclear weapons on its territory and this situation raised questions about the alliance in Turkey. The turning point in the relations between Turkey and the United States was the Johnson Letter. In 1964, President Johnson sent a telegram which is considered to be one of the harshest communications ever sent to an ally by the United States. The telegram delivered a

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110 Ibid., p.68
111 Ibid.,
113 Nasuh Uslu (2003) p.133
message warning Turkey not to engage in military operations to protect Turkish Cypriots who needed help in the midst of an ethnic conflict. This letter ended Turkey’s unquestioning good feelings towards the United States and made the United States suspect in the eyes of the Turkish public.\textsuperscript{114}\ The early signs of détente, the remission of the strained relations between the United States and the Soviet Union in the 1970s, was another sign of the weakening alliance between Turkey and the United States, because in this period, the perception of an external threat which was underlying the alliance, disappeared for a short time.\textsuperscript{115}

In the 1970s, Turkey was dealing with the problems of domestic politics but there were still expectations that the alliance would provide continuous aid. Instead of lobbying for their interests, the Turkish leadership had weak representation in Washington. Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit explained this situation by saying: “We do not think it would be appropriate to carry out lobbying activities in the United States.”\textsuperscript{116}

After the Johnson Letter, the alliance, especially the military component of the alliance, loosened significantly. Turkey was no longer an unquestioning supporter of US interests. Actually the Letter damaged the belief in US impartiality on the Cyprus issue. In 1967, when Turkish Cypriots were again in need of help because of Greek Cypriot attacks, the Turkish government started to consider non-cooperation with the United States, but the US presidential envoy Cyrus Vance found a settlement which was acceptable to Turkey.\textsuperscript{117}\ The Cyprus Peace Operation (internationally called the Turkish Invasion in Cyprus) started in July 1974 after Turkish politicians had lost their belief in

\textsuperscript{114}\ George S. Harris (2003) p.70
\textsuperscript{115}\ Ibid.
\textsuperscript{116}\ Ibid., p71
\textsuperscript{117}\ Ibid., p. 72
US support and decided to disregard the strong US urgings. The US Congress responded to this operation by imposing an arms embargo which damaged the military cooperation between two states and left a legacy of suspicion of American impartiality and friendship among Turkish politicians and the public. In the post-Cyprus period, Turkey and the United States entered a new, less-cooperative era of cooperation in which Turkey was no longer willing to say “yes” to American requests without serious negotiations.118

Opium poppy cultivation was another problematic issue between the United States and Turkey. The United States wanted Turkey to stop opium cultivation. The end of cultivation came only after a military coup had occurred and a military government had come to power.119 The pro-US decisions of the military government headed by Nihat Erim led the Turkish public to believe that the United States had a role in this military move.120

Starting from the 1960s, the alliance was increasingly questioned by domestic pressure groups in both countries. In Turkey, the Turkish press, opposition parties and public, specifically university students, became more and more suspicious about US interests in the alliance. A commonly believed conspiracy theory was that the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) was attempting to subvert Turkey. This fostered anti-Americanism. On the other hand, in the United States, the early signs of détente made the rationale for foreign aid questionable. The Greek Lobby’s rising power in the Congress became visible when the Congress stipulated that military aid to Greece and Turkey must be extended at a 7:10(Greece: Turkey) ratio. The Armenian Lobby was also an effective actor in Turkish-American relations by agitating the United States against Turkish

118 Ibid.
119 Ibid., pp. 72-3
interests. Although these domestic groups added some bitterness to the alliance, the
governments of both countries were successful in protecting the alliance.\textsuperscript{121}

The end of the Cold War changed dramatically the international and domestic
context of Turkish-American relations in the 1990s. The reason for the alliance, the
common enemy the Soviet Union was gone, and now, Turkey had to find a new reason to
keep its strategic importance if it wanted to keep the United States as an ally. It was a
hard situation for Turkey because in domestic politics, Turks were dealing with political
instability and terrorism. In the United States, the Greek and the Armenian Lobbies found
greater room for action to influence the Congress. Although significant challenges
affected the alliance, the bilateral relationship between the United States and Turkey
remained strong because of the domination of the Middle East agenda. In the end, the US
government accepted Turkey as having a unique geostrategic position in the middle of
continents and waterways.\textsuperscript{122}

In the first years after the Cold War, the Turkish president Turgut Ozal and
Turkish elites tried to find new ways to sell the importance of Turkey to keep the alliance
powerful. Ozal first tried to portray Turkey as a gateway to the former Soviet Central
Asian and Caucasian republics but this strategy was ineffective because neither the
United States nor the Turkic republics of the former Soviet Union accepted Turkey's role
in the region. The new strategy appeared with the Gulf War as Ozal sought to take
advantage of Turkey's strategic position on the margins of the Middle East. Although
many politicians and the military opposed cooperation with the United States against the

\textsuperscript{121} George S. Harris (2003) p.71-77
\textsuperscript{122} Sabri Sayari (2003) “Turkish-American Relations in the Post-Cold War Era: Issues of
Convergence and Divergence” in Mustafa Aydin and Cagri Erhan (ed.s)(2003) \textit{Turkish-
American Relations: Past, Present and Future}, New York: Routledge, pp. 91-3
trade partners in the Middle East, Ozal's willingness to strengthen the alliance won the discussion. In exchange for additional economic and military aid, Ozal made sure that the Incirlik airbase was available for allied operations in Iraq.\(^\text{123}\)

The Balkans were the second major area of cooperation between Turkey and the United States in the post-Cold War period. Ethnic conflicts following the disintegration of Yugoslavia were threatening regional stability and increasing the risk of a wider war in the region. Turkey, to protect Bosnia's Muslim community, began to engage in activist diplomacy to gain Western states' support to prevent the conflicts. At the beginning, the United States was not willing to become involved in the Balkans but the Clinton administration later took the initiative to restore peace in the region. Turkey, with US support, joined the NATO Enforcement/Stability Force to enforce the provisions of the 1995 Dayton Peace Agreement in Bosnia, and was involved in an “equip-and-train” program with the United States for a new military force of Bosnian Muslims.\(^\text{124}\)

There were also issues on which Turkey and the United States had divergent views. The Kurdish issue was the most crucial issue creating tension between these states.\(^\text{125}\) The Turkish public, elites and even the military were in fear of US support to the Kurdish separatists in Turkey.\(^\text{126}\) The security issues in the Caucasus region could also be problematic between Turkey and the United States. The United States did not share Turkey's fears and concerns about Russian ambitions to be powerful again in the region but later on, the United States modified its policy in the wake of the Chechnya conflict. US support for the Baku-Ceyhan pipeline project and “east-west energy corridor”

\(^{123}\) George S. Harris (2003) p. 79-85
\(^{124}\) Sabri Sayari (2003) pp. 96-7
\(^{125}\) Ibid., pp. 97-8
\(^{126}\) George S. Harris (2003) p. 79-81
signified this policy change. The support that the Armenian and Greek lobbies gained in the United States was another problematic issue between Turkey and the United States. The United States supported all peaceful communications between Turkey and Greece and it showed its supportiveness in the Imia/Kardak crisis, a territorial dispute about a small island in Aegean Sea, in 1995.\footnote{Sabri Sayari (2003) pp. 98-9}

The United States has been a firm supporter of Turkish accession to the European Union (EU) since the beginning of the long and tiring quest for entry. Especially after the Cold War, this supportive attitude of the United States became more and more important for Turkey as a reminder of its strategic importance to the West. Especially during the 1990s, the United States lobbied extensively on Turkey’s behalf with the EU officials and these lobbying activities played a significant role in the signing of a customs treaty in 1995 between Turkey and the EU.\footnote{Ibid., pp. 101-2}

In November 1999, President Clinton spoke to the Turkish Grand National Assembly, and formally announced the existence of a “strategic partnership” between the United States and Turkey in saying that “in the post-Cold War era, our partnership has become even more important than before.”\footnote{Ibid., pp. 92} It was accepted as a clear sign from Washington that Turkey still held high importance in terms of US strategic objectives in the region and shared common broad political and military goals in the region with Turkey.\footnote{David M. Giachetti (2008) United States Military Relations with Turkey, Air War College, Air University, pp.10-1}

According to Frances G. Burwell, the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 created expectations that Turkey would regain the former importance it had had in the
Cold War period. But the United States decision to invade Iraq set back the realization of those hopes because the possibility of war was viewed with alarm in Turkey, and the Turkish parliament rejected the United States request to open a second front in March 2003 because of large-scale protests by the public.\textsuperscript{131}

The Iraq War increased Turkish fears of instability in the Middle East and revived suspicions about US interests in the Middle East. On the other hand, in the United States, Turkish loyalty to the alliance started to seem less assured, even though they continued to use Incirlik Airbase to transfer major portions of equipment and personnel to Iraq.\textsuperscript{132}

In July 2006, to strengthen the alliance between the United States and Turkey, the State Department and Turkish Foreign Ministry negotiated a “Shared Vision and Structured Dialogue” which guaranteed cooperation on regional and global challenges supported by regular bilateral meetings to keep the cooperation alive. Although both countries have been making efforts to protect the alliance, there are still other actors and factors affecting their relationship, such as the role of the Armenian and Greek lobbies. The Turkish government and the public have been extremely anxious since the US House of Representatives considered a resolution on Armenian claims and called the incident in 1915 a genocide.\textsuperscript{133}

One of the most difficult issues between the United States and Turkey centers on their cooperation in eliminating Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) terrorist operations from northern Iraq which has become a haven for PKK terrorists. The Turkish side has been expecting the United States to ensure that its Kurdish allies in Iraq are not supporting


\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{132} \textit{Ibid.}}

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{133} \textit{Ibid.}}
terrorist attacks on Turkey. The United States, especially after September 11, has made clear that it accepts the importance of stopping terrorism, and the PKK has been designated as one of the global terrorist groups. For this reason, the United States appointed a special envoy to Turkey, General Joseph Ralston, to deal with the issues of PKK and northern Iraq. Until the resignation of Ralston in 2007, little progress was made. In 2007, after a terrorist attack which killed forty Turkish people, the Turkish parliament authorized military action into northern Iraq which aimed at destroying PKK bases. The United States tried to convince Turkey not to take such action, and called on the regional government in northern Iraq to deal with the PKK. Turkey waited for a while, but because there were no clear results, started a limited military action in the border area, mainly air attacks.\textsuperscript{134}

To understand the changing structure of relations between Turkey and the United States, we need to look at the changing domestic structure especially in Turkey. After having lived through four military coups and many weak coalition governments in sixty years of multiparty democracy, Turkey has been governed by the Justice and Development Party (JDP) for the last nine years. The JDP, having its roots in the Turkish Islamist movement, had a decisive victory in national elections in 2002, winning by 34 percent, and raised its vote to 47 percent in the 2007 elections. In the first years, the focus of the JDP was on the economic recovery after the 2001 crisis and the accession negotiations with the EU. Thus, the JDP was successful in widening its political support, including among liberal elements of the society. Although the JDP had a liberal image, it always has had problems with the strictly secular system and its defenders, especially the

\textsuperscript{134} Frances Burwell (2008) pp.5-6
The JDP and its Islamic past caused a major change in Turkish foreign policy. Although at the beginning the JDP had a pro-European image, later on it started to give more emphasis to relations with the Middle East, Turkic and Arabic states and Russia. From the US perspective, a failure to keep Turkey attached within Europe and the transatlantic community could open the door to the possibility of closer Turkish-Russian or Turkish–Middle Eastern ties. Especially at a time when the United States has been trying to build stability in the Middle East, losing Turkey as a secular and moderate ally in the region could be harmful to US interests. The idea of Turkey as a NATO member state excluded from the West could be very problematic for both the United States and the EU.

Turkey's relations with Israel also have been changing since the JDP came to power and began to underscore the Muslim identity of Turkey. Turkey, as the first Muslim state to officially recognize Israel in 1949, has had a strategic partnership with Israel on the basis of a multilayered set of military, political, and economic interests. Although cooperation between the two states continues, there have been some problems. Turkey's strong reaction to Israel's invasion of Gaza in 2008, when it accused Israel of “inhumane actions” and claimed that “Allah will sooner or later punish those who transgress the rights of innocents,” affected bilateral relations and damaged the opinion of

both peoples about each other.\textsuperscript{137} The Israeli government, the American Jewish community, and other supporters of Israel in the United States have been alarmed by Turkey's recent rhetoric regarding Gaza and the Turkish government’s steady criticism of Israeli policy in general during the past few years.\textsuperscript{138} With Turkey’s internal political transformation and its rapprochement with Iran and Syria, Israelis are relieved that their ties with Turkey have not deteriorated any further. Actually, although the relationship may have lost the warmth of the 1990s, the leaders of two states continue to meet at the highest level. Turkey still recognizes Israel as an important regional power, and knows that maintaining strong relations with Israel is important for regional stability and the pursuit of Turkey’s broader foreign policy interests especially with the United States.\textsuperscript{139}

Although mutual suspicion became a pervasive feature of US-Turkish relations after the Iraq War and it has became fashionable for Americans to ask “Who lost Turkey?”\textsuperscript{140} the United States and Turkey still have strong ties based on their interests. The re-emerging of a strategic relationship on the pattern of the Cold War years is unlikely to happen, and is not realistic in the changing environment of international relations. Turkey and the United States will have a more balanced relationship than the patron-client relationship of the Cold War years. This new and important era of cooperation has started with President Obama's first official trip as a president to Turkey during which he announced, “We share a commitment to democracy, a secular


\textsuperscript{139} Haim Malka, (2009) p. 55

constitution, respect for religious freedom and belief and in free market and a sense of global responsibility.”\textsuperscript{141}

\textsuperscript{141} USA Today, Obama to Visit Turkey, Focus on Iraq, on 03/07/2009 from http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/2009-03-07-turkey_N.htm retrieved on April 4, 2011
Chapter 5: The Armenian Question

The Armenian Question is an issue between the Armenian people and the Turkish Republic centered on different interpretation of a phenomenon that occurred in 1915 when Turkey was part of the Ottoman Empire. First, I will look at the question itself, then I will analyze the public reactions it has created in both Turkey and the United States. This is a very important illustration of how lobby groups can draw attention to a problem, create favorable public opinion, and then affect domestic and foreign policy-making.

History of the Armenian Question

Armenians claim that in 1915, they were killed, tortured and deported from the Ottoman Empire. They see these actions as deliberate attempts made by the Ottoman government to destroy the ethnoreligious community of Armenians that had existed as a part of society.\(^\text{142}\)

On the other hand, the Turkish side claims that in 1915, the Empire was involved in World War I. During the war, different nations under the weakening Empire were trying to gain their independence through rebellions; the Armenian population was one of them. Although the Empire took some measures to protect its unity, Turks claim that there was no policy aimed at destroying the Armenian nation.

This question, actually, dates back before 1915. Traditionally in the Ottoman society, Armenians, like other Christian communities, were defined as a *dhimmi millet*, a non-Muslim community of the Empire governed in accordance with sharia law. The

treatment meted out to them by the state varied with the military fortunes of the Empire, the religious passions of state elites, or the politics of the international or regional relations. Although these communities were free to practice their religion and to follow their national traditions, they were considered to be distinctively inferior to Muslims.\textsuperscript{143}

In the nineteenth century the Armenians challenged this traditional hierarchy of the society, as they became better educated, wealthier, and more urban. The Armenians were considered constituent millet of the Ottoman Empire and had good relations with the other communities.\textsuperscript{144}

In the late 1800s, the Russian Empire began to be highly interested in Armenians who had been living in the provinces bordering it such as Van, Bitlis, Kharpert, Sebastia, Erzerum, and Diarbekir.\textsuperscript{145} Russia was claiming to be the protector of the Armenian community by positioning itself as the religious leader. Until this time, there was little political interest shown by the United States in the area in a period which was relatively isolationist in the nineteenth century. Later on, particularly after 1890, the US concerns started to rise as Russians moved to the Turkish straights.\textsuperscript{146}

The Ottoman Empire was very unhappy about the interventions of the Western states and Russia into its domestic politics, especially about the minority issues. However, it did not have the power to resist their pressures and was engaged in some policy reforms including a reorganization which aimed to reduce the hierarchy in the

\textsuperscript{143} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{144} Ibid.
country and to bring Christians to equal status with Muslims. But, these reforms did not satisfy the foreign states. German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck noted in 1883: “The so-called Armenian reforms are ideal and theoretical aspirations, which were given an appropriate place in the ornament part of the transactions of the Berlin Congress. Thus, they could be used for parliamentary purposes. Their practical significance, whatever the final outcome, is very doubtful.” According to Simon Payaslian, the final outcome was the intensification of Turkish hostilities toward the Armenians, who in turn responded by arming themselves rather than continuing to rely on the European powers for protection.

Until the beginning of the 20th century, the United States was not involved in the Armenian Question seeing it as a domestic problem, and not wanting to damage its economic relations with the Turks for any humanitarian reason. This was an age in which states were the most important actors in international society and all issues regarding the population were counted as domestic matters. In 1915, Robert Lensing, the Legal Advisor to the State Department in World War I, noted that: “no nation at war, whose national safety is menaced, will permit or should be expected to permit obligations of justice, morality, humanity or honor to interfere with acts which it considers necessary for its self-preservation.”

In 1914, World War I was started. The Ottoman Empire was on the Central Powers' side with Germany. In 1915, Armenian Volunteers joined the Russian Army and

148 Simon Payaslian (2005) p.4
149 Ibid.
150 Ibid., pp.4-19
151 Ibid., p.76
started to fight against the Ottoman Empire.\textsuperscript{152} Around 200,000 Armenians joined the Allied Powers because of the promise of independence made by the Allied powers.\textsuperscript{153} In April 1915, Enver Pasha, a Turkish military officer and the minister of war at that time, warned the Armenian patriarch that if Armenians engaged in revolutionary activities or aided the Russian war aims, the government would not be able to prevent the hostilities of others towards them. He added that the government could not tolerate internal troubles while struggling to defend the country and that the government would employ all means necessary to control this situation.\textsuperscript{154}

What happened after this date, April 1915, is debatable. The Armenian society claims that first, the Armenians serving in the Ottoman Army were turned into labor battalions or killed. Then, civilians were deported from Eastern Anatolia and Cilicia to the deserts near Aleppo. Armenians claimed that the lines of Armenian deportees were set upon by Turkish and Kurdish villagers who were incited and led by specifically designated killing squads.\textsuperscript{155} Thus, Armenians think that in World War I, the Ottoman Empire, while fighting on the various fronts, deliberately and systematically tried to destroy the Armenian population.

On the other hand, the Turkish side claims there were various revolts by people from many the nations, leading to many being killed or tortured not just Armenians but Turkish, Kurdish, and Arabic people also. So they deny that there was a deliberate and systematic effort to destroy the Armenian population.

\textsuperscript{154} Simon Payaslian (2005) p. 79
\textsuperscript{155} Robert Melson (1996) pp. 159-160
Today, what is called 'the Armenian Question' refers to the problem of what to call the incident because of the ambiguity of the historical data. On the one hand, Armenians and their supporters want to call it a “genocide.” On the other hand, the Turkish side completely opposes the Armenian claims and do not accept the term genocide. In this problem, the most important issue is the use of the term 'Genocide' which is a crime under International Law with serious consequences. Turkish advocates oppose the use of the term, noting that this term was defined and became a crime under International Law after the United Nations Convention on the Crime and Prevention of Genocide was passed by the General Assembly on 10 December 1948.156

In the next section, I analyze the reactions this question created in both Turkey and the United States.

Public Opinion in the United States

As noted in Chapter 2, American public opinion is generally led by the elite and media, and lobby groups are particularly important in mobilizing public opinion. In the United States, the fragmented structure of the political system, by enabling multiple points of access into decision-making, creates opportunity for lobby groups to transfer their policy preferences to the policy-makers. These lobby groups try to present their interests as an integral part of the US national interest. 157 The Armenian lobby is one of the most effective lobby groups in the United States in that it has a substantial impact on...
Turkish-American relations.

The size of the Armenian-American community is estimated at 485,000 according to the American Community Survey 2009 data. Many Armenian-Americans are well educated and in professional occupations such as engineering, medicine, and teaching, but only a small number of them have entered the US political scene. However, they have the political support of a number of influential congressmen and senators sympathetic to the Armenian cause.

The Armenian lobby has been motivated by a collective outburst of anger against Turkey. The lobby's first accomplishment was the rejection of the Turkish-American Treaty of Lausanne in 1927 by the US Senate. The Armenian Assembly of America (AAA) was established in 1972. The AAA, with the financial support it has had, has become a very important group within the Armenian lobby. The Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA) is another important unit of the Armenian lobby. The lobbying agenda of these two organizations focuses on similar issues: (1) seeking the recognition of the Armenian 'genocide'; (2) increasing US assistance to Armenia; (3) reducing economic and military aid to Turkey; and (4) supporting the self-determination of Nagorno-Karabakh. Both the ANCA and the AAA have published books, journals and reviews, and organized major conferences and workshops to influence US public opinion and to gain political and economic support.

Although the Armenian lobby was effective in the rejection of the Treaty of Lausanne in 1927, throughout the Cold War, the anti-Turkish propaganda was ineffective.

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160 Ibid., pp. 189-190
Moreover, the Armenian terrorist organization, the Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia (ASALA), by killing 34 Turkish diplomats and their family members and wounding 424 others, harmed Armenian efforts to gain public support. The end of the Cold War, however, led the Armenian lobby to increase their activities and influence on Turkish-American relations.\footnote{Ibid., pp. 190-193}

In 2000, during the final weeks of the legislative session, to benefit from election politics, the Armenian lobby, hoping to benefit from electoral politics, supported House Resolution (H.R.) 596. This resolution was entitled 'Affirmation of the US Record on the Armenian Genocide Resolution,' and although it was legally non-binding, it had a great impact on the Turkish public. According to Suhnaz Yilmaz, one of the reasons why this resolution was pushed by the Republican House leadership was to increase support for their candidate James Rogan who was in a close race with the Democratic candidate in California's 27th district, which has a large Armenian-American population.\footnote{Ibid., p. 14} The fear of losing public support is an important pressure mechanism, and as reflected in this case, it has a direct impact on foreign policy.

In opposition to the Armenian lobby, the Turkish lobby is another effective group in Turkish-American relations. The Turkish lobby is a relative latecomer to Washington because until the 1974 Cyprus intervention and the arms embargo following the efforts of the Greek lobby, the Turks underestimated the importance of lobbying. The main goal of the lobby is to enhance Turkish-American relations, to counteract anti-Turkish propaganda in the United States, and to educate the American public about Turkey and such concerns of the Turkish-Americans as the rejection of the Armenian claims about
“genocide.” But there are some disadvantages experienced by the Turkish Lobby. The Turkish community, for instance, is smaller in size than the Armenians, it is around 350,000 people, and these people are generally first or second generation Turks living in the United States. The Turks are relatively less integrated, although they try to maintain their Turkish identity which is dissimilar to the American identity. In particular, religion is a very private issue for the Muslim Turkish community, unlike the Armenians, who, through Christianity, share an important characteristic with most of American society. The economic power of the Turkish community is also weaker than that of other lobbies.\textsuperscript{163}

The Assembly of Turkish-American Associations (ATAA) and the Federation of the Turkish-American Associations (FTAA) are umbrella organizations for over 100 Turkish associations in the United States. Both organizations undertake a number of activities, including educational seminars to the Turkish-American community to encourage them to engage in political activism and leadership. They organize conferences to inform the American public about the issues concerning the Turkish-American community. An important project, undertaken by the ATAA, has been organized educational seminars about Turkey and the Turks for American high-school teachers. The Turkish Day Parade, organized by the FTAA, is a very important public relations activity, which usually attracts over 45,000 participants. These organizations also publish books, newspapers, and journals to inform the general public. Still, the Turkish Lobby is not powerful enough to work effectively against the anti-Turkish propaganda of the other ethnic lobbies, such as the Armenians.\textsuperscript{164}

\textsuperscript{163} \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 195-7
\textsuperscript{164} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 198
In 2010, House Resolution (H.R) 252,\(^{165}\) the recognition of the Armenian “genocide,” passed the House Foreign Affairs Committee (HFAC), by a vote of 23-22, despite the efforts of the Turkish Lobby. There were thousands of letters, phone calls, e-mails and faxes sent to the Committee members by the Turkish-American community.\(^ {166}\) When the resolution came to the Congress, both the Armenian and Turkish lobbies actively worked to influence the public to pressure the congressmen to change their votes. The resolution was eventually rejected by the Congress. This result was welcomed and celebrated by the Turkish Lobby and accepted as a success of their lobbying.\(^ {167}\)

There are also other ethnic lobby groups supporting either the Turkish or the Armenian lobbies. The Greek lobby, for instance, supports the Armenian claims about the recognition of the Armenian 'genocide'. The American Hellenic Institution (AHI) congratulated the US House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee for the passage of the Armenian Genocide Resolution, H.R. 252, and urged the Greek American community to contact their US representatives to urge co-sponsorship and support for H.R. 252.\(^ {168}\) On the other hand, the Jewish Lobby has been a supporter of the Turkish Lobby since the end of the Cold War when the Turkish-Israeli partnership established. In the Armenian case, although the Jewish lobby publicly does not reject the Armenian claims, they support the Turkish lobby so as not to harm the Turkish-Israeli relations.\(^ {169}\)

\(^{165}\) Affirmation of the United States Record on the Armenian Genocide Resolution
http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/z?c111:H.RES.252:


\(^{169}\) Suhnaz Yilmaz (2003) pp. 199-204
The sympathy of the other ethnic groups is very important for the lobbies as they seek wider public support.

As can be seen, in the United States, public opinion on the Armenian Question is determined by the influences of lobbies, specifically the Turkish and the Armenian lobbies. These lobbies use the power of public opinion, and their biggest pressure tool is voting. In the Armenian case aspects of American identity are also come into play. As discussed in the second chapter, Americans tend to feel responsible for other nations because they see the United States as the world leader. The memories and stories of massacres influence the American public and lead them to defend the Armenians. Americans are also generally sensitive about Christianity which is a shared characteristic between them and the Armenians. These are important factors that strengthen the lobby groups and help them gain support more easily. The Turks, however, are pictured as barbarian by the Armenians. Thus, it is harder for them to tell their perspectives because of the bias towards them. They are also, because of their Muslim identity, at a disadvantage because they do not share an important aspect of the American identity as the Armenians do.

Although the American identity is important in determining American public opinion, issues such as the Armenian Question only some to public attention through the mobilization of the lobbies. Mobilized public opinion then affects foreign policy making through the pressure exerted on politicians.

Public Opinion in Turkey

Turkish public opinion is a natural extension of Turkish national identity. Thus,
national and religious problems can generate strong public reaction in Turkey. The Armenian Question is a good example of how certain issues affect the sensitivities of the Turkish nation. The nation feels that it is blamed for killing the Armenians and the Turks are offended by the Armenian claims. These feelings lead them to behave defensively and aggressively. The issue is called the 'so-called genocide' by the Turkish public and the Turkish media.

The elites and the masses seem to be in harmony on this issue. Except for some left wing groups, the majority of the public is against the recognition of the phenomenon as genocide. However, leftist campaign began in 2010 with the name “I apologize”. In this campaign, various writers, artists and businessmen signed a text saying that: “My conscience does not accept the insensitivity shown to and the denial of the Great Catastrophe that the Ottoman Armenians were subjected to in 1915. I reject this injustice and for my share, I empathize with the feelings and pain of my Armenian brothers and sisters. I apologize to them.”\footnote{The official website of the “I apologize” campaign: http://www.ozurdiliyoruz.com/ retrieved on April 14, 2011.} By signing this text, the elites showed that although they do not accept the incident as “genocide,” they accept the fact that the Armenians are owed an apology. But just after this campaign started, another campaign under the name “I don't apologize” began and was signed by more than 80,000 Turkish citizens.\footnote{The official website of the “I do not apologize” campaign: http://www.ozurdilemiyoruz.biz/ retrieved on April 14, 2011.}

On 5 March 2010, when the US House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee passed the Armenian Genocide Resolution, H.R. 252, the Turkish public reacted very nationalistically. In all leading newspapers, such as Hurriyet, Zaman or
Milliyet, the general tone was defensive and disappointed.\textsuperscript{172} Although the non-binding character of the resolution calmed reactions, the public was disappointed by the decision. A new online campaign was created by some writers to protest the decision. Called “Ermeni Yalanları: Yeter Artık!” (“Armenian Lies: That's Enough!”), it gathered more than one million people supporting.\textsuperscript{173} There were many local protests held in different cities in Turkey especially by university students. As noted in chapter 2, the relationship between the masses, the elites and the policy-makers in Turkey is relatively direct and homogenous. The policy-makers are aware of the public’s feelings and the elites do not need to mediate. This case was a typical example of that relationship. The foreign minister Ahmet Davutoğlu organized a press meeting right after the decision was made and noted that this decision harmed the feelings of the Turkish people.\textsuperscript{174} Furthermore Ambassador Namik Tan was recalled from the United States to Turkey to show the displeasure of the government people.

To sum up, Turkish public opinion on the Armenian Question is fed by nationalism. The Turkish policy-makers also share this attitude and therefore they can act in tune with the public opinion without necessarily depending on the elites.

\textsuperscript{172} The headlines of the many Turkish newspapers on 5 March 2010 can be accessed from: \url{http://www.resimlihaber.com/gazete-kapaklari/05-mart-2010-cuma-gazete-1-sayfalari_3966.html} accessed on April 14, 2011.

\textsuperscript{173} The website created and then exterminated campaign can be reached from \url{http://www.bizkackisiviz.com/index.php} Accessed on April 14, 2011.

\textsuperscript{174} Notes from Ahmet Davutoğlu's speech can be read from \url{http://hurarsiv.hurriyet.com.tr/goster/haber.aspx?id=14017703&tarih=2010-03-05}. Accessed on April 14, 2011.
Chapter 6: The Cyprus Problem

The Cyprus problem is a territorial dispute between Turkish and Greek Cypriots and involving also Turkey and Greece as stakeholders. The United States, the European Union and the United Nations have been involved in attempts to resolve the conflict. I will summarize the long history of the conflict in the island, then look at public reaction to the problem in both Turkey and the United States.

The History of the Cyprus Problem

Cyprus, an island located in the Eastern Mediterranean, has been an area of conflict from the very beginning of its history. This third largest island of the Mediterranean has changed hands continuously because of its geostrategic location and rich copper mines. Cyprus was ruled by various nations including Egyptians, Persians, Romans, Byzantines, Franks, Venetians, Turks and the British.175

The ancestors of the Greek Cypriots are Aegean colonists who came from Greece and Anatolia between 1400 and 800 B.C. Later on, in the Byzantine period, Greek influence on the island was consolidated. Although Franks, Venetians, and Romans respectively tried to eliminate the people's allegiance to the Greek Orthodox Church, they only forced it to go underground.176

The Ottoman Empire conquered the island in 1571 after 400 years of Latin rule. The Turks first abolished feudalism, then restored the Greek Orthodox Church to its former dominant position. Finally, they brought in a number of Turkish settlers and

176 Ibid.
gradually a Turkish Cypriot community was formed on the island. The Ottomans applied the same policy to every territory they conquered; they respected the religion and traditions of the natives, and they brought Turkish settlers in to form a Turkish community.

The abolition of feudalism made the Church the central institution in the Greek Cypriot community. Sultan Selim II also gave some secular authority to the Church including the regest to collect the state tax. Throughout the Ottoman period, the Greek Ottoman Church was the central institution around which the political, intellectual, and cultural life of the Greek Cypriots revolved. Thus, it is not surprising that the Church was the leader in the fight for enosis, the ideal of the Greek-Cypriots to unify Cyprus with Greece.

The Ottoman control of Cyprus ended in 1878 when Britain took control of the island in exchange for British support against Russia. Actually, British rule in Cyprus was only supposed to last until the Ottomans recaptured the eastern territories they lost to Russia. The new British administration was welcomed by the Greek Cypriot community because they saw this change as a step forward to enosis. These expectations frightened the Turkish Cypriots because they thought that they would be unable to protect their rights in a Cyprus united with Greece. The Turkish Cypriots expected that if the British decided to give up Cyprus, it would be returned to the Ottoman Empire. But, after the World War I, Britain continued to rule the island, and the British rule was recognized by Greece and Turkey with the 1923 Lausanne Treaty. The new Turkish Republic under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk had already renounced, in 1920, all Turkish claims

177 Ibid.
178 Ibid.
over areas inhabited by non-Turkish majorities. This attitude adopted in Lausanne continued as a foreign policy strategy until the 1950s. In compliance with this strategy, the Turkish government supported emigration of Turkish Cypriots to Turkey. But the British administration did not want to deal with a pro-enosis Greek population without an opposing Turkish community and so the British “created a variety of bureaucratic difficulties in order to retain a sizeable Turkish community in Cyprus.”\textsuperscript{179}

In order not to lose British support, both Turkey and Greece remained neutral on the Cyprus issue until the end of World War II. Although there was increasing pro-enosis support in both Greece and Cyprus, the Greek government did not raise the Cyprus question at the United Nations until 1954. Turkey, on the other hand, continued to support the British sovereignty over Cyprus until the end of the 1950s. The Turkish government believed that Britain could protect the island from the rising Soviet expansionism and the enosis plans.\textsuperscript{180}

In 1954, Greece raised the Cyprus problem at the UN and called for international support for Cypriot self-determination. The Greeks thought that self-determination could be the first step in the enosis process. The General Assembly, with the strong support of Turkish and American representatives, rejected the draft resolution by declaring that the “adoption of any resolution would harm good relations between some of our friends and allies.”\textsuperscript{181} This rejection caused Greek Cypriots to feel isolated, and this feeling led to the establishment of the National Organization of Cypriot Fighters (EOKA) a guerilla organization. In turn, a Turkish paramilitary organization, Turkish Resistance

\textsuperscript{179} Ibid., pp. 22
\textsuperscript{180} Ibid., pp. 24-27
\textsuperscript{181} Stephen G. Xydis (1967) Cyprus: Conflict and Conciliation, Ohio: The Ohio State University Press, p. 599
Organization (TMT), was established to protect Turkish Cypriots from EOKA attacks. Faced with an increasing tension on the island, the Turkish government, led by Prime Minister Adnan Menderes, revised the Turkish policy toward Cyprus, and decided to claim possession of the island if Britain were to give up Cyprus. According to Suha Bolukbasi, this demand for the return of Cyprus to Turkey was a reaction to Greece's enosis efforts; the Turkish government did not seriously believe that Turkey would ever be sovereign over the whole of Cyprus. Thus, the Turks did not present any draft resolutions to the UN.\textsuperscript{182}

In 1957, Turkey changed its strategy again, and started to suggest the partition of Cyprus into two states. In 1958, Britain announced that the government would implement a plan granting self-government to the island because the sovereignty over the island had become very costly due to the ongoing EOKA and TMT warfare. According to this plan, even though Britain would have to give up its sovereignty, it would be able to keep its military bases on the island.\textsuperscript{183} In 1959, Turkish, Turkish Cypriot, Greek and Greek Cypriot representatives came together in London, and drafted a constitution for a new republic. In August 1960, the Cyprus Republic was proclaimed.\textsuperscript{184}

The United States watched this whole period closely and was pleased with the agreements which seemed to eliminate serious frictions in the relations between three of its allies. The Cyprus problem was important for the United States because it did not want two of its NATO allies to be foes. Thus, when the conflict arose in the island again, the United States reacted very aggressively.

The newly established republic was far from providing stability to the Cypriots. In

\textsuperscript{182} Suha Bolukbasi (1988) pp. 28-30
\textsuperscript{183} Ibid., pp. 30-3
\textsuperscript{184} Ibid., pp. 33-5
December 1963, the intercommunal violence started again on the island when Greek Cypriot policemen murdered two Turkish civilians at a checkpoint near Nicosia. Within hours, Greek Cypriot policemen and some EOKA members started an all-out attack on Turkish quarters throughout Cyprus. Later on the tension quickly rose between the two communities. The United States carefully watched the island and urged Turkey and Greece to be calm and not to employ warfare. Turkey, Greece and Britain decided to establish a joint peacekeeping force to stop the ongoing violence in Cyprus. None of these efforts including the 1964 London Conference to create a new constitution, did anything to end the violence. On March 14, 1964, a UN peacekeeping force arrived in Cyprus to stop the warfare but it was not successful. In May 1964, thirty-five Turkish Cypriots were found dead near Nicosia. Turkish Prime Minister Inonu was trying to solve the problem without armed conflict because he feared the possibility of losing Western support in the Cold War. But, in the end, Inonu accepted the need for a military operation. On June 4, 1964, Inonu shared the intervention plans with US Ambassador Raymond Hare. The ambassador asked for a twenty-four hour delay to consult the US administration, and Inonu accepted. The message that came from the United States, the infamous Johnson Letter, was unexpectedly harsh and threatening. In this letter, Johnson clearly opposed any military actions, which could harm the stability between NATO allies. He added that in a possible Turkish military intervention, NATO would reconsider whether the members have an obligation to protect Turkey against the Soviet Union. Inonu cancelled the operation and accepted Johnson's offer of discussions in Washington.\textsuperscript{185} This step back and the reaction it created will be discussed in the next section.

\textsuperscript{185} Ibid., pp. 35-81
In August 1964, the Greek armed forces started another total operation against the Turkish community. The Turkish government decided to employ limited aerial bombings to stop the attacks, and the operation was started on August 8, 1964. These bombings did not stop the Greek forces, but just increased the tension on the island. Until another crisis occurred in Cyprus, which was followed by a military operation by Turkey, all peace efforts had already proved to be useless.\textsuperscript{186}

On July 20, 1974, Turkey's 'Peace Operation' into Cyprus started. Bulent Ecevit, the Turkish prime minister, ordered that the use of force and bombings be limited and that the troops not shoot unless shot at. This two-day limited military operation was accepted as legitimate by the international public because there had been a military coup in Cyprus supported by the Greek junta that put a president, Nikos Sampson, into power. Sampson was known as “a sadistic killer of Turks and Britons.”\textsuperscript{187}

The United States, under Secretary of State Kissinger, started efforts to contain a larger conflict between Turkey and Greece. Along with the bilateral talks, Kissinger pushed the UN Security Council to call both Turkey and Greece to the conference table to announce their adoption of a truce. On July 25, 1974 the first Geneva Conference opened. However, the conference did not solve the problem, so on August 9, 1974, the Second Geneva Conference was held. The Turkish side defended territorial federation model but the Greeks did not accept this solution. By the end of August 13, 1974, the Turkish representatives became convinced that the continuation of the negotiations would bring no favorable results. Thus, on August 14, 1974 the second phase of Turkey's Cyprus 'Peace Operation' was started but it was much more aggressive than the first one. This

\textsuperscript{186} Ibid., pp. 81-166
\textsuperscript{187} Ibid., pp. 167-197
second operation was met with displeasure from the international community, and the
United States imposed an arms embargo on Turkey as a result.¹⁸⁸

The second military operation divided the island and set the borders that are in
place today (See Map 6.1). Between 1980 and 1983, intercommunal talks continued in
Nicosia. But these talks also could not solve the problem and no agreement could be
reached. On November 15, 1983, the Turkish Cypriots unilaterally declared its
independence and established the Turkish Republic of the Northern Cyprus (TRNC),
which so far had not been recognized by any country except Turkey.¹⁸⁹

There have been various attempts to resolve the Cyprus Problem throughout
the years. In 2004, after years of negotiations, a UN proposal, known as the Annan Plan, was offered by the UN Secretary-General Kofi
Annan. This proposal aimed at the unity of the two communities within a United Cyprus
Republic. But this proposal was not passed in a referendum held in April 2004. In May of
the same year, the Greek administration of Southern Cyprus joined the European Union.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., pp. 167-226
Cyprus Problem” Emerging Markets Finance & Trade, Vol. 39, No. 6, pp. 54-70
Public Opinion in the United States

The Cyprus issue was a very important issue for the United States during the Cold War. The stability of the Mediterranean region and the maintenance of good relations between friendship of its NATO allies with each other were important aspects of American policy. Thus, the United States became involved in the issue from the moment Britain decided to give up the rule of Cyprus. Along with the national interest, there is another important element that led the United States to become involved in the issue, that is the influence of the lobby groups in the United States. The roles of the Greek and Turkish lobbies in US foreign-policy making should be analyzed as important factors affecting the decisions made.

The Greek Orthodox Church in the United States has been very active in communicating a deep concern over Cyprus to its members and mobilizing Greek American citizens to force American officials and legislators toward favorable actions.\(^{190}\) When Turkey started its second military operation in August 1974, the Greek Orthodox Church played a significant role in activating three million Greek American citizens. The Church wanted the United States to cut all military and economic aid to Turkey.\(^{191}\) The role of the Church with regards to the arms embargo was so great that in October 1974, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger met with Archbishop Iakovos in order to persuade him to calm his community.\(^{192}\) The activities of the Church were way aggressive. Throughout the congressional deliberations on the Turkish arms embargo, “Greek Orthodox priests read from the pulpit the names of the damned-congressmen who voted


\(^{191}\) Suha Bolukbasi (1988) pp. 214

\(^{192}\) Nasuh Uslu (2003) p. 214
with the Administration against the Turkish ban,” and urged the Greek American community to pressure their representatives to change their votes. During the church services petitions urging the Congressmen to support the embargo on Turkey were circulated among the people.193

There were also other Greek-American groups lobbying against Turkey. On July 39, 1974, the Greek associations and religious organizations came together in a meeting and decided to establish a 'Public Relations Office' to ask Congress to cut all military and economic aid to Turkey. As a result of this decision, the Orthodox Church organized a 'letter-writing and telegram/telephone campaigns' by using its front organization, the United Hellenic American Congress (UHAC). The American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association (AHEPA) was another important lobby in that period. AHEPA is an organization which has offices in every state and around 125,000 active members. In 1974, AHEPA urged Greek Americans to write personal letters to those Congressmen and Senators who seemed to favor Turkey. AHEPA along with the American Hellenic Institute (AHI), another Greek lobby group, maintained voting records on individual Congressmen and Senators, and they mounted massive telephone campaigns across the country to pressure those who were undecided.194

Daily demonstrations were also staged by Greek-Americans everyday for a period in Washington D.C. and New York. Some of these demonstrations attracted 70,000 people who were not only Greek Americans but Armenians and other Americans. Watching these activities, Senator Eagleton said that “The United States Senate and other branches of the Federal Government have become aware of a new political force in this

194 Ibid., pp. 214-215
Congressmen were influenced by the efforts of Greek Americans in their voting on the embargo issue because they wanted to secure the support of Greek Americans in the approaching congressional elections. The Greek Americans constituted a politically and socially activated segment of the US population. When the arms embargo was imposed, it was welcomed as a victory by the Greek lobby. The arms embargo was the most crucial US policy decision after the Johnson Letter imposed to force Turkey to act in a certain way, and this act caused a negative reaction from the Turkish people toward the United States.

The Turkish lobby was a latecomer to Washington. Until the arms embargo was imposed, the Turkish-American community underestimated the importance of lobbying activities. The Turkish lobby, led by FTAA and ATAA, has organized seminars and conferences to inform American public about the Turkish position in Cyprus. The lobby defends the rightness and legitimacy of the 1974 Turkish military operations and supports the Turkish military presence in Northern Cyprus today. The main goal of the Turkish Lobby is to gain US support and recognition of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). The lobby uses cultural festivals as platforms for sharing their perspective on Cyprus with the American public. On the anniversaries of the 1974 Turkish military operation, the Turkish-American community celebrates the emancipation of the Turkish Cypriots from the Greek Cypriot “terrorism.” Although the Turkish community is smaller in size, with the support of the Turkish government, it is actively involved in advocating for recognition of the TRNC.

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195 Ibid., p. 215
196 Nasuh Uslu (2003) p. 214
working in the United States to promote Turkey's importance for the United States to the US public.

The general media does not have a special interest in the issue unless there is a change in the situation or a specific campaign by the two communities. Thus, in this issue, it is not wrong to say that the main determiners of public opinion are the ethnic lobbies. The lobbies try to inform the American public about their positions, and to convince Americans on the correctness of their own positions. By doing that, the lobbies wish to gain support of the general public to pressure the policy-makers.

Public Opinion in Turkey

The Turkish public is highly sensitive about issues concerning their nationality. The Cyprus problem is one of the sensitive issues for the Turkish public. The first large reaction of the Turkish public came after the publication of the Johnson Letter in 1964. The threatening tone of the telegram caused disappointment and anger in Turkey toward the United States. The Turks thought that this letter put Turkey in a position of puppet state, and they found unacceptable the use of the US-Turkish alliance as a threat to prevent their action in a matter of vital national interest.\textsuperscript{199} Several demonstrations took place to condemn the United States. The speakers at these demonstrations denounced the United States and President Johnson as false friends of Turkey and accused them of betraying Turkey over Cyprus.\textsuperscript{200} The Johnson Letter\textsuperscript{today} is considered as a diplomatic mistake by Turkish scholars, such as Nasuh Uslu, because it caused widespread anti-

\textsuperscript{199} Nasuh Uslu (2003) pp.173-4
\textsuperscript{200} Suha Bolukbasi (1988) pp.88-9
Americanism in Turkey.\textsuperscript{201}

The Turkish public in general has supported the Turkish military presence in Cyprus since the 1974 Turkish military operation. From the beginning, the Turkish military operation received unanimous support from Turkish public opinion. According to Nasuh Uslu, there was no other issue, domestic or foreign, on which there was such unanimity in Turkey. All major parties and the domestic public have supported the Turkish military action and continuation of the military presence. When the arms embargo was employed, Turkish public opinion unanimously condemned it as an anti-Turkish move and deplored the use of arms supplies as a tool to exert power over Turkish policy.\textsuperscript{202}

The Turkish media reflects Turkish public opinion in the Cyprus problem. Every new development in the case is met by nationalistic reactions of the leading Turkish media. On April 25, 2004, for instance, one day after the Annan Plan referendum held in Cyprus, the Hurriyet, a leading newspaper in Turkey, carried a heading, “Greeks said ’no’ to peace.”\textsuperscript{203} Another newspaper Milliyet also carried the referendum results in its heading and said that “Now all the world needs to see, Turks want peace but Greeks not.”\textsuperscript{204}

To sum up, Turkish public opinion sees Cyprus as a part of Turkey and Turkish Cypriots as a part of the Turkish community. Thus Turks react strongly to any intervention in the Turkish policy toward Cyprus. There is no major distinction visible

\textsuperscript{201} Nasuh Uslu (2003) \textit{The Cyprus Question as an Issue of Turkish Foreign Policy and Turkish-American Relations 1959-2003}, New York: Nova Science Publishers
\textsuperscript{202} Nasuh Uslu (2003) pp. 215-6
between the mass and the elites about the Cyprus problem.

It is not that there are no groups that oppose the Turkish intervention and the ongoing presence. The first group, including liberal writers and opinion leaders such as Ahmet Altan and Ertugrul Ozkok, believe that Turkish Cypriots should be free to decide on what they want, and that the Turkish military should be withdrawn from the island as soon as possible to facilitate a peaceful solution. The second group is composed of socialists and communists who define Turkish policies on Cyprus as “imperialistic” and want Turkey to remove all political and military influence from the island. For instance, in his book *The Cyprus Issue*, the head of the Turkish Labor Party Dogu Perincek claims that Turkey is an invader in Cyprus and should withdraw all its forces. A third group is composed of a less organized group of people with various ideologies who state that Turkey would be better off if the economic and political “burden” of Cyprus is relieved. However, relative to the underground nationalistic support for Turkey on this issue, the opposition’s voices are relatively muted.

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207 Country Studies/Cyprus by the U.S. Department of the Army is available at [http://countrystudies.us/cyprus/75.htm](http://countrystudies.us/cyprus/75.htm) retrieved from May 9, 2011.
Chapter 7: Turkey’s Accession into the European Union

Turkey has been officially waiting for its accession into the European Union (EU) for more than twenty years as a candidate country. But actually this candidacy is just a small part of the long-run efforts of Turkey to be recognized as a member of the Western world - a status sought by Turkish and Ottoman governments for almost 150 years.208 For Turkey, acceptance into the European Union meant Westernization, enlightenment and a move towards modernity.209 The United States, as the strategic partner of Turkey, supports its accession into the EU, even though there are various domestic groups opposing US support in the United States, such as the Armenian and Greek lobbies.

Turkey-EU Relations

Turkey’s relations with the European Union date back to the 1950s when it applied for membership of the European Economic Community (EEC). On 12 September 1963, Turkey and the EEC signed the Association Agreement (Ankara Agreement) to grant membership to Turkey, which is accepted as the official starting point of Turkey-EU relations. The Ankara Agreement set up a customs union, which would be completed in twenty-two years, to foster economic integration, and an Association Council to meet regularly to follow up the agreement. Turkey has viewed the agreement as a promise for the country’s eventual accession to EEC/EU because Article 28 of the agreement stated, “when both parties are ready to assume the obligations arising from membership, then

Turkey’s accession will be possible.” Therefore, this agreement forms a legitimate basis for Turkey’s eligibility for EU membership.

Starting from the Ankara Agreement, Turkey and the European Union have had a problematic relationship changing according to the political environment in both Turkey and the European Union. For instance, following the military interventions in Turkey in 1971 and 1980, the European Union suspended all economic and military assistance to Turkish governments. After years of economic and political recovery, Turkey applied officially to the European Union in 1987 when the Turkish government felt ready to be a part of the EU. On 18 December 1989, the EEC rejected the request to start accession negotiations with Turkey right away by giving economic and political reasons such as the negative effects of the Cyprus Problem between Turkey and Greece, a member state. However, the EEC did not end its cooperation with Turkey, stating instead that the Community had a fundamental interest in working together with Turkey, and that it would help Turkey to complete the process of political and economic modernization.

In the 1980s and the 1990s, Turkey rather than “being a ‘natural insider’ was an ‘important outsider’ with whom …[the European Community sought to develop relations] on an arm's length basis barring full integration.”

In 1995, the final stage of the customs union began. This step gave Turkey the hopes that economic cooperation could strengthen institutional cooperation and deepen political dialogue. On 13 December 1995, the European Parliament gave its assent to the Customs Union.

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212 Meltem Muftuler-Bac and Yannis A. Stivachtis (2008) p. 4
213 Ziya Onis and Suhnaz Yilmaz (2005) p. 267
In April 1997, the European Union reaffirmed Turkey’s eligibility for EU membership as an equal candidate with the other applicant countries. On 15 July 1997, the European Union adopted Agenda 2000, which listed the needs of Turkey for membership including the resolution of the Cyprus Problem and improvements in the human rights situation. On the same day, the Customs Union was extended to new fields to step up economic cooperation. But in December 1997, relations entered a difficult phase as a result of the rejection of Turkey’s bid for candidacy status while eleven other states were granted formal candidacy status. Instead, the European Union decided to draw up a strategy to prepare Turkey for candidacy. This strategy included the intensification of the economic and financial cooperation, and the adoption by Turkey of the EU’s *acquis communautaire*, the cumulative body of European Union laws.\(^\text{214}\) This strategy was later named the “Copenhagen Criteria.” But Turkey reacted very negatively to the rejection of its candidacy maintaining that it had received discriminatory treatment compared with the other applicant countries, none of which enjoyed a customs union with the European Union, and some of which were weaker democracies and economies such as Slovakia, Bulgaria, and Romania.\(^\text{215}\) The Turkish government stated that it was suspending political dialogue with the European Union and it would no longer discuss political issues such as the Cyprus Problem, or human rights. Later on how efforts by the European Union led to the acceptance by Turkey of a “European Strategy” and the stair of preparation for Turkey’s future candidacy.\(^\text{216}\)

In December 1999, formal Turkish candidacy was granted at the Helsinki summit.


\(^{215}\) Birol A. Yesilada (2002) p.95

\(^{216}\) Meltem Muftuler-Bac and Yannis A. Stivachtis (2008) pp.4-6
Throughout the summit, American diplomats brought intense pressure to bear on the British and German delegations to support the Turkish position.\footnote{William Wallace (2008) “Leadership or Partnership? Can Transatlantic Leadership be shared?” In Geir Lundestad (ed.) \textit{Just Another Major Crisis?} New York: Oxford Press, p. 171} This decision was a turning point in EU-Turkey relations providing Turkey, like other candidate countries, with a pre-accession strategy to stimulate and support its reforms. In 8 March 2001, the Accession Partnership for Turkey was formally adopted by the European Council, setting out the priority areas for further work in a single framework. According to this framework, Turkey revised its “National Program for the Adoption of the Acquis,” which set out the policy framework, the schedule for adopting new legislation, policies and practices, and the administrative and budgetary requirements, and approved this agenda on 19 March 2001.\footnote{Meltem Muftuler-Bac and Yannis A. Stivachtis (2008) pp. 6-7}

In December 2004, finally the European Union decided that Turkey had fulfilled the Copenhagen Criteria, and that the accession negotiations should be opened without delay. On 3 October 2005, accession negotiations were opened with Turkey. Today, the adaptation to the EU acquis is currently ongoing in Turkey in various areas. On 30 June 2010, negotiations opened on food safety, veterinary and phytosanitary policy.\footnote{European Commission on Enlargement, EU-Turkey relations. Retrieved from \url{http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/candidate-countries/turkey/relation/index_en.htm} accessed on 18 April 2011.}

\textbf{The Role of the United States in Turkey-EU Relations}

Throughout the ongoing process, the United States actively sponsored Turkey’s application to join the European Union. According to William Wallace, the reason for the United States support of Turkey’s accession bid was that it saw Turkey as a key member
of NATO, and the EU as the external anchor that would keep this Muslim state within the West. But the European governments were conscious that Turkey-EU relations were far more complex than Washington’s “politico-military policy-makers wished to consider.”

The key reason for this difference in the attitude toward Turkey was that Turkey’s joining in the European Union did not involve any explicit costs for the United States. On the other hand, for Europeans, the potential costs of Turkish accession have been important, such as its impact on employment prospects, community-wide budgetary transfers, agriculture policy, the decision making process, and so on. There is another difference between the European Union and the United States which is that the United States is a much more security-oriented entity than the European Union. Thus, from an American perspective “the security producing credentials of Turkey were of greater importance than its immediate democratic deficits, constituting a strong basis for rapid progress towards EU accession.” On the other hand, the more inward-oriented European Union has had the fear that the incorporation of Turkey would link the European Union to a highly unstable part of the world, and would import insecurity and instability.

For the United States, supporting Turkish accession was a part of its Cold War strategy to keep the Western alliance together at the beginning. Turkey was a strategically important state, which had to be protected from Soviet expansion. In the post-Cold War period, Turkey’s claim to a central status rested on its attractiveness as an emerging

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American support for Turkey became visible through three key developments in the 1990s. First, the lobbying activities of American diplomats were very effective in the negotiations leading to the signing of the Customs Union. Prior to the vote in the European Parliament, the Europeans did not seem to favor a formal customs union with Turkey. However, active lobbies of American officials played an important role in turning the decision in favor of the outcome desired by Turkey. Second, American officials played an important role in the 1999 Helsinki summit in which the formal candidacy status of Turkey was accepted. In this decision, not just the American diplomats but also the Clinton administration was influential, employing significant pressure through both formal and informal channels, including direct telephone calls by President Clinton to European leaders. President Clinton, after the decision given, released an official statement noting that the United States welcomed the decision with pleasure, and repeated American support for Turkey’s bid.

The third development differs from the first two because along with American support, it clearly displayed the limits of American power in European Union decision-making. The United States once again launched a major lobbying campaign to support Turkey prior to the Copenhagen summit in 2002. President Bush, like President Clinton, made several telephone calls to European leaders to show American support. But, unlike

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228 Ziya Onis and Suhnaz Yilmaz (2005) p.273
the previous campaigns, this time the efforts did not achieve their goal.\textsuperscript{229} On the contrary, some Europeans complained about the persistent American pressure for Turkey's EU membership calling then counterproductive. Moreover, those pressures had an important negative side effect, that is the assumption of Turkish politicians that they could avoid implementing certain key components with American support.\textsuperscript{230}

Sabri Sayari notes that it is important to remember that the United States has not asked Europeans to change the membership criteria or show special favor to Turkey while they support Turkey’s membership. Instead, American officials accept the right of the European Union to apply membership rules, and they ask the European Union to offer Turkey equal treatment with other applicants and to reject any religious or cultural criteria as the basis for gaining membership.\textsuperscript{231} According to the United States, alienating Turkey by adopting a rejectionist attitude is not beneficial for all three actors. Americans accept that Turkey needs to undertake many political reforms on the way to full membership.

The support of the United States has changed in the post-Copenhagen period. The United States became less likely to pursue highly visible activism to promote Turkish membership and to invest as much diplomatic energy and capital as it did in the past. There are two major reasons for this policy change: (1) the Turkish parliament’s refusal to grant American troops transit rights on 1 March 2003,\textsuperscript{232} and (2) the idea that the United States has already achieved its aims by making Turkey a formal candidate and it does not want to risk further problems in the aftermath of the Iraq war which already created

\textsuperscript{229} Sabri Sayari (2003) pp.168-9
\textsuperscript{230} Ziya Önis and Suhnaz Yilmaz (2005) p.273
\textsuperscript{231} Sabri Sayari (2003) p.170
\textsuperscript{232} Ziya Önis and Suhnaz Yilmaz (2005) p.276
problems between the United States and the European states.\textsuperscript{233}

Although US support has diminished in activism, it is less likely to end in the near future because, as Sabri Sayari notes, “Washington's position on this issue is well established and it has become one of the important anchors of the bilateral ties between Washington and Ankara.”\textsuperscript{234} An important point to mention is that the increasing distance between Turkey and the United States has helped Turkey to move closer to the core Franco-German alliance which constitutes the dominant force within the European Union. And there are some scholars, such as Ziya Onis and Suhnaz Yilmaz, who think that this change in US support is beneficial in terms of pushing Turkey to fulfill the membership criteria.\textsuperscript{235}

\textbf{Public Opinion in the United States}

Turkish membership in the European Union is the only internal EU issue in which the United States has been so actively involved and asserted a right.\textsuperscript{236} In domestic politics, however, the issue does not attract public attention unless some lobby groups draw attention to it. There are various groups trying to influence US support. The major ones are the Greek, Armenian and Turkish lobbies.

The Greek and the Armenian lobbies try to diminish US support for Turkey joining into the European Union. A Turkish scholar, Burak Akcapar, claims that these lobbies demonstrate “zero regard for the strong mutual interests inherent in US-Turkish relations,” but they are not very effective because “the dominant policy did not agree in

\textsuperscript{233} Sabri Sayari (2003) pp.175-6  
\textsuperscript{234} Sabri Sayari (2003) p.176  
\textsuperscript{235} Ziya Onis and Suhnaz Yilmaz (2005) p.279  
\textsuperscript{236} Alan Makovsky, "Turkey's Faded European Dream," p. 60 in Sabri Sayari (2003) p.171
their outlook.” Both the Armenian and the Greek lobbies organize conferences, make campaigns and publish press releases to diminish US support on the Turkish bid.

In 2004, during his official visit to Turkey to participate in the NATO summit, President Bush called for the European Union to support Turkey's candidacy for membership. He described Turkey as a strong, secular democracy, and a close ally of free nations, and added that “with 150 years of democratic and social reform, stands as a model to others, and as Europe’s bridge to the wider world.” In reaction, the Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA)'s Chairman Ken Hachikian and American Hellenic Institute (AHI) President Gene Rossides wrote a letter to the President. In that letter, both the ANCA and AHI representatives expressed their concerns about US support for Turkish membership, writing that, “the reality is that Turkey is neither secular nor democratic and, if anything, represents a negative role model for the states of the region.” Later in this letter, they wrote that Turkey’s membership in the European Union “does not enjoy the backing of our nation’s citizens, who recognize that the Turkish government falls far short of meeting even the most basic standards of democracy and human rights that we embrace as Americans.”

The Armenian lobby, along with the Armenian organizations in Europe, opposes Turkey’s joining the European Union unless it recognizes the Armenian “Genocide.” But, ironically, the Armenian government supports the Turkish bid, because Armenia sees that Turkey’s joining might help the two countries to improve their relations. The Greek

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238 Office of the Federal Register (US) Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, George W. Bush, 2004, p.1152
240 RIA Novosti, on 10.16.2011, Armenia wants to see Turkey join EU. Retrieved from
lobby has a more aggressive attitude. The American Hellenic Institute wrote that there is no hope for Turkey to evolve into a democratic state so the United States should change its strategy and not support Turkey’s membership in the European Union.  

On the other hand, the Turkish lobby works to increase US support for the Turkish bid and to minimize the influence of the Armenian and Greek lobbies. On this issue, the Turkish-American business elites are more interested. The American-Turkish Council, a business association works for enhancing the promotion of US-Turkish commercial relations, organizes annual conferences that address the key issues including US support for Turkey’s European bid. In 2006, at the 25th Annual Conference of the American Turkish Council (ATC), where Turkey's EU bid was at the forefront of the discussions, US Assistant Secretary for European and Eurasian Affairs Matt Bryza described Turkey as a “successful country with its majority-Muslim population but democratic and secular governmental system.” At that conference Bryza repeated US support for the Turkish bid. According to Bryza, Turkey’s EU membership “has a key role in countering radical Islam.”

Public Opinion in Turkey

In Turkish public opinion literature, the issue of Turkish membership in the European Union is generally referred to as an “elite project,” because, traditionally, the

242 The official website of the American-Turkish Council: http://www.the-atc.org/
European integration process is seen as being driven by elites.\textsuperscript{245} Turkish elites, always defend the discourse of “giving” what is good for the people even they do not “understand.” What is good is generally described by Western values, and membership in the European Union is seen as the final point of Turkish Westernization; it signifies the acceptance into the Western club. Through the Turkish elites, the European Union has often been presented as the ultimate opportunity to improve the economic, social and political well being of the Turkish people. The masses generally accepted this argument and supported the EU bid until the 2002 when serious policy reforms started to be passed by from the parliament. The first policy package included abolishment of the death penalty and this created a strong reaction by the public. After that point, public support started to decrease.\textsuperscript{246}

In Turkey, more educated, less religious, more leftist parts of the population are supportive of EU membership; as Ozgehan Senyuva explains, “the potential winners of transition are more supportive.”\textsuperscript{247} The biggest support, however, comes from the business elite who are also another potential winner of this membership.

The Turkish business elite is very influential in the formation of public opinion toward the European Union, and in this process, the major actor is the Turkish Industry and Business Association (TUSIAD). TUSIAD, as a non-governmental organization, is not just a business association but also an organization that aims to be the opinion leader of the society. In its statute, TUSIAD describes its mission as to contribute to the creation of a modern Turkey with Western values such as the rule of law and human rights. In

\textsuperscript{246} Ozgehan Senyuva, p. 22
\textsuperscript{247} Ibid p. 26
order to realize this aim, TUSIAD sees the European Union as a very important step. Again in its statute, it is written that one of the main missions of TUSIAD is to contribute to the promotion of Turkey’s European Union membership in both Turkey and in the international arena.248 TUSIAD has had a representative office in the United States, TUSIAD-US, which aims to strengthen not only economic but also political ties between Turkey and the United States.249 On 17 June 2010, TUSIAD-US met with Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, and asked for US support of Turkish policies, especially EU membership.250 With the leadership of TUSIAD, the Turkish business circles expect the increasing support of the United States for the Turkish Westernization process.

On the other hand, general Turkish public opinion about membership has been

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changing (See chart 7.1) The 2010 Pew Global Attitudes report shows that the support of the Turkish public for membership decreased 14 percent in five years. Moreover, only 28 percent of Turks hold a positive view of the EU according to the same report (see chart 7.2). In this respect it is hard to say that the Turkish public supports US support FOR Turkey’s EU bid. In the 2010 Pew report, it is only 9 percent of the Turkish public (the lowest rate in the whole world) believes that the United States considers Turkey’s interests in its foreign policy making. Thus, even though the United States officially supports the Turkey’s membership bid, Turkish public does not have high expectations from it.
Chapter 8: Conclusion

Turkey and the United States have had a long history of relations that have been generally friendly and cooperative since the 1946 Truman Doctrine was enunciated in the United States. Although there have been some fluctuations, both sides worked for the continuation of good relations. During the Cold War years, their relationship evolved into a “strategic partnership” which has continued also after the Cold War. In Turkish-American relations, public opinion has had a strong impact on the policy-making process.

This study has hypothesized that because of the size and diversity of the United States, public opinion generally impacts the decision-makers through the returns of the elite. On the other hand, in the more cohesive, homogenous Turkey, mass opinion is more important. In two of the cases analyzed, the Cyprus Problem and the Armenian Question, the Turkish public has indeed held strong opinions. Since the elites and leaders have shared this nationalism, it is not really that the masses have been influential so much as the fact that they have lent support to the leadership. In the other case, Turkey’s accession to the European Union, it turn out that elite opinion and leadership preferences have been more important than mass opinion. Therefore the picture is mixed in terms of my hypotheses. In all three cases, the fact that attitudes are shared between the masses and the leaders makes the measurement of the public’s actual influence difficult. Also, in the academic sphere, there is a considerable lack of empirical studies investigating the interaction between the Turkish political elite, policy-makers and the Turkish public.251

In the case of the United States, there is a very diverse population composed of

many different people from various national, ethnic and religious backgrounds. The size and diversity of the population make it harder for the public to know every issue in which a subgroup of people has an interest. Thus, there is a need for the elites (generally lobby groups) to construct public opinion and direct it to the decision makers. Thus, the elites play an important role in the flow of public opinion to the decision-makers. In sum, in the case of the United States, the elites are very important in the construction and the mobilization of public opinion. In the three cases analyzed, lobbies have been influential in helping US decision makers to create.

Where do we go from here? Although from the three cases, the Cyprus Problem, the Armenian Question and Turkey’s accession into the European Union, it can be concluded that public is effective in both Turkey and the United States, in reality the impact of the public opinion is more limited than it appears and very hard to measure unless it is clearly organized.

In the Turkish case, there is a need for elite influence to balance collective nationalist reactions, so that a relatively more rational public opinion can be constructed. Writers, opinion leaders and businessmen must work to inform the masses about critical foreign policy issues so that public opinion is less reactive and more proactive. Thus, the politicians can be more free to solve the problems without the fear of wide nationalistic reactions.

In the United States, it is understandable that the public can not be informed about all foreign policy issues in which subgroups have a special interest so the lobby groups need to work more effectively to introduce their causes to the masses. Considering that the lobbies differ in size and power, however it is difficult to ensure equitable decision-
making. For example, the pressure the Greek and the Armenian lobbies can bring to bear on Congress is stronger than what the Turkish lobby can do as a “latecomer” to Washington circles. The Turkish lobby clearly needs to increase its influence on the policy-makers in order to be equally heard by the US policy-makers.

To sum up, public opinion is a very important determinant of the policy-making process today, and especially given the spread of democracies throughout the world. As can be seen in the Middle East (at the time of writing), governments ignore public opinion, especially mass opinion, at their peril. While policy makers do not need to be beholden to polls and surveys, they must, at the same time, listen to the voice of the people whose vote it is to elect them to their offices.
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