

Turkey-United Kingdom Relations in Recent Years: an Era of ‘Golden Age’?

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Abstract: Although nothing extensively written so far, Turkey-UK relations reached a good harmony in recent years and entered into an era of ‘golden age’ according to top state officials in both countries. Intensification of bilateral economic relations -albeit global economic crisis-, cooperation concerning EU policies, similar reactions shown on both sides towards political developments in the Middle East, shared approach in the Cyprus Dispute, common threat perception against Russian expansionism in Syria and Ukraine and the lack of a specific issue that creates problems between two sides, are the main reasons of this progress. Moreover, the positive image of British conservatism in Turkish Islamic-rightist movements contributes a lot to the progressive nature of the bilateral relations in recent years. This study aims to summarize the main issues that characterize Turkey-UK relations in the last 5-6 years.

Keywords: Turkish Foreign Policy, United Kingdom, England, Turkey-UK Relations, Turkey-England Relations, David Cameron, Abdullah Gül, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Ahmet Davutoğlu, Cyprus Dispute, Conservative Party, Labour Party, Brexit, Jeremy Corbyn.

1. INTRODUCTION

Diplomatic relations between two historical powers coming from Empire tradition, United Kingdom and Turkey, started with the appointment of British Ambassador William Harborne to the Ottoman capital (Istanbul) in 1583. Ottoman State appointed its first ambassador to London more than two centuries later in 1793 by sending Yusuf Ağâh Efendi to this country.¹ Although these countries fought with each other many times during the history (most notably during the First World War), thanks to the secular Republican heritage in Turkey that takes Western civilization and European political systems as its role model, United Kingdom enjoyed a positive image in Turkey and political relations evolved on the basis of peace and mutual benefit. After Turkey’s strategic choice of integration into the Western political system after the Second World War, bilateral relations strengthened thanks to Turkish accession to NATO and European Council. Naturally, in time, with the replacement of Britain by the United States as the new leader of the Western bloc, Turkish-British relations assumed a lower profile compared to Turkish-American relations. However, due to Cyprus Dispute and some other intersecting political issues as well as the lack of a major conflicting interest between two sides, Turkish-British relations have always been progressing in the last few decades. Nowadays, UK is one of the few EU member countries that give clear support to Turkish accession to the Union and this shows the strategic nature of bilateral relations. In addition, both countries have very strong Transatlantic ties and they try to act in conformity with USA in their foreign policy.

As it was stated in the website of Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs; “Turkish-British relations are multi-dimensional due to the effect of strong ties coming from history”.² Both countries are members of some international organizations including NATO, European Council and G-20 and act together on many issues. Especially strong and clear British support given to Turkey’s strategic target of becoming EU member in recent years is very much welcomed in Turkey and led to a growing sympathy toward this country in Ankara especially among the political elites. Moreover, two countries have some intersecting foreign policy agendas

¹ “Türkiye-Birleşik Krallık İlişkileri”, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Dış İşleri Bakanlığı*, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/turkiye-ingiltere-siyasi-iliskileri.tr.mfa>.

² “Türkiye-Birleşik Krallık İlişkileri”, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Dış İşleri Bakanlığı*, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/turkiye-ingiltere-siyasi-iliskileri.tr.mfa>.

including Cyprus, Middle East, energy security and Eurasian politics. Two countries seem to act very carefully and within the lines of friendly and ally countries on these issues in order not to harm each others' interests. In addition, growing economic and cultural relations provide the integration of two societies in addition to good relations between two states.

2. RECENT POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

After the general elections that took place in UK in May 2010, 13 years old Labour government ended and the new government was established by means of a coalition between Conservative Party and Liberal Democratic Party. At the beginning, Turkey was a bit skeptical of the new government in London since it enjoyed very good relations with UK during the successive Labour governments led by Tony Blair and Gordon Brown. Moreover, considering French and German rightist challenge towards Turkey's accession to EU based on strong Islamophobic arguments, a conservative-liberal coalition was thought to be a potential barrier for Turkey's EU membership after the elections. However, two parties that established the new coalition government, Conservative Party and Liberal Democrats also supported Turkey's EU membership goal.³ Moreover, similar economic approach of Turkey's Islamist leaning government and the new coalition government in London that was based on liberal principles favoring free-market economics, created a more comfortable ground for new economic projects and extensive cooperation. UK Ambassador in Ankara at these days, Sir David Logan even said that *"there was a slowing down process during the government of Gordon Brown and the new government will change this trend"*.⁴

New Prime Minister of UK, Mr. David Cameron, paid an official visit to Turkey first time in the last days of July 2010. Mr. Cameron met with his counterpart Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and became the first statesman to announce that Turkish-British relations entered into a new phase of 'golden age'.⁵ Turkish leader Erdoğan on other hand, praised UK and underlined the shared approach between two countries in terms of their foreign policy as well as developing economic relations.⁶ In addition, during this visit, "Strategic Partnership Document" that was signed between Erdoğan and Gordon Brown in 2007⁷ was updated. This document set the areas of cooperation as follows; Bilateral Relations, Commerce and Investments, Turkish Accession to EU, Regional Stability and Peace, Cyprus, Defence, Global Security, Prevention of Illegal Arms Trade, Struggle against Illegal Immigration, Energy Security, Cultural Dialogue and Education.⁸ This document was a positive step for developing relations especially in terms of economics and showed the willingness on both sides for further cooperation. Erdoğan visited United Kingdom two times on 30-31 March 2011 and 26-28 July 2012 and had successful diplomatic contacts in Britain as Turkish Prime Minister.⁹

Previous President of the Republic of Turkey, Mr. Abdullah Gül visited United Kingdom in November 2011 and became the first President of Turkey to visit London after Kenan Evren in 1988.¹⁰ This was a return visit to Queen Elizabeth's Turkey visit in 2008 and received a high level of media attention in both countries.¹¹ After meeting with top state officials including British PM David Cameron and members of the royal family, Gül thanked United Kingdom for

³ Right after the elections, the shadow Foreign Minister of the Conservative Party, Mr. William Hague stated that they will continue to support Turkish accession to EU. See; Ali Balcı (2011), "Türkiye-İngiltere İlişkileri 2010", Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from <http://works.bepress.com/alibalci/19/>, p. 355.

⁴ Ali Balcı (2011), "Türkiye-İngiltere İlişkileri 2010", Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from <http://works.bepress.com/alibalci/19/>, p. 356.

⁵ "Türkiye-İngiltere ilişkilerinde 'altın çağ'" (2010), *Hürriyet*, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/turkiye-ingiltere-iliskilerinde-altin-cag-15426304>.

⁶ "Türkiye-İngiltere ilişkilerinde 'altın çağ'" (2010), *Hürriyet*, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/turkiye-ingiltere-iliskilerinde-altin-cag-15426304>.

⁷ "Info Notes Political Relations" (2013), *Turkish Embassy in London*, 20.03.2013, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from <http://london.emb.mfa.gov.tr/ShowInfoNotes.aspx?ID=180168>.

⁸ "Türkiye-Birleşik Krallık İlişkileri", *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Dış İşleri Bakanlığı*, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/turkiye-ingiltere-siyasi-iliskileri.tr.mfa>.

⁹ "Info Notes Political Relations" (2013), *Turkish Embassy in London*, 20.03.2013, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from <http://london.emb.mfa.gov.tr/ShowInfoNotes.aspx?ID=180168>.

¹⁰ Before Kenan Evren, the last Presidential visit was made by Cevdet Sunay in 1967.

¹¹ "Gül'den İngiltere'ye tarihi ziyaret" (2011), *NTV*, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from <http://www.ntv.com.tr/turkiye/gulden-ingiltereye-tarihi-ziyaret.HJXj2ZCrjEykb6ZEBKP3Ig>.

its support to Turkey's EU bid and repeated what Cameron said a year ago by making reference to the term "golden age of relations".¹² Gül also received Chatham House Prize during this visit with a royal ceremony at Buckingham Palace.¹³ There was also a military agreement signed between Turkish Chief of General Staff and British Defence Minister Mr. Philip Hammond during this visit.¹⁴ Following this visit, British Ambassador in Ankara, Mr. David Reddaway, paid a visit to Trabzon and repeated the "golden age" rhetoric by pointing out 40 % rise in economic relations (trade) since 2009.¹⁵

Toward the end of 2013, for the commemorative ceremony of the tenth year of Al Qaeda attacks to British Consulate in Istanbul, British Foreign Minister Mr. William Hague came to Turkey and pointed out the growing security risks around Turkey due to ongoing Syrian civil war. Hague said that "they are ready to help Turkey concerning security risks".¹⁶ This visit marked a new approach especially on the side of the Britain since the failure of Arab Spring caused growing terrorism threats in the region. This was followed by the softening of the critical tone toward Syrian President Bashar al Assad by UK similar to USA and France, due to barbaric crimes committed by the fundamentalist terrorist organization ISIS (IS) which became a more eminent threat for the Western world. However, this move put Turkey into a difficult position since Turkey made its plans for the removal of Syrian dictator which was unable to prevent the emergence of a civil war in his own country due to wrong policies based on sectarianism. However, UK was careful enough not to blame Turkey openly after this foreign policy change, though there were very harsh critics toward Turkish government in the British press.¹⁷ Cameron government even supported Turkish military operations to Syria and Iraq, but also stated that the target of these operations should be ISIS, not Kurdish groups.¹⁸

In addition, Cameron visited Turkey twice on 26-27 July 2014 and 9-10 December 2014.¹⁹ The second visit was important since both sides declared that they agreed on the establishment of a new government in Syria that will represent the whole Syrian population and on the prevention of terrorist activities. Furthermore, they showed their intention for a diplomatic solution for the Cyprus Dispute, they repeated their willingness for Turkish accession to EU and they reached a consensus for the further development of economic relations.²⁰

¹² "Türkiye-İngiltere ilişkilerinde 'altın çağ'" (2011), *BBC Türkçe*, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from http://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler/2011/11/111123_gul_wednesday.shtml.

¹³ "Relations between Turkey and the United Kingdom", *Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs*, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/relations-between-turkey-and-the-united-kingdom.en.mfa>.

¹⁴ "UK-Turkey relations and Turkey's regional role - Foreign Affairs Committee", *Parliament.uk*, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201012/cmselect/cmfaff/1567/156706.htm>.

¹⁵ "İngiltere ile Türkiye ilişkileri altın çağını yaşıyor" (2011), *Habertürk*, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from <http://www.haberturk.com/dunya/haber/696762-ingiltere-ile-turkiye-iliskileri-altin-cagini-yasiyor>.

¹⁶ "İngiltere-Türkiye İlişkileri Gelişiyor mu?" (2013), *Amerika'nın Sesi*, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from <http://www.amerikaninsesi.com/content/ingiltere-turkiye-iliskileri-gelisiyor-mu/1795742.html>.

¹⁷ For instance; Seymour M. Hersh (2014), "The Red Line and the Rat Line", *London Review of Books*, 17 April 2014, Vol. 36, No: 8, Date of Accession: 15.02.2016 from <http://www.lrb.co.uk/v36/n08/seymour-m-hersh/the-red-line-and-the-rat-line>. Also see; "Robert Fisk: Türkiye Pakistan'ın yolundan gidiyor" (2015), *BBC Türkçe*, 28 July 2015, Date of Accession: 22.02.2016 from http://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler/2015/07/150727_fisk_kurtler.

¹⁸ "Cameron: Türkiye Kürtlere değil, IŞİD'e odaklanmalı" (2015), *Sputnik Türkiye*, Date of Accession: 15.02.2016 from <http://tr.sputniknews.com/turkiye/20150727/1016796642.html>.

¹⁹ For some analyses before the visit, see; Ozan Örmeci (2014), "British PM David Cameron Set to Visit Turkey This Week", *Uluslararası Politika Akademisi*, Date of Accession: 15.02.2016 from <http://politikaakademisi.org/2014/12/08/british-pm-david-cameron-set-to-visit-turkey-next-week/>; Ünal Çeviköz (2014), "UK PM Cameron's agenda in his visit to Turkey", *Hürriyet Daily News*, Date of Accession: 15.02.2016 from <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/Default.aspx?pageID=238&nID=75347&NewsCatID=396>.

²⁰ For an analysis after the visit, see; Hacı Mehmet Boyraz & Metin Erol (2014), "David Cameron'ın Türkiye Ziyareti: Her Konuda Daha Fazla İşbirliği", *Uluslararası Politika*

Another important step concerning bilateral relations was the emergence of Turkey-UK Sweet Talk Forum (*Türk-İngiliz Tatlıdil Forumu*) since 2011. Previous foreign ministers of both countries Mr. Yaşar Yakış and Mr. Jack Straw became the co-chairs of this Forum and used this unofficial platform to develop British-Turkish ties.²¹ The first session of the Forum was organized in England in 2011 and was followed by the second one in Istanbul and third one in Edinburgh.²² The event should be seen as a good mechanism to integrate political elites of two countries. The fifth session of the event is organized in Bath on March 11-13 this year and top names from both countries including Turkish Deputy Prime Minister Mehmet Şimşek, Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu, Turkish Minister of Transport, Maritime and Communication Binali Yıldırım and UK Foreign Minister Philip Hammond attended to the event.²³ Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs explains the importance given to the Forum by saying “The high level participation in the Forum attests to the importance attached by Turkey to its contribution and role in adding a substantial civil dimension to the strong ties, friendship, strategic partnership and alliance relations between Turkey and the United Kingdom.” from its website.²⁴

Progress in Turkish-EU relations also contributes to bilateral relations. For instance, Turkey and EU concluded a deal in March 2016 for additional economic help from EU to Turkey in order to keep Syrian refugees in Turkey in return to visa-free travel right for Turkish citizens into EU countries in case Turkey could meet 72 conditions.²⁵ This (visa-free travel right for Turkish citizens in the Schengen area) will be an important step on which Turkey has been insisting and lobbying for long years. Although many experts think that Turkey’s EU membership is still a long and painful process²⁶, this deal could secure Turkey’s European identity and could reduce critics towards Turkish government.

Diplomatic activities between two countries continue to take place at different levels. For instance, British Ambassador in Ankara, Mr. Richard Moore, spoke at a conference in Atılım University in Ankara in May 2014. Moore pointed out the progressive nature of bilateral economic relations and gave the example of his favorite biscuits produced in Turkey in order to show the high level of economic integration between two countries.²⁷ Mr. Moore is also known with his excellent Turkish language skills²⁸ and is one of the numerous people working for growing British-Turkish ties and Turkish integration into the Western world.

The most important problem emerged between bilateral relations in recent years was the detention of Scottish member of the British Parliament Natalie McGarry in Diyarbakır in the

Akademisi, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from <http://politikaakademisi.org/2014/12/10/david-cameronin-turkiye-ziyareti-her-konuda-daha-fazla-isbirligi/>.

²¹ “No:224, 6 Ekim 2011, Türkiye-İngiltere Tatlıdil Forumu Hk.” (2011), *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Dış İşleri Bakanlığı*, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from http://www.mfa.gov.tr/no_224_-6-ekim-2011_-turkiye-ingiltere-tatlidil-forumu-hk_.tr.mfa.

²² Yaşar Yakış (2013), “Turkish-UK ‘Tatlıdil’ Forum”, *Today’s Zaman*, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from http://www.todayszaman.com/columnist/yasar-yakis/turkish-uk-tatlidil-forum_330173.html.

²³ “5. Türk-İngiliz Tatlıdil Forumu 11-13 Mart’ta Bath’da Gerçekleşecek” (2016), *Haberler.com*, Date of Accession: 12.03.2016 from <http://www.haberler.com/5-turk-ingiliz-tatlidil-forumu-11-13-mart-ta-bath-8244861-haberi/>.

²⁴ “No: 61, 10 March 2016, Press Release Regarding the 5th Meeting of “Turkish - British Tatlıdil Forum”” (2016), *Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs*, Date of Accession: 12.03.2016 from http://www.mfa.gov.tr/no_-61_-10_03_-2016_-press-release-regarding-the-5th-meeting-of-turkish-british-tatlidil-forum_.en.mfa.

²⁵ See; Mustafa Aydın (2016), “Unsustainable agreement between Turkey and the EU”, *Hürriyet Daily News*, 24 March 2016, Date of Accession: 24.03.2016 from <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/Default.aspx?pageID=449&nID=96829&NewsCatID=468>.

²⁶ See; Nick Danforth (2016), “Erdogan’s Epic Europe Trolling”, *Foreign Policy*, 23 March 2016, Date of Accession: 24.03.2016 from <http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/03/23/erdogans-epic-europe-trolling-eu-migrant-refugee-deal/>.

²⁷ “Yeni Dönemde Türkiye - İngiltere İlişkileri” (2014), İngiltere Büyükelçisi Richard Moore’un Atılım Üniversitesi Konferansı, *Atılım Üniversitesi Kadriye Zaim Kütüphanesi*, Date of Accession: 16.02.2016 from <http://kurumsal.library.atilim.edu.tr/libinstitutional/view/id/1870>.

²⁸ http://webtv.hurriyet.com.tr/haber/ingiltere-buyukelcisi-moore-turkiye-de-en-cok-korktugum-an_89498.

last days of February 2016. At a time when Turkish Armed Forces are still making military operations against Kurdish secessionist PKK, McGarry was detained by the Turkish police for 2 hours because of using her cellphone. Mc Garry said “her experience showed the need for intervention in the conflict between Kurdish separatists and Turkish forces”.²⁹ Moreover, the deportation of British academic Chris Stephenson because of distributing brochures of pro-Kurdish People’s Democratic Party (*Halkların Demokratik Partisi*-HDP) was another diplomatic issue that could be seen as problematic.³⁰ In addition, increasing governmental pressure over the free press in Turkey is also critically portrayed in British press. For instance, two well-known Turkish journalists, Can Dündar and Erdem Gül, face life in prison over a story alleging that the Turkish government was arming Islamist militants in Syria.³¹ Police raid and appointment of a trustee to the Fethullah Gülen movement’s popular newspaper *Zaman* also had media coverage in Britain³² and Turkey was criticized. Most recently, British Chancellor of the Exchequer George Osborne said they could prevent Turkey’s EU bid probably as a reaction to Turkey’s authoritarian Islamist inclination in recent months.³³

3. ECONOMIC RELATIONS

Conservative government in Britain has a political approach that is primarily based on economic growth perspective. According to Global Entrepreneurship Index (GEI), UK is ranked as the most entrepreneurial country in Europe and fourth in the world in 2014.³⁴ The main reason for this prevailing economic mentality is the terrible legacy of the bad economic management in recent past after the global economic crisis in 2008, which led to the biggest economic shrinkage in Britain (4.9 %) after the Second World War. After this awful year, in 2010, with the new coalition government, UK achieved to have 1.3 % economic growth and increased its growth rates in the coming years.³⁵ Nowadays, the economic rationale (growth mentality) in this country is so strong that the conservative government recently decided to join China-led World Bank alternative Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank.³⁶ Forecasts show that the country will continue to have 2-3 % economic growth in the following years.

Economic mentality is also the driving force for the Conservative government in London concerning the British-Turkish relations. In his early days in the office in 2010, British PM Mr. Cameron stated that “*they want to double the trade volume between two countries in the next*

²⁹ “Scottish MP detained in Turkey talks of ‘terrifying experience’”, *The Guardian*, 27 February 2016, Date of Accession: 28.02.2016 from <http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2016/feb/27/scottish-mp-detained-in-turkey-talks-of-terrifying-experience>.

³⁰ “İngiliz akademisyen Stephenson hakkındaki sınır dışı kararı kalktı” (2016), *Diken*, 18.03.2016, Date of Accession: 18.03.2016 from <http://www.diken.com.tr/ingiliz-akademisyen-hakkinda-sinirdisi-karari-kalkti/>.

³¹ “Turkish journalists face life in jail over Syria report” (2016), *BBC*, 27.01.2016, Date of Accession: 07.03.2016 from <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-35422357>.

³² “Zaman newspaper: Defiant last edition as Turkey police raid” (2016), *BBC*, 05.03.2016, Date of Accession: 07.03.2016 from <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-35735793>.

³³ “İngiltere: Türkiye’nin AB üyeliğini engelleyebiliriz” (2016), *NTV*, 13.03.2016, Date of Accession: 13.03.2016 from <http://www.ntv.com.tr/dunya/ingiltere-turkiyenin-ab-uyeligini-engelleyebiliriz,1a4S2xJ5UkK5-gA3Ymr1QA>.

³⁴ “UK is ‘most entrepreneurial’ country in Europe” (2014), *The Telegraph*, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/yourbusiness/11241579/UK-is-most-entrepreneurial-country-in-Europe.html>.

³⁵ “İngiltere: Genel Ekonomik Durum”, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Ekonomi Bakanlığı*, Date of Accession: 15.02.2016 from http://www.ekonomi.gov.tr/portal/faces/home/disliiskiler/ulkeler/ulke-detay/%C4%B0ngiltere/html-viewer-ulkeler?contentId=UCM%23dDocName%3AEK-160181&contentTitle=Genel%20Ekonomik%20Durum&_afLoop=2321271304255042&_afWindowMode=0&_afWindowId=blioio46o_1#!%40%40%3F_afWindowId%3Dblioio46o_1%26_afLoop%3D2321271304255042%26contentId%3DUCM%2523dDocName%253AEK-160181%26contentTitle%3DGenel%20Ekonomik%20Durum%26_afWindowMode%3D0%26_adf.ctrl-state%3Dblioio46o_25.

³⁶ “US anger at Britain joining Chinese-led investment bank AIIB” (2015), *The Guardian*, 13 March 2015, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from <http://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2015/mar/13/white-house-pointedly-asks-uk-to-use-its-voice-as-part-of-chinese-led-bank>.

five years” which was around only 9 billion \$ then.³⁷ Turkish Minister of Industry and Trade Mr. Zafer Çağlayan, who spoke at the Turkish-British Business Forum earlier this year on 17 March 2010 also claimed that “they could increase the trade volume to 20 billion \$ in the next two or three years”.³⁸ Following these optimistic speeches, the bilateral trade volume rose to 11.9 billion \$ in 2010 from 9.4 \$ in 2009.³⁹

More recently, on 23 February 2015, speaking at the new session of Turkish-British Business Forum, Turkey’s Economy Minister Nihat Zeybekçi underlined the complementary nature of two countries’ economies and claimed that with the partnership of Turkey’s young and dynamic labor force and British capital, “they could engage in new ventures not only in Turkey, but also in Balkans, Africa and Asia”.⁴⁰ UK government’s Minister of State for Trade and Investment, Lord Livingston on the other hand, expressed his government’s continuous support for Turkish accession to EU and mentioned about 2500 British firms operating in Turkey. Mr. Livingston also said that “all barriers against free trade should be removed”.⁴¹

According to the official statistics from Turkey’s Ministry of Economy⁴²; by 2014, the total volume of Turkish exports to UK is around 10 billion \$, whereas the imports reached 6 billion \$. Looking at the main products in trade, it should be stated that Turkey sells textile products and clothes, electrical and non-electrical machines, motor vehicles and its parts, iron and steel to UK and buys electrical and non-electrical machines, products based on automotive industry and its supplies, pharmaceutical products, iron, steel, plastic and plastic based commodities from this country most. Moving from 16 \$ billion volume trade to 20 \$ billion seems like a reasonable and achievable goal. According to a report prepared by Turkish Exporters Parliament (*Türkiye İhracatçılar Meclisi*) in 2013; UK is the third country in total Turkish exports after Germany and Iraq with a share of 5.8 % and takes the 11th seat in the total imports ranking.⁴³ This proves that, bilateral trade, especially in terms of British imports, could be elevated.

Looking at foreign firms operating in Turkey; UK takes the second rank with 2760 firms after Germany (5991 firms) among the European countries.⁴⁴ British Airways, HSBC, Tesco, BP, Shell, Vodafone, Marks and Spencers, Harvey Nichols and Commercial Union are the most famous British firms operating in Turkey. Turkey’s important capital groups including Vestel,

³⁷ Ali Balcı (2011), “Türkiye-İngiltere İlişkileri 2010”, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from <http://works.bepress.com/alibalci/19/>, p. 367.

³⁸ Ali Balcı (2011), “Türkiye-İngiltere İlişkileri 2010”, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from <http://works.bepress.com/alibalci/19/>, p. 367.

³⁹ Ali Balcı (2011), “Türkiye-İngiltere İlişkileri 2010”, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from <http://works.bepress.com/alibalci/19/>, p. 368.

⁴⁰ “Türkiye-İngiltere Ekonomik İlişkileri İvme Kazanıyor”, *DEİK*, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from https://www.deik.org.tr/6016/T%C3%9CRK%C4%B0YE_%C4%B0NG%C4%B0LTERE_EKONOM%C4%B0K_%C4%B0L%C4%B0%C5%9EK%C4%B0LER%C4%B0_%C4%B0VME_KAZANIYOR.html.

⁴¹ “Türkiye-İngiltere Ekonomik İlişkileri İvme Kazanıyor”, *DEİK*, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from https://www.deik.org.tr/6016/T%C3%9CRK%C4%B0YE_%C4%B0NG%C4%B0LTERE_EKONOM%C4%B0K_%C4%B0L%C4%B0%C5%9EK%C4%B0LER%C4%B0_%C4%B0VME_KAZANIYOR.html.

⁴² “Türkiye-İngiltere Ekonomik İlişkileri İvme Kazanıyor”, *DEİK*, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from https://www.deik.org.tr/6016/T%C3%9CRK%C4%B0YE_%C4%B0NG%C4%B0LTERE_EKONOM%C4%B0K_%C4%B0L%C4%B0%C5%9EK%C4%B0LER%C4%B0_%C4%B0VME_KAZANIYOR.html.

⁴³ TİM (2014), “Ekonomi ve Dış Ticaret Raporu 2014”, Date of Accession: 15.02.2016 from http://www.tim.org.tr/files/downloads/raporlar/tim_ekonomi_ve_dis_ticaret_raporu_2014.pdf, p. 126.

⁴⁴ “2 bin 760 İngiliz firması Türkiye’de” (2014), *Londra Gazete*, 27 December 2014, Date of Accession: 15.02.2016 from <http://www.londragazete.com/2014/12/27/2-bin-760-ingiliz-firmasi-turkiyede/>.

Sabancı, Koç, Doğan and Doğuş have also considerable investments in Britain.⁴⁵ Here, some non-governmental organizations that facilitate the economic integration of two countries should also be mentioned and praised. For instance, the second oldest trade chamber of UK in the world, British Chamber of Commerce Turkey⁴⁶ has contributed a lot to the developing economic relations over the years. As a member of COBCOE, it was established by a British businessman in 1887 and still operates successfully.⁴⁷

In terms of tourism industry also, British-Turkish relations are very important. For UK, Turkey is the fourth most popular touristic destination after France, Spain and USA. The total number of tourists coming from UK to Turkey was around 2.5 million in 2013.⁴⁸ Looking at the statistics of 2010, UK had a share of 9.98 % in Turkey's total tourism industry and was at the third place after Germany (15.35 %) and Russia (11.54 %).⁴⁹ In 2014, the number of total British tourists coming to Turkey rose to 2.6 million and the third place was kept, but the total share decreased to 7.06 %.⁵⁰ Considering the cultural "added value" of tourism activities, 2.6 million tourists each year is a serious number. Moreover, in North Cyprus (TRNC) also there are many British people living and contributing to economic and cultural activities. Here, it should be added that due to recent political crisis between Turkey and Russian Federation that will have some negative implications on tourism industry, the role of European tourists in general and British tourists particularly will be even more important for Turkey in the next few years.

4. CULTURAL RELATIONS

Cultural relations between United Kingdom and Turkey (Ottoman Empire) are historical and rooted. One of the most important events in both societies' collective memories in relation to each other is -without any doubt- the Gallipoli Campaign and Dardanelles War in 1915. Aside being a very important event for Australians and New Zealanders, it is also very significant in Turkish and British minds in terms of bilateral relations. The Gallipoli Campaign was a brutal war, but it also had historical significance because it led to the birth of a new great leader (Mustafa Kemal Atatürk) and it witnessed many interesting events between two nations. Both sides, British and Turkish nations (and also Australian and New Zealander -Anzac- soldiers), recognized each other as a righteous and courageous enemy during the war and this later helped them to establish a new type of relationship based on friendship.⁵¹ Turkish and British states implemented very successful political psychology methods so far in order not to transform this historical event into a national trauma that will boost negative feelings towards the other side. Unlike for instance the Armenian state, which uses 1915 events (Armenian genocide claims) as a tool to make two nations enemy to each other and to prevent free trade and diplomatic relations between two countries as well as cultural exchanges between two nations that lived together in peace for long centuries, Turkey and United Kingdom used this event as an opportunity to promote peaceful relations. This shows the greatness and democratic maturity of these two nations as well as the success of the political elites on both sides. For example, for the 100th anniversary of Gallipoli Campaign last year, British heir to throne Prince

⁴⁵ Eda Akalın, "TÜRKİYE'DE İNGİLİZ TİCARET ODASI (THE BRITISH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF TURKEY – BCCT)", *TOBB*, Date of Accession: 15.02.2016 from http://www.tobb.org.tr/UlkeRehberi/Documents/Ulkeler/ingiltere/bcc_of_TR.pdf.

⁴⁶ For its website; <http://www.bcct.org.tr/>.

⁴⁷ Eda Akalın, "TÜRKİYE'DE İNGİLİZ TİCARET ODASI (THE BRITISH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF TURKEY – BCCT)", *TOBB*, Date of Accession: 15.02.2016 from http://www.tobb.org.tr/UlkeRehberi/Documents/Ulkeler/ingiltere/bcc_of_TR.pdf.

⁴⁸ "Türkiye-Birleşik Krallık İlişkileri", *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Dış İşleri Bakanlığı*, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/turkiye-ingiltere-siyasi-iliskileri.tr.mfa>.

⁴⁹ Ali Balcı (2011), "Türkiye-İngiltere İlişkileri 2010", Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from <http://works.bepress.com/alibalci/19/>, p. 369.

⁵⁰ "Turist sayısında rekor!" (2015), *Milliyet*, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/turist-sayisinda-rekor-ekonomi/detay/2002775/default.htm>.

⁵¹ By making reference to this war, Atatürk once said; "Those heroes that shed their blood and lost their lives... You are now lying in the soil of a friendly country. Therefore, rest in peace. There is no difference between the Johnnies and the Mehments to us where they lie side by side here in this country of ours... You the mothers, who sent their sons from faraway countries wipe away your tears; your sons are now lying in our bosom and are in peace, after having lost their lives on this land they have become our sons as well."

Charles and Prince Harry came to Turkey and were warmly welcomed by Turkish state and Turkish people.⁵² Turkish-British alliance is a good example of the positive use of history to establish peaceful relations.

Some cultural policies of the British state and gestures of British statesmen towards Muslims also create sympathy for this state in the Muslim world and in Turkey in the last years. For example, some examinations that will be hold in this country during the holy month of Ramadan were rescheduled according to Muslims in order to increase Muslim students' chances.⁵³ Here it should be stated that other than being a positive move toward Muslims, this is also beneficial for British democracy since the number of Muslim migrants and citizens in this country is also on the rise in recent years and religion-based conflicts could easily lower down the democratic quality of a country. Thanks to these efforts, together with USA, UK is one of the most welcomed Western countries in the Islamic world. British PM David Cameron also has a good image in the Muslim world compared to other right-wing leaders in Europe (such as Nicolas Sarkozy or Angela Merkel). Cameron always celebrates the religious holidays of Muslims by using his social media accounts.⁵⁴ However, a statement made by Cameron in 2014, "Britain is a Christian country"⁵⁵, caused skepticism in the Muslim world and led to the growing fears of discrimination toward Muslims and people from other religions in this country. However, this statement stayed as a populist slogan and never turned into a concrete political step to discriminate British people from other religions from British Christians. Moreover, former London mayor and one of the top Conservative Party officials in recent years, Mr. Boris Johnson comes from a Turkish family and this gives him a kind of prestige and popularity in Turkey. Although British conservatism was built mainly on Christianity, due to the high prestige of British monarchy in the world, there is a general admiration toward this country in Turkey as well as in Arab monarchies especially among the conservative-Islamist circles.

There were some additional positive developments in the cultural field as well in recent years. For instance, the first Yunus Emre Cultural Center⁵⁶ was established in London very recently and was welcomed by the British state and society.⁵⁷ Here, British Council that operates in Turkey since 1940 also worths a reference due to its successful programs.⁵⁸ British Council has offices in Ankara and Istanbul. British Council not only teaches English language, but also spreads the British culture in Turkey. Thanks to the increasing number of English speaking students and citizens, British culture -as well as other European cultures and American culture- is on fashion in Turkey for many decades. Turkish government also sees this as an opportunity for integration into Europe and supports multi-culturalism though the government has also links with very radical and anti-Western Islamic groups that do not approve Western integration. Opposition parties also, primarily pro-EU Republican People's Party (*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi*), supports this trend of European integration in all fields. British Culture language schools also are very popular and highly respected in Turkey.

In the field of education too, United Kingdom is a place of attraction for Turkish students. Within the top names of the ruling Justice and Development Party (*AK Parti*), there are very important politicians having educational experience in Britain including former President of

⁵² "Çanakkale ve Erivan'da 100. yıl anma törenleri" (2015), *BBC Türkçe*, Date of Accession: 15.02.2016 from http://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler/2015/04/150424_canakkale_1915_canli.

⁵³ "İngiltere sınav takvimini Ramazan'a göre değiştirdi" (2016), *BBC Türkçe*, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from

http://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler/2016/01/160107_ingiltere_ramazan.

⁵⁴ "Kurban Bayramı 2015: David Cameron'un mesajı" (2015), *Gov.uk*, 23.09.2015, Date of Accession: 15.02.2016 from <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/eid-al-adha-2015-david-camerons-message.tr>.

⁵⁵ Birce Bora (2014), "İngiltere Hıristiyan bir ülke' deyince...", 22 April 2014, *Hürriyet*, Date of Accession: 15.02.2016 from <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/ingiltere-hiristiyan-bir-ulke-deyince-26270512>.

⁵⁶ For its website; <http://londra.yee.org.tr/>.

⁵⁷ "UK-Turkey Relations and Turkey's Regional Role" (2012), Government Response to the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee Report of Session 2010-12, June 2012, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/32945/2012-jun-uk-turkey-relations.pdf.

⁵⁸ For its website; <http://www.britishcouncil.org.tr/>.

the Republic Abdullah Gül, Foreign Minister Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu and Deputy Prime Minister Mehmet Şimşek⁵⁹. According to a research, each year approximately 30.000 Turkish students go to UK for having high quality education at different levels (undergraduate, MA, PhD). This makes UK the first country of choice for Turkish students -except TRNC- even before USA, which hosts nearly 25.000 Turkish students each year.⁶⁰ Commercialization of education also strengthens this trend and contributes a lot to cultural exchanges.

In terms of culture, sports and arts should also be taken into consideration. In sports, British Premiere League has a very special place for Turkish football fans. This is the most admired football league in Turkey and English football teams like Manchester United, Arsenal and Chelsea has many fans and sympathizers in Turkey. Turkish originated German football player Mesut Özil, who plays for Arsenal, is closely followed by Turkish soccer fans. Colin Kazım Richards is a former Turkish national team player who has British passport and currently plays in the Premiere League. British manager Gordon Milne, who was very successful in Turkey in the early 1990s as the coach of Beşiktaş JK, is a football legend for Turks especially for Beşiktaş fans. British champion boxer David Haye also has some fans in North Cyprus and Turkey due to his TRNC passport and excellent fighting skills.

There is also a considerable interest to British music and cinema in Turkey. For example, British Marxist director Ken Loach has a limited but very loyal fan group in Turkey within the socialist circles. Moreover, British movie stars who were transferred to Hollywood such as Hugh Grant, Helen Mirren, Sean Connery, Daniel Craig, Jude Law, Benedict Cumberbatch, Kate Winslet, Anthony Hopkins and Keira Knightley are much more popular than British politicians in Turkey. James Bond movie serie is the all-time most popular cinema franchise in Turkey. In terms of music, British singer Robbie Williams, who is married to a Turkish citizen, is very popular among the Turkish youth. In addition, music groups like The Beatles and Queen are legendary bands for the older generations in Turkey. British female singer Geri Halliwell, who was very successful with Spice Girls female band, once worked in Turkey in television channels and still has some fans in this country. Adele on the other hand, is a very popular singer in Turkey with her recent hit songs.

In terms of literature also, there are very important and well-known British authors in Turkey. William Shakespeare, Ian Fleming, George Orwell, John le Carré, Rudyard Kipling, Graham Greene and D. H. Lawrence can be named as the most well-known British authors in Turkey whose books are still on sale in bookstores. Lawrence Durrell also, as the author of most famous Cyprus novel "Bitter Lemons of Cyprus", is an important author for Turkish Cypriots. Some of the British academics and researchers' books are also very popular in Turkey. For instance, British sociologist Anthony Giddens' "Sociology" book became an official textbook in most of the Turkish universities. There is a constant interest of Turkish readers to the books of British academics and researchers especially to those written on subjects like the First World War, biography and political deeds of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and Ottoman-Turkish history. Lord Kinross, H. C. Armstrong, Andrew Mango and Norman Stone can be classified as some important British academics and researchers whose books are still in circulation in bookstores and online book companies. There are also some university programs and research institutions in United Kingdom working on Turkey and Turkish Politics. Contemporary Turkish Studies program in London School of Economics (LSE), directed by Turkish Professor Şevket Pamuk, is a very important podium and hosts each year many important politicians and academics from Turkey and the rest of the world. Research Turkey⁶¹ and CEFTUS (Centre for Turkey Studies)⁶² are two British think-tanks working specifically on Turkey. Changing Turkey in a Changing World⁶³ website is also an interesting initiative for Turkish and British academics. *Uluslararası Politika Akademisi* (International Political Academy)⁶⁴ website in Turkey also, tries to make European politics in general and British politics in particular more popular in Turkey.

⁵⁹ He is also a citizen of United Kingdom. See;

<http://www.milliyet.com.tr/2007/10/08/siyaset/axsiy02.html>.

⁶⁰ "Türkiye'nin beyin gücü yurtdışında eğitime 1,5 milyar dolar harcıyor" (2015), *Milliyet*, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/-turkiye-nin-beyin-gucu-egitim-2029136/>.

⁶¹ For its website; <http://researchturkey.org/>.

⁶² For its website; <http://ceftus.org/>.

⁶³ For its website; <http://changingturkey.com/>.

⁶⁴ For its website; <http://politikaakademisi.org/>.

There is also a growing interest to British media thanks to increasing number of English speaking Turks. BBC is by far the most famous and appreciated media channel in Turkey, known with its objective broadcasting policy. BBC Radio still has an audience though it is not popular as once it was during the golden days of the radio broadcasting. BBC Turkish⁶⁵ website has begun to become a popular news portal in Turkey with its extensive and updated Turkish content about Turkish and world politics. British newspapers such as *The Sun*, *Daily Mirror*, *The Guardian*, *The Times* and *The Independent* are closely followed in Turkey by English speaking academics, intellectuals, politicians, businessmen and students via internet. Recent estimations show that there are nearly 350.000 Turks (from Turkey and Cyprus) and Kurdish originated Turkish citizens living in Britain.⁶⁶ Among this population, 150.000 people is consisted of Turkish Cypriots. Turks in UK generally work in catering sector. Sometimes, ethnic problems between Turks and Kurds could take place in Britain as well. According to Turkish journalist Adem Yavuz Arslan, who made a research on this topic; Turks in Britain have a very active media industry of their own and the total weekly circulation of Turkish language-based newspapers in UK is around 200.000 copies.⁶⁷ Among these newspapers, there are also some pro-Kurdish publications that are close to PKK terrorist organization. Although Turks' social status in Britain is not at very high level yet, negative stereotypical labeling and racist attacks towards Turks are very rare due to their loyalty to the state and preference for law and order. Similar to the other European/Western countries, there is an image of Turks as the "Kebab men", but compared to some other ethnic groups, this is not so bad. Turks living in Britain were even praised by British people and press when they achieved to suppress a riot taking place in London in 2011.⁶⁸ The number of British people living in Turkey is also on the rise. Especially Fethiye district of Muğla city is known as the hometown of British people.⁶⁹ British people living in Turkey are highly respected and live in excellent harmony with local people. They sometimes made surprising gestures to Turks such as placing Atatürk portraits to their houses, inviting imams to their funerals together with priests and making Turkish flag designs to their gravestones. Local and national media in Turkey also writes often positively about them.

Cyprus also should be mentioned here as a special bond between Turkey and UK. Hired to the British Empire in the late 19th century, Cyprus became a British colony in the early 20th century and hosted Turks, Greeks and British people for many decades. Cultural exchanges in the island between British and Turkish communities reached high level over the years. Unlike more nationalist and skeptical Greek Cypriot attitude toward British presence in the island, Turkish Cypriots remember colony years not with hatred feelings and enjoy living together with British people.⁷⁰ Recently, a new British university -British University of Nicosia⁷¹- was also established in North Cyprus (TRNC). However, there is still not a British university in Turkey.

5. FOREIGN POLICY DIMENSION

A-) Turkish Accession to EU

Among the EU members, UK seems to be the most supportive country for Turkish accession to the Union. Except UKIP, all major political parties in the country (Conservative Party, Labour

⁶⁵ For its website; <http://www.bbc.com/turkce>.

⁶⁶ Adem Yavuz Arslan (2014), "Londra'daki küçük Türkiye", *Aksiyon*, 13 December 2014, Date of Accession: 15.02.2016 from http://www.aksiyon.com.tr/dunya/londradaki-kucuk-turkiye_514788.

⁶⁷ Adem Yavuz Arslan (2014), "Londra'daki küçük Türkiye", *Aksiyon*, 13 December 2014, Date of Accession: 15.02.2016 from http://www.aksiyon.com.tr/dunya/londradaki-kucuk-turkiye_514788.

⁶⁸ "Türkler varken polise ne gerek var!" (2011), *Sabah*, 09.08.2011, Date of Accession: 15.02.2016 from <http://www.sabah.com.tr/dunya/2011/08/09/turkler-varken-polise-ne-gerek-var>.

⁶⁹ "İngilizlerin ikinci vatani Fethiye" (2011), *Sabah*, 28.03.2011, Date of Accession: 15.02.2016 from <http://www.sabah.com.tr/turizm/2011/03/28/ingilizlerin-ikinci-vatani-fethiye-oldu>.

⁷⁰ Here, I commented on the basis of my observations in North Cyprus, where I lived between 2012 and 2016 for 3,5 years. See; <http://www.starkibris.net/index.asp?haberID=203844>.

⁷¹ For its website; <http://www.bun.edu.tr/>.

Party and Liberal Democratic Party) support this cause.⁷² In his early days in the office, Mr. Cameron commented on this issue and said; “*Thinking about Turkey’s deeds in Afghanistan as a NATO ally for defending Europe, I am disappointed about the current progress in Turkish accession to EU. My views on this issue are clear: I believe that saying ‘Turkey could protect camping site but could not stay in the tent’ is wrong. I will probably stay as your strongest supporter for Turkey’s EU membership ideal and search for a higher position in European diplomacy. This is an issue on which I am determined and strong. I want us to open the way to Brussels together.*”⁷³ It is a fact that compared to other important European powers such as Germany and France, there is higher support for Turkish membership into the EU in Britain. A research made in 2009 proved this; according to this research’s results, resistance to Turkish membership was measured as 37 % in UK, 52 % in Germany and 62 % in France.⁷⁴ However, UK does not seem to be the leading country in European affairs in recent years and there are even discussions about a possible British exit from the Union known shortly as “Brexit”.

In accordance with these perceptions, Turkey’s governing Justice and Development Party decided to join to the new right-wing bloc established by David Cameron, AECR (Alliance of European Conservative and Reformists)⁷⁵ instead of EPP (European People’s Party) in 2013.⁷⁶ This shows that, if Turkey becomes an EU member, it will probably act -together with Poland-closer to UK and will constitute another axis against Franco-German alliance within the EU. It is also a fact that Turkey uses British alliance as a response to negative German and French approach toward its membership bid. Britain on the other hand, sees Turkish membership as a strategic move that will create a loosely unified Union against federalist powers such as France and Germany. As it is seen, concerning EU policies, Turkish-British relations are based on mutual interests.

B-) Cyprus Dispute

Cyprus Dispute has always been very important in Turkish-British relations in the last few decades. Together with Greece, UK and Turkey constitute three guarantor powers of the 1960 Cyprus Republic. Two countries work closely in recent years for the solution of Cyprus Dispute. In the renewed Strategic Partnership Document of 2010, two countries stated that “*they are in favour of a bicomunal and bizonal federational solution based on political equality*” for the Cyprus Dispute.⁷⁷ However, here it should be added that, Cyprus, often defined as an “unsunk aircraft carrier”, is also a very important country for two countries concerning their military/security policies towards Middle East and Eastern Mediterranean. Both countries have military bases in the island. British military bases, which are secured by international agreements, are used in British attacks toward ISIS targets in recent months.⁷⁸ Turkish military bases on the other hand, were established after the 1974 intervention and are not backed up by international law.

In recent years, it is seen and also felt that Britain does not want to act as a barrier for the solution of Cyprus Dispute. British indifference for the solution of Cyprus Dispute in the recent past created a more hawkish Greek and Greek Cypriot reaction to UK within and outside the EU and caused diplomatic problems for UK in the international arena due to successful Greek lobbying activities. British Foreign Minister Philip Hammond recently said that they are ready to give up from the half of their territories in the island if a new federal and united Cyprus state

⁷² Ali Balcı (2011), “Türkiye-İngiltere İlişkileri 2010”, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from <http://works.bepress.com/alibalci/19/>, p. 358.

⁷³ Ali Balcı (2011), “Türkiye-İngiltere İlişkileri 2010”, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from <http://works.bepress.com/alibalci/19/>, p. 359.

⁷⁴ Ali Balcı (2011), “Türkiye-İngiltere İlişkileri 2010”, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from <http://works.bepress.com/alibalci/19/>, p. 360.

⁷⁵ For its website; <http://www.aecr.eu/>.

⁷⁶ “Erdogan’s AKP party joins Cameron’s conservative political family” (2013), *EurActiv*, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from <http://www.euractiv.com/section/elections/news/erdogan-s-akp-party-joins-cameron-s-conservative-political-family/>.

⁷⁷ Ali Balcı (2011), “Türkiye-İngiltere İlişkileri 2010”, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from <http://works.bepress.com/alibalci/19/>, p. 357.

⁷⁸ “Britain carries out first Syria airstrikes after MPs approve action against Isis” (2015), *The Guardian*, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/dec/02/syria-airstrikes-mps-approve-uk-action-against-isis-after-marathon-debate>.

could be established.⁷⁹ Later, Hammond also said that they could give up from their guarantorship rights as well if both communities agree on this.⁸⁰ Mr. Hammond came to Cyprus in 2015 and met with Greek Cypriot leader Nikos Anastasiades and Turkish Cypriot leader Mustafa Akıncı.⁸¹ During his Foreign Ministry, UK has been acting as a neutral country between Turkish and Greek Cypriots and his efforts are thus praised by all sides. It seems like UK is concentrated in recent years more on the protection of its legal rights in the island especially on the basis of the continuity of its military bases and leaves the decision to two communities in Cyprus and other guarantor powers. This new position for sure reduces the power of nationalist political groups on both sides of the island that are against a diplomatic solution. Recently, Turkey also changed its historical policy for the official recognition of TRNC and began to push for a diplomatic solution to the dispute. In doing this, Turkey also wants to get rid of Greek and Greek Cypriot opposition to its foreign policy and its EU membership bid. However, until now, Turkey never gave a positive signal for the abandonment of its guarantorship rights over the Cyprus Republic. Giving up from military bases also might be problematic for Turkey in some ways in case of a solution. In addition, it is also highly suspicious whether Turkish Cypriots will accept a solution without an official Turkish guarantee. Thus, Turkish-British relations are close, but interests do not match 100 % concerning Cyprus Dispute.

C-) Arab Spring and Middle East Politics

Britain was an influential actor in the Middle East especially -together with France- during the short era between the dissolution of Ottoman Empire and the entry of USA and Soviet Russia to this region during the Cold War. UK is still an important actor in the region with its economic, military, intelligence power and cultural influence. However, the negative legacy of the controversial 2003 Iraqi War, to which UK was engaged together with USA, forces this country to act very cautiously in that region.⁸²

During the Arab Spring process, which flourished high hopes for the spread of a democratic model in the Muslim dominated Middle Eastern and North African states, United Kingdom - similar to many other Western countries- gave a lot of emphasis to the role model qualities of JDP (*AK Parti*) government's moderate Islamic or Muslim democratic identity. However, as some reports suggest⁸³, Britain has always been aware of Turkey's authoritarian modernization heritage (Kemalism) and strong central state tradition compared to Arab states as well as its flaws compared to European democracies concerning the Kurdish Question, majoritarian political culture, anti-democratic electoral threshold (10 %), underdeveloped civil society, problems related to male-female equality and human rights violations. Thus, after a successful transition in Tunisia, with the failure of Arab Spring in Egypt, Libya and Syria, UK took a new position based on status quo in order to prevent further escalation of violence in that region. This was supported by all other Western powers as well. This put Turkey into a difficult position since JDP government made its plans previously according to the toppling down of Syrian dictator Bashar al Assad. Nowadays, except for bombing ISIS targets by RAF planes taking off from British military bases in Cyprus from time to time, Syrian civil war does not seem to be the most important issue in British foreign policy. Cameron government does not seem very ambitious to send its land forces to Syria. Same foreign policy line is also adopted by Obama administration in USA and Hollande administration in France. This policy inevitably made Putin's Russia that settled militarily into Syria in recent months, a more influential actor in the Middle East politics. However, this is against Turkish national interests

⁷⁹ "İngiltere'den, Kıbrıs'taki Üssü Devretme Önerisi" (2015), *Star Kıbrıs*, 24.11.2015, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from <http://www.starkibris.net/index.asp?haberID=217271>.

⁸⁰ "İngiltere garantörlükten vazgeçmeye hazır" (2016), *Kıbrıs Gazetesi*, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from <http://www.kibrisgazetesi.com/?p=761064>.

⁸¹ For a tv analysis after Hammond-Akıncı meeting, see; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SPb2X7YexcA>.

⁸² "İngiliz Dış Politikasının Ortadoğu İkilemi" (2013), *Uluslararası Politika Akademisi*, Date of Accession: 15.02.2016 from <http://politikaakademisi.org/2013/09/17/ingiliz-dis-politikasinin-ortadogu-ikilemi/>.

⁸³ Fadi Hakura (2011), "UK-Turkey Relations and Turkey's Regional Role", *Chatham House*, September 2011, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/files/chathamhouse/public/Research/Europe/0511pment_hakura.pdf, pp. 5-6.

due to Russian support to Kurdish secessionist groups and Assad government in Syria. That is why; Turkey might push its allies like USA, France and UK for a military option in Syria in the following months. Increasing Syrian refugee problem and its growing implications for the EU countries as well as rising security risks due to ISIS and its sympathizers in Europe (recent Paris attacks show the danger for European states and people), might force these countries to adopt a new Syria policy based on military solution in the near future. However, the situation of Syrian Kurds will be here a point of discussion between Turkey and its Western allies. USA and UK still refuse to recognize PKK's Syria branch PYD as a terrorist organization and support Kurdish secessionists since they fight against ISIS.⁸⁴ However, Turkey is afraid of an autonomous or independent Kurdish region in Northern Syria that might be able to reach the Mediterranean Sea by a Kurdish corridor. In addition to the already existing Kurdistan Regional Government in Northern Iraq that has very good relations with Turkey, this move might trigger "Greater Kurdistan" dreams among the Kurds and could cause terrible bloodshed in the region since Kurdish independence are not welcomed by all states in the Middle East except for Israel.

After the success of nuclear negotiations between P5+1 countries and Iran, -similar to France-UK aimed to make investments into this country rapidly in order to take its share from an untouched market that has been subjected to economic isolations for long years. In accordance with this policy, first of all British Embassy in Tehran was reopened⁸⁵ after long years and then new investments into this country, especially in the banking industry, began⁸⁶. Concerning British foreign policy of integrating Iran into the world system, in fact, there is no disaccord between UK and Turkey's classical foreign policy tradition. However, Turkey's recent rapprochement with the Gulf States and the increasing tone of Sunni Islam in Turkish foreign policy inevitably leads this country to a competition-based approach towards Shiite world's leader Islamic Republic of Iran which has been following a sectarian foreign policy line especially within the Arab states since the Islamic Revolution in 1979. Thus, complete harmony might not be reached between two states concerning Iran. In fact, UK has also closer economic and political ties with Sunni countries in the Islamic world. However, this country has the advantage of acting solely on the basis of its national interests since most of its population does not consist of Muslims. Turkey on the other hand, since the majority of its population is based on Sunni Muslims, should oppose to Iran at some points in order to get approval from its own people and increase the legitimacy of the state. However, the density and the content of this opposition will be important and will determine the fate of Turkish-Iranian relations.

United Kingdom is acting on the basis of economic interests while constructing its foreign policy towards Middle East and Gulf States. However, after the Presidential elections that will take place in USA this year, if the new American President and administration will prefer military policies towards the Middle East, UK can also be a part of this policy line. UK recently began to establish a new Royal Navy base in Bahrain⁸⁷ and never gave up from its assertive position in the Middle East. Turkish and British interests are also very much alike in the Middle East. Both countries recognize fundamentalist terrorist organizations like ISIS as dangers for their national security and economic stability of the region. The failure of Western regime-change policy towards Syria and the increasing influence of Russia in this region also is not a welcomed situation for Turkey, USA or Britain. In fact, although they adopt very harsh Islamic legal and cultural practices, Gulf States are also against ISIS and other fundamentalist terrorist groups and consider these movements as an insult to Islam. Nowadays, there are even

⁸⁴ See; "İngiltere Büyükelçisi: PYD'yi PKK ile aynı görmüyoruz" (2015), *T24*, 10 August 2015, Date of Accession: 15.02.2016 from <http://t24.com.tr/haber/ingiltere-buyukelcisi-pydyi-pkk-ile-ayni-gormuyoruz.305731>; "Erdoğan'dan ABD'ye 'PYD' tepkisi: Bu nasıl ortaklık?" (2016), *BBC Türkçe*, 10 February 2016, Date of Accession: 15.02.2016 from http://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler/2016/02/160210_erdogan_abd.

⁸⁵ "Britain to reopen embassy in Tehran this weekend after four years" (2015), *The Guardian*, 20 August 2015, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/aug/20/britain-to-reopen-embassy-in-tehran-after-four-years-iran>.

⁸⁶ "İngiltere bankacılık sektöründe İran'la işbirliği yapmak istiyor" (2015), *Sputnik Türkiye*, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from <http://tr.sputniknews.com/ekonomi/20150823/1017287199.html>.

⁸⁷ "Watershed moment': UK starts building new permanent navy base in Bahrain" (2015), *RT*, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from <https://www.rt.com/uk/320358-royal-navy-base-bahrain/>.

discussions about a Saudi Arabia-led military intervention into Syria in order to eradicate ISIS.⁸⁸

United Kingdom was also the country that gave most support to Turkey in Turkey's recent political crises with Israel. Cameron government criticized Israel after the Mavi Marmara Crisis and defended Turkish theses.⁸⁹ This was not welcomed by Israeli right-wing authors and Cameron government was harshly criticized. However, Cameron continued to defend Turkish theses and actively supported Turkey and Brazil's diplomatic initiative to solve the Iranian nuclear crisis in a peaceful way. In the following months, due to successful public diplomacy efforts of UK, Cameron was even described as the "most pro-Israeli politician in history" by an Israeli newspaper.⁹⁰ Considering British attitude on this issue, one can claim that UK is acting with the idea of preventing a major war between big and militarily capable countries like Iran and Israel and Israel's security is also an important dimension in British foreign policy. This is in perfect harmony with Obama administration's position in USA and classical Turkish foreign policy line.

By making reference to a new activism in foreign policy, British Chancellor of the Exchequer Mr. George Osborne made an interesting statement recently about "UK gaining its mojo back".⁹¹ However, this new approach adopted by the Cameron government is found risky⁹² and criticized⁹³ by some analysts. In relation to this, there are popular discussions in the international press about whether UK is still a world power or not.⁹⁴ Considering the establishment of a new military base in Bahrain, Cameron government can be assessed as successful in its foreign policy towards Middle East.

As it seen, two countries' interests in the Middle East are mostly consistent. However, the fate of Kurds and the more comfortable position of UK and USA (compared to Turkey or Israel) as two powers away from the region, might create problems in the future. Turkey and Israel are situated in the Middle East and for them; growing refugee problem or terrorism threats are urgent matters. However, looking from Washington or London, these problems might not seem as the most important issues in their foreign or security policy agenda. Turkey's involvement into sectarian policies championed by Saudi Arabia and Iran in the Middle East might also create problems between two countries. That is why; classical Turkish foreign policy tradition might be a wiser policy alternative for this country especially in these turbulent times.

D-) Relations with Russia

Recent Russian aggression in Ukraine and Syria also might encourage two countries for further cooperation. In fact, leaders of both countries; David Cameron⁹⁵ and Recep Tayyip Erdoğan⁹⁶

⁸⁸ "Suudi Arabistan, Suriye'ye karadan müdahalede ısrarcı" (2016), *Sputnik Türkiye*, Date of Accession: 17.02.2016 from <http://tr.sputniknews.com/ortadogu/20160210/1020785800/suudi-arabistan-suriye-ye-karadan-mudahalede-ısrarci.html>.

⁸⁹ Ali Balcı (2011), "Türkiye-İngiltere İlişkileri 2010", Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from <http://works.bepress.com/alibalci/19/>, pp. 362-363.

⁹⁰ Anshel Pfeffer (2015), "Is David Cameron the Most pro-Israel British PM Ever?", *Haaretz*, 27 April 2015, Date of Accession: 15.02.2016 from <http://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/premium-1.653847>.

⁹¹ Anand Menon (2015), "Little England No More?: The United Kingdom Sends a Signal in Syria", *Foreign Affairs*, 16 December 2015, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-kingdom/2015-12-16/little-england-no-more>.

⁹² Matthias Matthijs (2013), "David Cameron's Dangerous Game: The Folly of Flirting With an EU Exit", *Foreign Affairs*, September-October 2013, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/western-europe/2013-09-01/david-cameron-s-dangerous-game>.

⁹³ Peter Martin (2016), "After Empire: An Era of British Decline", *Foreign Affairs*, 20 January 2016, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2016-01-20/after-empire>.

⁹⁴ Jawad Iqbal (2015), "Does the UK remain a world power?", *BBC*, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-32317703>.

⁹⁵ "Cameron'dan Putin Uyarısı" (2014), *NTV*, Date of Accession: 15.02.2016 from http://www.ntv.com.tr/dunya/camerondan-putin-uyarisi,FHKP_AhXdEyA3rNMvX-8qA.

⁹⁶ "Erdoğan ve Putin arasında IŞİD petrolü polemigi" (2015), *BBC Türkçe*, Date of Accession: 15.02.2016 from http://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler/2015/11/151130_putin_ucak.

are strongest critics of Vladimir Putin's policy preferences in recent months among the European leaders. Recent Russian moves in Ukraine and Syria are largely assessed as violation or at least reinterpretation of international law and disrespect for international order by many observers and journalists in both countries.⁹⁷

However, Turkey's high level of energy (natural gas) dependency on Russia, might negatively affect this country especially in the economic field because of the recently imposed Western economic sanctions upon this country. In order to reach complete harmony with Western policy of punishing Russia, Turkey should enrich its energy resources and to prevent direct confrontation with Russia. Since Russia's position in Syria is also strengthening, Turkey has begun to feel Russian pressure closely in recent months. Pointing out this trend, British Foreign Minister Philip Hammond said that "only Russian leader Vladimir Putin could end the Syrian civil war and just with a phone call"⁹⁸.

British-Turkish relations might be in conflict in some ways concerning Russia. Turkey could not take a very harsh position against Russia unless it reduces its energy dependency on this country. However, USA, UK and France for instance, could act more harshly against Russia. Unlike Germany, UK is not heavily dependent on Russian gas. Looking at 2012 statistics; Britain produces nearly the half of its energy by itself, imports the rest from Norway (29 %), Netherlands (7 %), Belgium (3 %) and Qatar (15 %).⁹⁹ Turkey on the other hand, is dependent on Russia with an enormous 55 % rate in its natural gas imports.¹⁰⁰ In order to change this situation, Turkey should diversify its gas import supplies by establishing new projects with countries such as Azerbaijan (like TANAP), Iran, Qatar and Nigeria. The transportation of Caspian resources to Europe via Turkey will also be of critical importance in the near future. This might be attractive for UK as well; since this country tries to be active in this region by its firm BP in the energy geopolitics struggle.

6. FUTURE SCENARIOS

As a result of the last general elections that took place on 7 May 2015, David Cameron's Conservative Party established an -unexpected- single party government with 37 % of total votes in Britain.¹⁰¹ However, the rapid rise of Scottish National Party that increased parliamentary seats from 6 to 56 was an alarming bell.¹⁰² It should not be forgotten that Scotland voted against independence with a slight difference (55 % - 45 %) in the referendum that took place in September 2014.¹⁰³ These two results show that Scottish independence will continue to be a challenge for British democracy in the coming years. Labour Party and Liberal Democratic Party had disappointing results and their leaders Ed Miliband and Nick Clegg

⁹⁷ For a summary, see; Ozan Örmeci (2014), "Rusya'nın Ukrayna Politikasına Yönelik Eleştiriler ve Yeni Soğuk Savaş Tartışmaları", *Uluslararası Politika Akademisi*, Date of Accession: 15.02.2016 from <http://politikaakademisi.org/2014/11/19/rusyanin-ukrayna-politikasina-yonelik-elestiriler-ve-yeni-soguk-savas-tartismalari/>.

⁹⁸ Samuel Osborne (2016), "Putin could end Syrian civil war 'by making a phone call', Philip Hammond says", 14 February 2016, *The Independent*, Date of Accession: 15.02.2016 from <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/putin-could-end-syrian-civil-war-by-making-a-phonecall-philip-hammond-says-a6873121.html>.

⁹⁹ "İngiltere yaptırımlara rağmen Rus gazını doğrudan satın almaya hazırlanıyor" (2014), *Enerji Enstitüsü*, Date of Accession: 15.02.2016 from <http://enerjiensitusu.com/2014/03/26/ingiltere-yaptirimlara-ragmen-rus-gazini-dogrudan-satin-almaya-hazirlaniyor/>.

¹⁰⁰ Cüneyt Kazokoğlu (2015), "Türkiye doğalgazda Rusya'ya ne kadar bağımlı?", *BBC Türkçe*, 4 December 2015, Date of Accession: 15.02.2016 from http://www.bbc.com/turkce/ekonomi/2015/12/151204_rusya_turkiye_dogalgaz_cuneyt_kazokoglu.

¹⁰¹ For an analysis of the elections, see; Ozan Örmeci (2015), "Birleşik Krallık Seçimlerinin Ardından", *Uluslararası Politika Akademisi*, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from <http://politikaakademisi.org/2015/05/20/birlesik-krallik-secimlerinin-ardindan/>.

¹⁰² Deniz Tansi (2015), "'Oyunu Değiştirmek' ve Britanya Dersleri", *Uluslararası Politika Akademisi*, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from <http://politikaakademisi.org/2015/05/09/oyunu-degistirmek-ve-britanya-dersleri/>.

¹⁰³ For an analysis, see; Göktürk Tüysüzoğlu (2014), "İskoçya Bağımsızlığı Neden Reddedti?", *Uluslararası Politika Akademisi*, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from <http://politikaakademisi.org/2014/09/21/iskocya-bagimsizligi-neden-reddetti/>.

resigned after the elections. Nationalist and euroskeptic UKIP (United Kingdom Independence Party) on the other hand acquired only one seat in the House of Commons, but increased its total votes to 12 % which shows that the party and its charismatic leader Nigel Farage's influence is still on the rise.

In case Conservative Party continues to lead the country successfully especially in economics and foreign policy, Tories might dominate British politics at least for a decade. American *CNN* television's anchor and a well-known political analyst Fareed Zakaria also points out Cameron's success in bringing his party and voters to the center and claimed that Labour Party's new leader Jeremy Corbyn's radical leftist rhetoric might guarantee the success of Conservative Party in the next elections.¹⁰⁴ However, increasing income inequality in United Kingdom shows that Corbyn's socialist opposition might be in fact correct and necessary in some ways from the perspective of ordinary citizens. Today, Britain is the most unequal European country in terms of wages.¹⁰⁵ Cameron government, as a response to income inequality and increasing economic problems for middle and poor classes, nowadays works on public housing projects.¹⁰⁶ Cameron and his team were successful in consolidating the right-wing votes so far, but in the near future, they could have more difficulty in preventing the fragmentation of the right-wing politics due to UKIP and Liberal Democratic Party. Thus, British political party system which was defined as a perfect example of two party system (Labour vs. Conservative) until very recently, might soon transform into multi-party system permanently with parties like UKIP, LDP and Green's Party of England and Wales. Moreover, a recent statement made by Cameron about his decision not to become a candidate for third term as the Conservative Party leader might turn into a crisis for Tories.¹⁰⁷ Although Cameron pointed out George Osborne, Theresa May or Boris Johnson as potential leaders after him, it is a fact that replacing his seat will not be easy since he is a charismatic and approved politician in Britain. Moreover, if the Brexit referendum process is not well managed by the Tories, it might lead to a discord within the party between pro-Brexit and anti-Brexit camps and decrease party's votes.¹⁰⁸

However, Turkish-British relations will continue to progress with a Labour, Conservative or another government. This was proven with the smooth transition and even further development of relations after 13 years Labour government followed by first Conservative-Liberal coalition government and then the Conservative government. This is caused by the dominating national interest paradigm in British politics. In fact, until very recently, this was also the case in Turkey. However, Turkish politics has been evolved into a very fragmented and polarization-based characteristic in recent years due to conflict-based relations between Turkish-Kurdish and secular-Islamic identities and lifestyles. Independent from the domestic political developments in both countries, Turkish-British relations will continue to develop. But in case of a Labour Party government, probably British criticism towards deficits of Turkish democracy such as the Kurdish Question, deterioration of secularism, decreasing male-female equality and human rights violations will be heard loudly. This is because Cameron government has a more profit-oriented mentality and it does not want to spoil economic and political relations by getting involved into domestic affairs of sovereign countries. But if Jeremy Corbyn for instance becomes the new Prime Minister of Britain, he will probably focus

¹⁰⁴ Fareed Zakaria (2015), "Center the serious place in politics", *CNN*, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from <http://edition.cnn.com/2015/09/22/opinions/zakaria-center-politics/index.html>.

¹⁰⁵ "Report finds that Britain's wages are the most unequal in Europe" (2015), *The Independent*, 19 May 2015, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/report-finds-that-britains-wages-are-the-most-unequal-in-europe-10259077.html>.

¹⁰⁶ "İngiltere 30 yıl sonra toplu konut inşa edecek" (2016), *NTV*, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from <http://www.ntv.com.tr/emlak/ingiltere-30-yil-sonra-toplu-konut-insa-edecek,y8YskeibH0SmHT2shkgqUw>.

¹⁰⁷ "David Cameron rules out third term as prime minister (2015), *The Guardian*, Date of Accession: 19.02.2016 from <http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2015/mar/23/david-cameron-i-would-not-serve-third-term-as-pm>.

¹⁰⁸ See; John Rentoul (2016), "David Cameron is finished whatever happens in the EU referendum", *The Independent*, Date of Accession: 21.02.2016 from <http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/comment/david-cameron-is-finished-whatever-happens-in-the-eu-referendum-a6886361.html>.

on political issues more than the economic projects. This will not be a nightmare for bilateral relations, but there might still be an economic slowdown.

In the future of bilateral relations, the most important issue will not be the domestic politics of Britain or Turkey, but rather will be the UK-EU relations. Shortly known as Brexit, British exit from EU is now a serious possibility and Cameron government plans to have a referendum on this issue this year. It seems like Prime Minister Cameron and his friends do not have a decisive position on this matter and they want to leave the decision to British people in a democratic way. Recent polls show that British people are equally divided on the Brexit issue.¹⁰⁹ In fact, past leaders of this party including the most admired “Iron Lady” Margaret Thatcher could not be named as the biggest fan of the EU. However, Cameron’s position is more moderate and he is not euroskeptic. After the agreement reached in 19 February 2016 in Brussels, which guarantees a privileged position for UK in the EU, Cameron even said that he will campaign against Brexit.

There are different opinions in British press and academia concerning Brexit. Those who defend Brexit focus on three main issues. These are; (1) EU prevents UK to be an independent country since many of the executive powers are transferred from London to Brussels within the EU, (2) UK might do better economically outside the EU by implementing independent economic policies with its old colonies and newly emerging markets such as India and China and (3) Brexit will allow UK not to contribute to the EU budget which will be a small but positive step for the economic performance.¹¹⁰ People who are against Brexit on the other hand claim that these are all weak arguments. For instance, a report prepared by London-based Center for European Reform (CER) shows that 50 % foreign investments into Britain are originated from EU countries.¹¹¹ Similarly, the share of British banks in the eurozone are 70 % more than their presence in the US finance system. In terms of trade as well, EU countries constitute more than the half of total British trade rates. This shows that British economy has been transformed into a European-oriented economy in recent years and without necessary economic agreements and arrangements, Brexit will be economically disastrous. However, it is also a fact that EU project economically created a new Empire -that is Germany- in Europe and politically also EU’s leadership is in the hands of Franco-German duo. This is not welcomed by UK, a country that ruled the world for long centuries and once defined as an “empire on which the sun never sets”.¹¹² Brexit might be politically wrong, but economic nightmare scenarios are rather exaggerated since all these problems could be solved with bilateral economic agreements with the EU and the continuation of Customs Union and Schengen membership. This privileged position will economically change nothing, but might give UK a chance to become a more influential global economic and political actor. UK might develop closer ties with growing markets in China and India and balance the Franco-German axis outside the EU. Moreover, United Kingdom might have higher chances in preventing the strengthening secessionist mentality in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales if it goes out of the EU, a supranational European state project that strengthens ethnic nationalisms and separatist movements due to glocalization.

It is also a fact that Cameron government still uses Brexit card as a weapon to acquire a privileged status for UK within the EU. Accordingly, Cameron states his four conditions for staying within the EU: (1) United Kingdom should be kept outside of establishing a super European state, (2) Euro should not be the single current in EU, (3) Britain should be given right to reject instructions coming from Brussels and (4) EU should be restructured for

¹⁰⁹ “Üyelikten çıkmak isteyenler artıyor” (2015), *DW Türkçe*, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from <http://www.dw.com/tr/%C3%BCyelikten-%C3%A7%C4%B1kmak-isteyenler-art%C4%B1yor/a-18696643>.

¹¹⁰ Mustafa Kutlay (2014), “Mustafa Kutlay: İngiltere AB’den Ayrılırsa Ne Olur?”, *Uluslararası Politika Akademisi*, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from <http://politikaakademisi.org/2014/09/11/mustafa-kutlay-ingiltere-abden-ayrilirsa-ne-olur/>.

¹¹¹ “The economic consequences of leaving the EU” (2014), *Centre for European Reform*, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from http://www.cer.org.uk/sites/default/files/publications/attachments/pdf/2014/report_smc_final_report_june2014-9013.pdf.

¹¹² Ozan Örmeci (2015), “Birleşik Krallık AB’den Çıkacak Mı?”, *Uluslararası Politika Akademisi*, Date of Accession: 15.02.2016 from <http://politikaakademisi.org/2015/06/02/birlesik-krallik-abden-cikacak-mi/>.

protecting 9 EU members that are outside of the eurozone.¹¹³ Although Cameron still uses Brexit as a negotiation matter, one can also claim that at one point British nation state model will inevitably confront with European federalism represented by Franco-German axis within the EU.¹¹⁴ Considering Turkey's nation state tradition, differences from European countries and strong ties with USA (similar to UK), federalist powers within the EU are afraid of a new British-Turkish axis inside the Union which will challenge the current balance of power. Former French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius' statement about "France being ready to 'roll out the red carpet' for British exit from EU"¹¹⁵ proves that Brexit is also taking support from some federalist groups within the EU. French President François Hollande also previously warned UK for backing "an integrated Europe" or "to quit".¹¹⁶ In fact, 44 % of French people also support Brexit.¹¹⁷ British vision for EU is a loosely unified economic union that will include many new members and will not evolve into a complete political union. Turkey's membership to the club is beneficial for this vision¹¹⁸ since this country is different from European countries in many ways but also a very important economic actor. Agreement announced after the David Cameron-Donald Tusk meeting in February 2016¹¹⁹ seems to find a temporary solution to Brexit discussions for the moment by giving some privileges to UK, but there will be a referendum on this matter and a British exit from the club is still possible. After this deal, Cameron announced his will to stay in a reformed EU, but the decision will be the decision of British people in the referendum that will be organized on 23 June 2016.¹²⁰ Nowadays, while the Syrian refugee crisis forces Turkey and EU to cooperate more in foreign and security policy, Turkish accession to EU still seems difficult, painful and slow. Whether British exit from the EU really takes place or not, Turkish-British ties will not be negatively affected from it. Turkish-British relation was constructed long before and outside the EU and it is based more on bilateral relations, Transatlantic ties and is shaped within the NATO perspective.

Here, one could also question the meaning of Brexit for Britain looking from a political psychological perspective. United Kingdom was once defined by US Secretary of Defence Mr. Dean Acheson as "a country that lost an empire and looking for a new role" in 1962.¹²¹ In

¹¹³ "Cameron, İngiltere'nin AB'de kalması için şartlarını açıkladı" (2015), *Sputnik Türkiye*, Date of Accession: 15.02.2016 from

<http://tr.sputniknews.com/avrupa/20151011/1018280927/ingiltere-ab-cameron-bruksel.html>.

¹¹⁴ Sezgin Mercan (2013), "Türkiye-AB İlişkilerine İngiltere Modeli", *21. Yüzyıl Türkiye Enstitüsü*, Date of Accession: 14.02.2016 from

<http://www.21yyte.org/tr/arastirma/ingiltere/2013/02/08/6876/turkiye-ab-iliskilerine-ingiltere-modeli>.

¹¹⁵ "France ready to 'roll out the red carpet' for British exit from EU" (2013), *The Telegraph*, Date of Accession: 20.02.2016 from

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/financialcrisis/9820327/France-ready-to-roll-out-the-red-carpet-for-British-exit-from-EU.html>.

¹¹⁶ Matthew Holehouse (2015), "Back an integrated EU or quit, Francois Hollande warns Britain", *The Telegraph*, Date of Accession: 22.02.2016 from

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/francois-hollande/11917960/Back-an-integrated-EU-or-quit-Francois-Hollande-warns-Britain.html>.

¹¹⁷ "Une majorité de Français souhaite un référendum sur la sortie de la France de l'UE" (2016), *Le Monde*, Date of Accession: 12.03.2016 from

http://www.lemonde.fr/europe/article/2016/03/12/une-majorite-de-francais-souhaite-un-referendum-sur-le-frexit-la-sortie-de-la-france-de-l-ue_4881768_3214.html.

¹¹⁸ Çiğdem Nas, "Cameron Ziyaretinin Ardından", *İKİV*, Date of Accession: 15.02.2016 from <http://oldweb.ikv.org.tr/icerik.asp?konu=haberler&id=2761&baslik=%DDNG%DDLTERE%20BA%DEBAKANI%20DAVID%20CAMERON%92UN%20T%DCRK%DDYE%20Z%DDYA%RET%DD%20ARKASINDAN%20B%DDR%20DE%D0ERLEND%DDRME%20YAZISI>.

¹¹⁹ "Unanimous support for UK-EU deal – Tusk" (2016), *BBC*, Date of Accession: 20.02.2016 from <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-35616768>.

¹²⁰ Lizzie Dearden (2016), "EU referendum date set for 23 June after David Cameron secures reforms giving UK 'special status'", *The Independent*, Date of Accession: 20.02.2016 from <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/when-is-eu-referendum-vote-date-set-on-23-june-in-out-david-cameron-reforms-brexite-a6885811.html>.

¹²¹ Jawad Iqbal (2015), "Does the UK remain a world power?", *BBC*, Date of Accession: 15.02.2016 from <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-32317703>.

accordance with this definition, UK was transformed into a key diplomatic actor during the Cold War as the country that establishes European-Transatlantic ties and became also a member of the Union in 1973 by overcoming the “empty-chair policy” (1961-1967) of France. This new role was welcomed by Britain and gave self-confidence to this country and its people although it can never be compared to the greatness psychology of this state during the glorious Empire times. During the Cold War, this identity was internalized by UK and kept Britain in the world scene as one of the major powers. However, with the end of Cold War and the emergence of France and Germany as a new duo that has been challenging British and American policies (2003 Iraqi War was such an example), British membership to the club became a more problematic matter. German domination in European economy and French-German partnership in EU’s political leadership increased British distaste even more. Looking from a political psychological perspective, British position is like an athlete who is used to have gold medals in tournaments, but has bronze medals recently. As the successor of an empire that ruled the world for a few centuries, this “third place” within the EU is not welcomed by British political elite as well as British people. Thus, it might be a more rational and satisfying decision for UK to realize the Brexit and to engage in new and more active policies in the Middle East and other regions together with USA.

In fact, UK tried a limited version of this role during the times of Tony Blair but failed to realize it. This was caused by the lack of experience of British Army and people for internalizing this new militarily active role after a long break as well as the unfair pretext of the Iraqi War which was based on a false accusation towards Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein for having weapons of mass destruction. Moreover, social democratic Tony Blair government’s choice of close cooperation with USA and the use of hard power methods also are not approved by left-wing and liberal circles in the world. However, now there is a Conservative government in London and barbaric deeds of ISIS create a very comfortable conjuncture for interventionist tendencies. That is why, this time United Kingdom and USA might be more successful in implementing military policies due to higher support for interventionism in the world after the emergence of ISIS. But one thing here is crucial; the enemy identification should be rightfully made and terrorist organizations like ISIS should be the main target of military methods. If UK engages in more active and hard power-based policies in the Middle East, this will also increase Turkey’s role and strengthen Turkish-British relations. Turkish Armed Forces is the second biggest army within the NATO and had successful international experiences in the recent past in Afghanistan and Kosovo. Turkish Armed Forces was also successful in providing European security throughout the Cold War. Thus, return to military policies will mean a stronger relationship between USA, UK and Turkey.

7. CONCLUSION

This study is based on media screening method in order to explain the recent history of bilateral relations between United Kingdom and Turkey. Accordingly, first of all, all the major events, visits and agreements in recent history are explained briefly. Later, economic and cultural dimensions of the developing relations are analyzed in separate parts. Following this, the article focused on the foreign policy agendas of both countries (EU, Cyprus, Middle East, Eurasia and Russia) and concluded that two countries’ foreign policy interests are similar. In the last part of the study, recent political developments and future scenarios in Britain are explained. This article shows that the recent “golden age of relations” rhetoric of two countries’ top statesmen is correct and plausible. However, economic and cultural relations could be developed further. A trade volume reaching 20 billion \$, a new British university in Istanbul and further cooperation between state forces (armies, police forces and intelligence services) as well as more frequent communication between political parties, civil society organizations and political leaders is possible and could be easily achieved in the next few years. The main reason for the bright future of relations is that two countries’ political and economic interests are very much alike. There is not a specific issue where national interests of both sides collide. Moreover, British and Turkish societies do not consider each other as “enemy” and there is an optimistic mood in bilateral relations. That is why; everyone should be certain that Turkish-British relations will continue to progress in the 21st century. However, because of the increasing authoritarian governmental practices in Turkey, relations might be slowing down in the near future especially if there will be a Labour-led government in Britain which is more concerned about individual freedoms.

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