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ABSTRACT

This article aims to develop a historical materialist analysis to analyse Turkish Foreign Policy (TFP) as part of what I refer to as critical foreign policy studies. The paper utilises a critical political economy approach to TFP based on the Gramscian concept of hegemony and extends it to analyse different foreign policy strategies as hegemonic projects developed by ruling capital classes to sustain their rule. The paper also presents the concept of hegemonic depth to resolve the antinomies involved in understanding foreign policy projects as the outcome of a dialectical interplay between structures and agencies. The concept of hegemonic depth is then used to understand the dynamics of TFP in terms of the state-capital nexus. Hegemonic depth implies the extent of the embeddedness of capital fractions in controlling the state apparatus and the functioning of the state. The article also argues for the replacement of the geopolitical concept of strategic depth with the sociological concept of hegemonic depth to describe this process of deepening of the neoliberal principles of globalization, the concomitant development of hegemonic projects and their reflection on TFP. The final section argues that there are always limits to hegemonic depth and that the current Justice and Development Party government may have difficulties in extending the penetration of its hegemony.

Keywords: Historical materialism, Turkish Foreign Policy, Class and State, Hegemony, Hegemonic Projects, Accumulation Strategy.

Türk Dış Politikasının Tarihsel Materyalist Bir Analizi: Sınıf, Devlet ve Hegemonya

ÖZET

Bu makale, *eleştirel dış politika çalışmaları* adını verdiğim bir yaklaşım çerçevesinde Türk Dış Politikası'nın tarihsel materyalist analizini yapmaya yönelik bir çerçeve çizmektedir. Bu doğrultuda eleştirel bir politik iktisat yaklaşımı benimseyerek Gramsci'nin hegemonya kavramını temel almakta ve bu kavramı genişleterek *dış politika stratejilerini* hakim sınıfların egemenliklerini sürdürmek için geliştirdikleri *hegemonya projelerinin* bir uzantısı olarak değerlendirmektedir. Makale dış politikanın değerlendirilmesinde yapılar ve failler arasındaki *diyalektik* ilişkinin nasıl anlaşılması gerektiğine yönelik olarak *hegemonik derinlik* kavramını önermekte ve devlet-sermaye ilişkisinin incelenmesinde bu kavramı kullanmaktadır. Hegemonik derinlik sermaye sınıflarının devlet kurumları ile bu kurumların işleyişindeki etkilerinin derinliğini ifade etmektedir. Makale bu süreci ifade etmek üzere *jeopolitik* bir kavram olan *stratejik derinlik* kavramı yerine, neoliberal küreselleşme ilkeleri ile bunları yansıtan dış politika projelerini ifade etmek üzere *sosyolojik* bir kavram olan *hegemonik derinlik* kavramının kullanılmasını önermektedir. Makale hegemonik derinliğin sınırları olduğunu ve mevcut AKP hükümetinin bu sınırlara erişmiş olabileceğini ifade etmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Tarihsel Materyalizm, Türk Dış Politikası, Devlet ve Sınıf, Hegemonya, Hegemonya Projeleri, Hegemonik Derinlik

Introduction

This paper attempts to develop a historical materialist analysis of Turkish Foreign Policy (TFP) based on a critical political economy approach employing a neo-Gramscian theoretical framework.¹ Overall I want to locate the article as part of an ongoing attempt to develop what I refer to as *critical foreign policy studies*. Despite the existence of different theories/approaches to TFP and proliferation of new ones, a theoretical analysis of TFP from a historical materialist framework does not yet exist. Different concepts of the historical materialist tradition are sometimes applied (class, relative autonomy etc.),² but these are not properly integrated within an analysis uniting different elements of a historical materialist approach. Conventional works of foreign policy analysis, influenced by positivism and pluralist political science, focus on foreign policy decision making and the decision makers rather than the social context of foreign policy. The most significant feature of the mainstream analyses is the way in which they conceptualize the relation between state, foreign policy and society by assuming an “ontological exteriority” *vis-à-vis* classes and social relations.³ A historical materialist approach to foreign policy analysis, on the other hand, would argue that we need to link “foreign policy agency to the structures of capitalist social relations and the social forces engendered by it”⁴

The analysis presented in this paper while using historical materialism (HM) as its substantive theory is based on critical realism (CR) as its philosophical and methodological basis.⁵ To connect and integrate CR and HM as Herring and Stokes note provides us with a “non reductionist, non economistic and non-teleological” form of HM.⁶ A CR-informed HM thus provides a *deeper* focus on the structural constraints on foreign policy by accessing a level of social reality which operates through multiple causal constraints that has effects on foreign policy events and discourses.⁷ It would indeed be strange to consider foreign policy as some independent form of politics unrelated to the social structure of society. Therefore, it is important to reconstruct our understanding of foreign policy from a perspective that takes social relations into account as its ontological basis.

* The author would like to thank Mustafa Aydın and the anonymous reviewers for their helpful comments and suggestions on an earlier version of this article.

- 1 The critical economy approach to International Relations (IR) was initiated with the works of Robert Cox and later developed by other scholars. According to Cox, a critical approach to political economy involves a dialectical theory of history based on relations of production and the social forces engendered by these relations. See, Robert W. Cox, *Production, Power and World Order: Social Forces in the Making of History*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1987. See also Adam David Morton, “Social forces in the Struggle over Hegemony: Neo-Gramscian Perspectives in International Political Economy”, *Rethinking Marxism*, Vol.15, No.2, 2003, p.153-179; Andreas Bieler and Adam David Morton, “A Critical Theory Route to Hegemony, World Order and Historical Change: Neo-Gramscian Perspectives in International Relations”, *Capital and Class*, Vol.28, No.1, 2004, p.85-114.
- 2 For instance see Baskın Oran, *Türk Dış Politikası*, Cilt I: 1919-1980, İstanbul, İletişim, 2005, p.12, 40.
- 3 Adam David Morton, “Sosyolojik Marksizmin Sınırları?”, *Praksis*, No.27, 2012, p.9-40.
- 4 Bastiaan van Apeldoorn, “Geopolitical Strategy and Class Hegemony: Towards a historical materialist foreign policy analysis”, *Spectrum: Journal of Global Studies*, Vol.6, No.1, p.2.
- 5 The analysis here is an extension of my previous Works. Please see Faruk Yalvaç, “Critical Realism, International Relations Theory and Marxism”, Jonathan Joseph and Colin Wight (eds.), *Scientific Realism and International Relations*, London Palgrave Macmillan, 2010, p.167-185; “Strategic Depth or Hegemonic Depth: A Critical Realist Analysis of Turkey’s Position in the World System”, *International Relations*, Vol.26, No.2, 2012, p.165–180 and “Approaches to Turkish Foreign Policy: A Critical Realist Analysis”, *Turkish Studies*, Vol.15, No.1, 2014, p.117-138 where I argue that a combination of HM and Critical Realism strengthens and provides important insights to IR studies and foreign policy analysis.
- 6 Eric Herring and Douglas Stokes, “Critical realism and historical materialism as resources for critical terrorism studies”, *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, Vol.4, No.1, 2011, p.12.
- 7 My use of neo-Gramscianism is based on a critical realist interpretation. See Jonathan Joseph, “On the Limits of Neo-Gramscian International Relations: A Scientific realist Account of Hegemony”, Alison J. Ayers *et.al.* (eds.), *Gramsci, Political Economy and International Relations Theory: Modern Princes and Naked Emperor*, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, 2008, p.67-87

The argument advanced in this article than is that foreign policies pursued by different states can only be properly explained if we open the black box of the state, linking state power and policy to social power and social forces.⁸ This is important since the conflict between social forces in specific historical contexts is the source of social change which in turn has effects on state policy. With its emphasis on social forces, this approach differs from what most constructivists define as a social construction of foreign policy. Constructivists have an ideational understanding of social construction that ignores materiality or takes it as significant as far as it effects the construction of ideas. However, even when materiality is emphasized, this is mostly understood as material capabilities rather than social relations and the structural context of decision making. The present analysis therefore departs from that of the constructivists (and also from neo-classical realists which emphasize perception of leaders) in underlining and focusing on the dialectical relation between the material and the ideational⁹ rather than merely focusing on *intersubjectivity*.

Accordingly, this paper will seek to apply an historical materialist approach to analyse the changes in TFP in terms of the socially determined state-capital nexus relation and the social origins of foreign policy making. This article will first introduce some basic concepts of a historical materialist analysis of TFP and will focus on certain theoretical issues involved in analysing the relation between classes, the state and hegemonic projects. It will then proceed to demonstrate the relevance of these concepts to the socio-political development of Turkey and to foreign policy strategies in particular. It is claimed that each foreign policy strategy is linked to a hegemonic project and that a crisis in political hegemony in most cases will also imply a change in foreign policy strategies. The fourth section will focus on the foreign policy of Justice and Development Party (JDP) as a class based neo-conservative and neo-liberal hegemonic project and shed light on the significance of this on the TFP analysis. It will be argued that the state-capital nexus that informs the doctrine of strategic depth and neo-Ottomanism is a reflection of a particular state-capital nexus that is dominant today. The aim of this section is to demonstrate how a foreign policy strategy is linked to domestic conditions of hegemony. The article concludes by highlighting the significance of an historical materialist approach to TFP and the limits to hegemonic projects as social conditions that inform it to change.

Historical Materialism, Foreign Policy Analysis and Turkish Foreign Policy

The basic premise of any historical materialist approach is the importance of the sphere of production and related social relations in explaining society. As Apeldoorn argues, “what distinguishes historical materialism from other perspectives is that it seeks to uncover the inner connections between the prevailing regime of surplus extraction as defined by the social relations of production and different systems of rule (different forms of state), including the relations and practices between those polities”.¹⁰ A similar view was also proposed by Gramsci in his analysis of international relations when he asked the question: “Do international relations precede or follow (logically) fundamental social relations?” and replied, “There can be no doubt that they follow”.¹¹ Beyond attributing a primacy to production and

8 Van Apeldoorn, “Geopolitical Strategy and Class Hegemony”, p.7.

9 Eric Herring, “Historical Materialism”, Alan Collins (ed.), *Contemporary Security Studies*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2013, p.153-154.

10 Van Apeldoorn, “Geopolitical Strategy and Class Hegemony”, p.11.

11 Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, (ed. and trans.), Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell-Smith. London, Lawrence and Wishart, 1971, p.176.

the relations of production, Marxism as a historical materialist theory of society focuses, in particular, on the historical specificity of the capitalist mode of production as the basis to understand capitalist societies. This implies that the policies and foreign policy strategies of states are inevitably internally related to the relations and practices that shape (global) capitalism. The emphasis on the social relations of production and their *historical/* transitory nature enables us to avoid *tranhistorical categories* and *a priori* forms of conceptualisations in understanding geopolitical relations and practices. It is also crucial to avoid a deterministic interpretation of the concept of mode of production. As Cox argues, “production is to be understood in a wider sense, not only implying material production as such, but also including the production and reproduction of knowledge, institutions and the social relations involved in the production of physical goods”.¹² Therefore, production relations do not only consist of economic, but also of political and ideological relations that are all internally related to each other.

Class and the State

From a historical materialist perspective what is important is the class nature of the state and therefore of foreign policy.¹³ The emergence of classes is related to the ownership and control of the production process and this in turn creates conflict between the classes which is the main cause of social change. A focus on the class nature of the state thus provides a sociological clue to the constraints on the foreign policy behaviour of different actors. Accordingly, the state is defined as “the site of major struggles as well as negotiations and compromises of articulations and exclusions.”¹⁴ In social formations dominated by the capitalist mode of production, the separation of economics and politics leads to the appearance of the sphere of politics as structurally unrelated to the social.¹⁵ It is this separation that gives the image of a foreign policy that is somehow independent of all other societal structures. Therefore, what is crucial is to conceptualize the state “not as a thing in itself, but as a form of social relations.”¹⁶ Thus, unless foreign policy is discussed under a wider social ontology, it is difficult to account for differing foreign policy strategies, and the distinction between competing strategies is reduced to a temporal difference expressed in terms of disparate time periods in the making of foreign policy (i.e., foreign policy of x country between such and such a date). When Gramsci discusses the relation between state and society, he criticises the idea of conceiving the state as an abstract institutional apparatus, that is as ‘statolatry’ or in other words, the state “conceived of as something in itself, as a rational absolute.”¹⁷ He, in turn, defines the state as “the entire complex of practical and theoretical activities with which the ruling class not only justifies and maintains its dominance, but manages to win the active consent of those over whom it rules.”¹⁸

The link between state and society and the class nature of the state is perhaps best conceived by what Gramsci means by the concept of ‘integral’ or ‘extended’ state defined as “state = political society + civil society,” thus overcoming the distinction between the political and economics. As such,

12 Cox, *Production, Power and World Order*.

13 As Apeldoorn argues, “class... is seen as the causal nexus between the process of capital accumulation and concomitant interests on the one hand, and the geopolitical interests and strategies of the state on the other”. Apeldoorn, “Geopolitical Strategy and Class Hegemony”, p. 13.

14 Jonathan Joseph, “A Realist Theory of Hegemony”, *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*, Vol.30, No.2, 2000, p.183-184.

15 See Ellen M. Wood, “The Separation of the Economic and the Political in Capitalism”, *New Left Review* 127, 1981, p.66-95.

16 Andreas Bieler and Adam David Morton, “Globalisation, the state and class struggle: a ‘Critical Economy’ engagement with Open Marxism”, *British Journal of Politics*, Vol.4, No.3, 2003, p.471.

17 Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, p.117, 168-269.

18 *Ibid.* p.244.

however, the state “can never be considered as neutral” and has a necessary “structural selectivity”, favouring certain social forces and struggles over others.¹⁹

With its emphasis on the class nature of the state, this conceptualization is radically different from the unitary/totalistic conception of the state, dominant in mainstream International Relations, as well as in the other alternative neo-Weberian, constructivist, neo-classical realist or post-structuralist approaches. In contrast to these approaches and analyses which have a conception of the “state as actor” abstracted from society, the perspective adopted here seeks to examine the *social sources of state power* and the *social purpose* of state/foreign policy projects. This would imply incorporating a *social ontology* to understand foreign policy making, without reducing it solely to the actions of foreign policy agents or states.

Accordingly, this article analyses the Turkish “state-capital nexus”²⁰ in the formation of TFP. Although some political-economy approaches adopted recently that take the influence of economy on the formation of foreign policy into consideration, the conceptions of the economy and the state utilized in these works ignore *classes* as a social force in the explanation of foreign policy.²¹ As a result, they lack a social-class dimension and provide a limited explanation of the dynamics and *content* of TFP. Thus, this paper argues for a social-class definition of foreign policy and underlines the importance of class and conflict in the determination of foreign policy projects *as mediated* through different class-hegemonical-projects.

The definition of class is also crucial and some definitional issues should also be taken into account.²² First, classes are not unitary monolithic entities and they are characterized by intra-class and inter-class contradictions. If there were no such contradictions, the state would be equal to society as assumed by the mainstream but this is clearly not the case. Due to their differential interests all the classes have a differential relationship to the state. Second, classes are not spatial categories in the sense that they cannot be defined in terms of their geographical location. Therefore the use of spatial categorisations such as the Anatolian capital or Istanbul capital maybe misleading.²³ Classes are defined by their position in the relations of production and are linked in diverse ways. Third, since there is not a unitary class structure, classes have a differential relationship to the state and the international

19 Bob Jessop, *State Theory: Putting the Capitalist State in its Place.*, Cambridge, Polity, 1990. p.268. “The state as a structure of forms...on the one hand, an arena in which social forces pursue rival strategies and political projects. On the other hand, this area is structurally biased that is, the the state tends to be more open to some social classes and groups than to others and tends to select or favour their strategies over others” (p.26).

20 Bastiaan van Apeldoorn and Nina de Graaf, “ The Limits of Open Door Imperialism and the US State-Capital Nexus”, *Globalizations*, Vol.9, No.4, 2012, p.593-608.

21 Yalvaç, “Strategic Depth or Hegemonic Depth” p.165–180; Beyza Tekin and Barış Tekin adopt a political economy perspective and emphasize the “deep-seated structural problems of the Turkish economy”. Beyza Ç. Tekin and Barış R. Tekin, “The Limits, Dilemmas and Paradoxes of Turkish Foreign Policy: A Political Economy Perspective”, *LSEE Papers on South Eastern Europe*, March 2015, p.4. Kemal Kirişçi on the other hand underlines the importance of growing interdependence in the region. “The Transformation of Turkish Foreign Policy: The Rise of the Trading State”, *New Perspectives on Turkey*, Cilt 40, p.29-57. However, the *critical political economy approach* adopted in this article emphasizes the importance of relations of production and social forces in the formation of foreign (economic) policy (see fn. 1 above). An attempt to develop a class perspective of TFP is provided in Yasin Kaya, “Turkey’s Turn to the East and the Intra-Class Contradictions in Turkey”, *Global Discourse*, Vol.2, No.2, [http://globaldiscourse.com/ contents](http://globaldiscourse.com/contents).

22 Nicos Poulantzas, *Classes in Contemporary Capitalism*, London, New Left Books, 1975; *State, Power, Socialism*, London, Verso, 1978 See Korkut Boratav, “Toplumsal Sınıflar Üzerine”, Korkut Boratav, *1980’li Yıllarda Türkiye’de Sınıflar ve Bölüşüm*, 3rd.ed., Ankara, İmge, 2016, p.15-31 for a discussion with respect to Turkey’s class structure during the Özal period and Çağlar Keyder, *Türkiye’de Devlet ve Sınıflar*, İstanbul, İletişim, 1993, Chps. V and VII.

23 See Evren Hoşgör, “Islamic Capital/ Anatolian Tigers: Past and Present”, *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol.47, No.2, 2011, p.343-360; Kaya, “Turkey’s Turn to the East”.

capital. Some classes are closer to the nationally organized modes of capital accumulation while the others are more internationally oriented. Fourth, classes have different ideological inclinations such as commonly differentiated between the Kemalist-Nationalist group in TFP and the Islamist wing. However such a differentiation is not sufficient to explain why certain beliefs and ideologies are held and utilized by some people and not by others. Finally, as Gramsci explains, in the “development of a national class, one must take into account not only the process of its formation within the economic sphere but also its parallel growth in for example, the ideological, juridical, religious, intellectual, philosophical spheres. Indeed, one ought to say that growth in the economic sphere cannot take place without these other parallel developments”.²⁴

Hegemony

The mainstream conceptualisation of hegemony is based on an asocial and ahistorical conception of the state. In realist terminology hegemony refers to the dominance or leadership of a state based on its power capabilities or material resources.²⁵ In this paper the concept of hegemony is used in terms of being related to underlying social structures and class domination.²⁶ Hegemony (defined both as a structural as well as an agential concept) is therefore a necessary feature of all modern societies due to the existence of class conflict and the need for social cohesion. As Robinson underlines, “we cannot speak of the hegemony of a state. Hegemony is exercised by social groups, by classes or class fractions, by a particular social configuration of these fractions or groups”.²⁷ The concept of hegemony used here refers to Gramsci’s understanding, which defines hegemony not in terms of the hegemony of one state over another but in terms of the relations of the classes. Specifically, it refers to the political, cultural and intellectual leadership of the ruling classes oriented to create and maintain the consent of the ruled. As Gramsci argued, the state rules not only by coercion and domination but also by consent, through “hegemony protected by the armour of coercion”.²⁸ Gramsci’s approach underlies a conception of the state that includes its organic unity and interaction with civil society. In contrast to realism, which assumes the unity of society (a territorial, homogeneous, closed totality), the concept of hegemony used here implies that such unity must be created.²⁹ If, as Poulantzas argues, the “state is nothing but the condensation of power relations among the classes”,³⁰ then one of the main functions of the state “is to maintain the unity and cohesion of a social formation divided into classes... in such a way as to sanction and legitimize the interests of the dominant classes and fractions against the other classes of the formation in a context of class contradictions”.³¹ In other words, in the relation between different classes, certain sections of capital take precedence and assume hegemonic position vis-à-vis other classes and the unity of society cannot be taken for granted. Gramsci explained this through his concept of the historic bloc in which he demonstrates how a temporary alliance between social classes is established around a set of hegemonic ideas, or ‘dominant ideology’.³²

24 Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, p.143.

25 See for instance, David P. Rapkin, *World Leadership and Hegemony*, Boulder and London, Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1990.

26 Jonathan Joseph, “Hegemony and the Structure Agency Problem in International Relations: a Scientific Realist Contribution”, *Review of International Studies*, Vol.34, No.1, 2008, p.109.

27 William I. Robinson, “Gramsci and Globalisation: From Nation-State to Transnational Hegemony”, *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy*, Vol.8, No.4, 2005, p.564.

28 Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, p.273.

29 Yalvaç, “Strategic Depth or Hegemonic Depth”, p.166.

30 Nicos Poulantzas, *Political Power and Social Classes*, London, New Left Books, 1973, p.49-120.

31 Poulantzas, *Classes in Contemporary Capitalism*, p.152.

32 Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, p.137. Also see p.366, “Structures and superstructures form an historical bloc”.

With this framework in the background, hegemony is defined here as the domestic project of a rule of certain classes (but increasingly integrated into a transnational class of capitalists) aimed at producing social cohesion and the reproduction of underlying social relations. However, it also denotes the external projection of this hegemony as a foreign policy act (for instance Neo-Ottomanism as explained below). This also entails a *sociological conception of geopolitics* representing interplay of domestic class relations, hegemonic projects, the state, and geopolitical and geoeconomic competition.

Hegemonic Projects

Hegemony is an emergent process, involving ontological depth and rooted in underlying structural conditions, but realised through concrete hegemonic projects.³³ These projects cannot simply be reduced to the conditions of their emergence, although these conditions are also important in understanding their possibilities and limitations.³⁴ As Apeldoorn argues, these projects cannot be explained purely by reference to the structural factors of capital accumulation, as such explanations ignore class agency and cannot explain class rule.³⁵ Therefore, the success of a hegemonic project depends on its compatibility not only with the domestic but also with the transnational conditions of accumulation and hegemony.

Hegemony has a structural basis, but its realisation occurs through concrete hegemonic projects.³⁶ Hegemonic projects also constitute foreign policy discourses and practices reflecting the compromises and contestations between different interests and capital fractions.³⁷ Nevertheless, foreign policy acts and discourses are formulated in terms of the national interest. As Gramsci argues, to secure the unity of society “it is the task of organic intellectuals to organise the social forces” and “to develop a hegemonic project” that will “transcend the particular economic-corporate interests of their social group by binding and cohering diverse aspirations, interests and identities into an historical bloc”.³⁸ Jessop also comments that “since the modern capitalist state and political sphere construes itself in reference to the dominance not of a class, but rather of a national-popular entity, such leadership is always established through a hegemonic project that aspires to a representation of this entity though in an incomplete way”.³⁹ However, hegemonic projects have to articulate not only with a domestic national-popular programme over the domestic classes, but also with the positions of respective states within the world order. Finally, in order to be successful, hegemonic projects will also have to be linked to an accumulation strategy which is a specific growth model. The accumulation strategy ultimately shapes the conflicting class interests and the manner in which are reflected in different state apparatuses and policies.⁴⁰

33 For a discussion, see Yalvaç, “Strategic Depth or Hegemonic Depth”, p.170-80.

34 Joseph, “Hegemony and the Structure Agency Problem in International Relations”, p.121-122.

35 Van Apeldoorn and de Graaf, “The Limits of Open Door Imperialism”, p.597-598.

36 Jonathan Joseph, “The limits of governmentality: Social theory and the international”, *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol.16, No.2, 2010, p.128.

37 Jessop, *State Theory*, p.208.

38 Andreas Bieler, “Class Struggle over the EU Model of Capitalism: Neo-Gramscian Perspectives and the Analysis of European Integration”, *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy*, Vol.8, No.4, 2005, p.513-526.

39 Jessop, *State Theory*, p.196-220.

40 As Jessop argues, “While accumulation strategies are directly concerned with economic expansion on a national or international scale, hegemonic projects can be concerned principally with various non-economic objectives, even if they are economically conditioned and economically relevant. The latter might include military success, social reform, political stability or moral regeneration”. *Ibid.* p.208.

Hegemonic Depth

The concept of hegemonic depth is important since it facilitates the development of a *social theory of foreign policy* that connects the domestic social relations of hegemony to the historical interaction between *social orders* and *world orders*. Unlike the geopolitically based realist concepts, in this concept depth includes economic, political and ideological relations on the local, regional and global levels and their articulation with each other. Therefore, in order to comprehend the interaction between different hegemonic projects (i.e., American policy of neoliberal globalization or Strategic Depth) it is necessary to understand their individual relationships with global forms of hegemony and associated forms of governmentality. In the current situation, neoliberalism is the dominant form of governmentality, and each national hegemonic project is intrinsically connected to and inseparable from the realization of this global hegemonic project. Therefore, the concept of hegemonic depth utilised throughout this paper is introduced as an explanation of the way in which social classes, in this case the classes associated with a fraction of bourgeoisie linked with the JDP, gain increasing social and political embeddedness and increase their economic, political and ideological leadership, and thus consent to the Party's rule.⁴¹ Indeed, the doctrine of strategic depth can be interpreted or conceptualised as a hegemonic project reflecting the interests of a fraction of Islamic capitalist classes gaining increasing social embeddedness and hegemonic depth in Turkish society. As this new class of bourgeoisie increases its hegemonic depth and with this its political depth at the state level and ideological depth on the discursive level, this has also inevitably results in changes in foreign policy. The shift in the foreign policy discourse of JDP from its *status quo* oriented defensive posture to one of expansion in line with the development and deepening of capitalist relations of production can be considered as such a change. In short, by demonstrating how foreign policy strategies are linked to different hegemonic projects, the concept attempts to demonstrate the link between geopolitics, class relations and conditions of capital accumulation. It is also used as an explanation of how agents involved in foreign policy making are linked to the underlying structures of social relations.

Capital-State Nexus Formation in Turkey

Within this framework outlined above, one of the main arguments from a historical materialist approach is that different *foreign policy strategies* need to be considered as part of hegemonic projects in the reproduction of the interests of the dominant classes and the structure of capital accumulation associated with it. The argument advanced here is that, the development of different hegemonic projects in Turkey by the ruling fractions of capital,⁴² also have a structurally rooted foreign policy dimension that has a class nature. The development of such hegemonic projects and foreign policy strategies in Turkey have been linked to the process of a bourgeoisie class slowly building its *hegemonic depth* in Turkish society. In turn, this process has been accompanied by a *deepening* of the capitalist relations of production and changes in accumulation strategies leading to the formation of new capital fractions compatible with the expanding process of capital accumulation. Space constraints do not allow a full presentation of the development of social classes and the development of different hegemonic projects in Turkey's political life; however some general observations will suffice to support the arguments outlined in this article.

41 Eren Düzgün, "Class, State and Property: Modernity and Capitalism in Turkey", *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol.53, No.2, 2012, p.119-148.

42 For a review of different hegemonic projects in Turkish political development, see İsmet Akça, "Hegemonic Projects in Post-1980 Turkey and the Changing Forms of Authoritarianism", İsmet Akça et al. (eds.), *Turkey Reframed: Constituting Neoliberal Hegemony*, Londra, Pluto Press, 2014, s.13-46.

Revolution From Above

Turkey's integration with the capitalist world economy started during the Ottoman Empire⁴³ and continued with the formation of the new Turkish Republic in 1923 within the framework of the uneven and combined development of world capitalism.⁴⁴ The way in which local conditions articulated with the global structural forces of world capitalism have thus shaped both the form of the state and the relation of different classes with the state institutions. The development of industrial capitalism in Europe initiated a set of changes in the Ottoman Empire that brought about the gradual disintegration of pre-capitalist relations of production and reorganization of the structure of the state and its social life initiating the peripheralisation of the Empire and its articulation with European capitalism.⁴⁵ This led to the formation of a commercial bourgeoisie class in the Ottoman Empire, consisting of non-Muslim minorities such as the Greek, Armenian, Christian traders, and, to a lesser extent, Jewish tradesmen, initiating a conflict of interest with the Muslim traders and businessmen. The development and strengthening of a national bourgeoisie competing with these comprador bourgeoisie classes thus became one of the first tasks of the new republic. This development had already started with the attempt of the Union and Progress Party (*İttihat ve Terakki*) to form "Muslim-Turkish entrepreneurs" with a "national political economy".⁴⁶ Initially, this resulted in the formation of a bourgeoisie class that was dependent on the state and continued until the civilisation process was initiated during the JDP government in the 2000s in its attempt to curb the powers of the civil/military bureaucracy.⁴⁷ As Trimberger argues "military bureaucrats" in countries such as Japan, Turkey, Peru and Egypt "used the state apparatus in an attempt to foster capitalist industrialization."⁴⁸ Engaging in a "revolution from above", these bureaucrats could operate as an independent social force "using their control over state resources to promote a new mode of production."⁴⁹ In the words of Pijl, the new Turkish state was a latecomer "Hobbesian contender state"⁵⁰ with a strong bureaucratic *state class* countering the Anglophone capitalist Lockean heartland. The contender states "resisted peripheralisation" by the Lockean core states but the strong state nevertheless persisted.⁵¹ This position "reflected an impasse between social class forces"; "it was not itself hegemonic, and so initiated capitalist development as a passive

43 See Huri İslamoğlu and Çağlar Keyder, "Agenda for Ottoman History" *Review*, Vol.9, No.1, 1977, p.101-130; Çağlar Keyder, *State and Class in Turkey: a Study in Capitalist Development*, London, Verso, 1987.

44 Leon Trotsky, *History of the Russian Revolution*, (trans.), Eastman M. Ann Arbor, University of Michigan, 1959. According to Trotsky, the geographical expansion of capitalism accordingly produced uneven and combined development implying diverse forms of development and social and political differentiation due to the backwardness of local conditions with which capitalist relations of production are articulated. See also, Leon Trotsky, *The Third International after Lenin*, New Park, London, 1974; Sungur Savran, *Türkiye'de Sınıf Mücadeleleri: 1919-1980*, İstanbul, Turkey, Kardelen Yayınları, 2010.

45 For this process see, Immanuel Wallerstein, Hale Decdeli, ve Reşat Kasaba, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Dünya Ekonomisi ile Bütünleşme Süreci", *Toplum ve Bilim*, No.23, 1983, s.41-54; Sevket Pamuk, *Osmanlı Ekonomisi ve Dünya Kapitalizmi*, Ankara, Yurt Yayınevi, 1984 and *Türkiye İktisadi Tarihi 1500-1914*, Ankara, Gerçek Yayınevi, 1999; Deniz T. Kılınçoğlu, *Economics and Capitalism in the Ottoman Empire*, London and New York, Routledge, 2015. Huricihan İnan, "Osmanlı Tarihi ve Dünya Sistemi: Bir Değerlendirme", *Toplum ve Bilim*, No.23, 1983, p.9-39,

46 See Feroz Ahmad, *The Young Turks*, London, Oxford University Press, 1969 and "Vanguards of a nascent bourgeoisie: the social and economic policy of the Young Turks 1908-1918", O. Okyar and Halil İnalçık (eds.), *Papers presented to the "First International Congress of the Social and Economic History of Turkey"*, Ankara, Meteksan, 1980.

47 Metin Heper, *The State Tradition in Turkey*, Walkington, Eothen Press, 1985; Ayşe Buğra, *State and Business in Modern Turkey: A Comparative Study*, Albany, State University of New York Press, 1994.

48 Ellen Kay Trimberger, *Revolution from Above: Military Bureaucrats and Development in Japan, Turkey and Peru*, New Brunswick, New Jersey, Transaction Books, 1978, p.9.

49 Jamie Allinson and Alexander Anievas, "The uses and misuses of uneven and combined development: an anatomy of a concept", *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, Vol.22, No.1, 2009, p.47.

50 Kees Van der Pijl, *Transnational Classes and International Relations*, New York, Routledge, 1998, p.80-83.

51 *Ibid.* p.80.

revolution within and under state leadership for the lack of any established bourgeoisie hegemony”⁵² In this passive revolution, the “state becomes the leading agent of transformation,” drawing different classes into a *nation building hegemonic project*.⁵³ In the process, “the reification of the ‘nation’ in the body of the state becomes the means for constructing the hegemonic structure” of state power.⁵⁴ In this mode of capitalist “transition”, in which hegemony (or *hegemonic depth* in my terminology) is not yet achieved but the creation of a modern state becomes the requirement for social development. In other words, the state comes to act as the “midwife of modern capitalism” and “serves as the locus of accumulation and the construction of the political order of capital”.⁵⁵ The republican state therefore also acted as a “collective capitalist”⁵⁶ and engaged itself in an intense investment activity. The conditions of unequal and combined development in Turkey resulted in the development of a bourgeoisie class dependent upon the state for its reproduction rather than the market.⁵⁷

As the embeddedness of the state vis-à-vis society was weak at the initial stages of the foundation of the Turkish state, this increased the dominance of the civil-military bureaucracy coalition in the formation of foreign policy. Nationalism provided the overall ideological framework for foreign policy in this period and its content was determined by a secular, populist, anti-imperialist discourse of the Kemalist civil-military bureaucracy. It was oriented towards the preservation of the newly born Turkish state and the securing of its independence, maintaining the *status quo* and creating good relations with its neighbours. As the dominance of a *state class* in Turkey’s political development was gradually reversed as new classes appeared along with the deepening of capitalist relations of production, not only was the capital-state nexus restructured, but also the content of the nationalist ideology was adjusted to include Islam. However, during the Kemalist period, nationalism assumed a secular form and was translated into the foreign policy discourse as “peace at home, peace in the world”. This discourse was later criticized by the JDP for being isolationist, defensive and unsuitable for the needs of Turkey during the 2000s.

(Neo) Liberal Transformation

The end of the World War II led to the formation of a liberal capitalist order under the hegemony of the US. Turkey was already structurally part of the capitalist world system buttressed by its efforts to Westernize since the foundation of the Republic. As a consequence of the policies of Westernisation,

52 Cox, *Production, Power and World Order*, p.218.

53 Adam David Morton, “Reflections on Uneven Development: Mexican Revolution, Primitive Accumulation, Passive Revolution”, *Latin American Perspectives*, Vol.37, No.1, 2010, p.7-34 and “The Continuum of passive revolution”, *Capital and Class*, Vol.34, No.3, 2010, p.315-342. In Morton’s usage passive revolution can both refer to the revolution from above as in the first phases of the formation of the Turkish state, as well as to the neoliberal restructuring of the economy under different governments since 1980s, particularly since the 1990s.

54 Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1993, p.212.

55 Morton, “Reflections on Uneven Development”, p.19.

56 Savran, *Türkiye’de Sınıf Mücadeleleri*, p.155.

57 Düzgün, “Class, State and Property”, p.130-133. The analysis here departs both from the strong state tradition in explaining Turkish modernity as well as what Wood called the “bourgeoisie paradigm” which explains the specificity of Turkish modernity by resorting to the distinction between state and society. In contrast to these approaches which either reify the state or make a separation between the state and the society, my concept of hegemonic depth conceives this relation as a process of deepening hegemony and resolves the problems involved in a long disputed issue concerning the relation between the state and society in Turkey’s modern development. The concept of hegemonic depth therefore describes not only the initial stages of the development of the Turkish republic but also is valid for the later stages of increasing embeddedness of rising new class fractions and their strength in the state apparatus. See Heper, *The State Tradition in Turkey*; Wood, “The Separation of the Economic and the Political in Capitalism”, p.66-95.

Turkey's structural position in the world system was consolidated during the Cold War. During the ideological politics of the bipolar international system, Turkey became part of the Western Alliance and a member of NATO in 1952 as a protective shield against communist expansionism. However, after the end of the Cold War, before Davutoğlu's reformulation as *Strategic Depth*,⁵⁸ Turgut Özal (1989-1993) followed by Süleyman Demirel (1993-2000) had believed that Turkey needed to obtain a new place in the geopolitical and geoeconomic world system in the post-Cold War era. This implied not only being a dominant power in the Middle East, but also involving the development of links with the newly independent Turkic states and closer relations with Russia. The changing constellations of world geopolitics and the power vacuum after the 1991 Gulf War and the 2003 Iraq War made it possible to envisage a strong regionally powerful Turkey. The dismantling of the geopolitical framework of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union enabled Turkey to seek for a new role for itself in the world and in the Middle East in proportion to its perceived geostrategic importance and power.⁵⁹ Disappointment with the EU membership process bolstered Turkey's search for a more pivotal role in the Muslim world. Turkey's new self-image also coincided with the United States and the Western powers search for new approaches to the Middle East.

These changes were closely related to the capitalist transformation of Turkey and the creation of a new capital-state nexus. Together with the state led capitalist industrialization of the Kemalist period, Turkey was involved in the application of import substitution strategies (ISI) until the 1980s when a transition to export led growth was made.⁶⁰ The investment of the multinational companies in the ISI industries during this period led to further integration with the capitalist world economy and increased the dependence of local industries to foreign technology.⁶¹ Subsequent to the major problems faced in the ISI strategies, a neoliberal accumulation strategy was initiated with the 24 January 1980 measures led by Prime Minister Turgut Özal through the application of structural adjustment programmes and conditions laid down by the IMF and the World Bank. This new neoliberal accumulation model was supported by the export of labour-intensive goods.⁶² The transition to this new accumulation strategy can be defined as the second form of passive revolution in Turkey's socio-political development involving the "transformation of production relations enacted by the bourgeoisie within the prevailing mode of production."⁶³

The neoliberal economic reforms undertaken under Özal's leadership led to the rise of religious and conservative business classes called the Anatolian Tigers, engaged in a process of passive revolution "that resulted in the incorporation of the Islamic-conservative masses into the wider neoliberal social project".⁶⁴ The interests of these newly emerging bourgeoisie classes were also represented in the shift in foreign policy strategies. Replaced by the closed National Salvation Party, the Welfare Party (WP) was victorious at the general elections of 1995. The main focus of the WP's foreign policy was the

58 Ahmet Davutoğlu, *Stratejik Derinlik: Türkiye'nin Uluslararası Konumu*, İstanbul, Küre Yayınları, 2004.

59 Şule Kut, "The Contours of Turkish Foreign Policy in the 1990s". Rubin, Barry and Kemal Kirisci (eds.). *Turkey in World Politics – an Emerging Multiregional Power*, London, Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2001, p.5-12 for an overall view of the period.

60 See Haldun Gülalp, "Patterns of Capital Accumulation and state-society relations in Turkey", *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, Vol.15, No.3,1985, p.329-348.

61 See Haldun Gülalp, "Capitalism and the Modern Nation-State: Rethinking the Creation of the Turkish Republic", *Journal of Historical Sociology*, Vol.7, No.2, 1994, p.155-176.

62 Kaya, "Turkey's Turn to the East" p. 8; Ahmet Bekmen, "State and Capital in Turkey During the Neoliberal Era", İsmet Akça et al. (eds.), *Turkey Reframed: Constituting Neoliberal Hegemony*, Londra, Pluto 2014, p.49-50 and also *passim* for a review of state/capital relations in Turkey.

63 Morton, "The Continuum of passive revolution", p.325.

64 Bekmen, "State and Capital in Turkey During the Neoliberal Era", p.62.

Islamic countries and East Asia rather than the EU. Nevertheless, these policies were opposed by a new group in the WP represented by Erdoğan who defined the party's position as "Muslim Democrat", emphasizing an initially closer integration with the EU and American capital rather than *solely* with Islamic capital in an effort to consolidate its domestic hegemony. The differences between these two groups eventually reflected the interests of alternative capital groups represented by different fractions within the Islamic capital. While the WP represented the traditional small businessmen, Erdoğan represented the "renovationists" appealing more to the internationalising Islamic bourgeoisie in search of further integration with the world market and transforming itself into finance capital.⁶⁵

The economic crises of 1994, 2000, and 2001 dismantled the weak societal basis of Özal's neoliberal hegemonic project.⁶⁶ The electoral victory of the JDP in 2002 changed the established state-society relationship and created a much more intertwined capital-state nexus. Following its accession to power, the JDP has struggled to overcome the historical weakness of the bourgeoisie class against the entrenched civil-military bureaucracy. Initially, the JDP employed an Islamic discourse to define its ideological position and wage its counter hegemonic struggle against the traditional civil-military bureaucracy. However, it has nevertheless increasingly turned into a pro-state, pro-market and pro-capitalist political party as it entrenched its hegemony.⁶⁷ Along the way, the state-capital relation assumed a much more integrated structure suitable for the creation of populist hegemonic projects. On the other hand, increasing their socio-political hegemonic depth enabled the JDP to civilianize the foreign policy formation and eliminate the military as a force in foreign policy making.⁶⁸ Especially in the first stages of its hegemonic consolidation, the government used the EU to fight against the military and to deepen its domestic hegemony.⁶⁹ However, the transition from a secularized form of Americanisation to an "Islamicized Americanisation",⁷⁰ unlike a return to the East or leading to a shift of axis that some have described,⁷¹ has deepened the relations with the West when viewed with respect to the consolidation of the capitalist relations of production through Turkey's neoliberal transformation. The foreign policy expression of this new state capital nexus became the *Strategic Depth Doctrine* expressed in different forms such as neo-Ottomanism, "zero problems with neighbours", "Islamic Realism", Turkey's increasing soft power, the "trading state" or as sub-hegemony.⁷² In other words, Strategic Depth as a foreign policy discourse has been the expression of a new hegemonic project

65 Burak Gürel, "İslamcılık: Uluslararası Bir Ufuk Taraması", Neşecan Balkan et al. (eds.), *Neoliberalizm, İslamcı Sermayenin Yükselişi ve AKP*, İstanbul, Yordam Kitap, 2013, p.45.

66 Ibid. p.54-55.

67 Cihan Tuğal, *Passive Revolution: Absorbing the Islamic Challenge to Capitalism*, Stanford, CA, Stanford University Press, 2009, p.1.

68 See Soner Çağaptay, "European Union Reforms Diminish the Role of the Turkish Military: Ankara Knocking on Brussels' Door", *The Washington Institute, Policywatch 781*, 12 August 2003.

69 See Yaprak Gürsoy, "The Impact of EU-driven reforms on the political autonomy of the Turkish military", *South European Politics and Society*, Vol.16, No.2, 2011, p.293-308; Şule Toktaş and Ümit Kurt, "The Turkish Military's Autonomy, JDP Rule and the EU Reform Process in the 2000s: An Assessment of the Turkish Version of Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DECAF)", *Turkish Studies*, Volume 11, Issue 3, 2010, p.387-403.

70 See Cihan Tuğal, "Nato's Islamists: Hegemony and Americanization in Turkey", *New Left Review*, No.44, 2007, p.34.

71 See for instance, Tarık Oğuzlu, "Middle Easternization of Turkey's Foreign Policy: Does Turkey Dissociate from the West?", *Turkish Studies*, Vol.9, No.1, 2008, p.3-20; Ziya Öniş, "Multiple Faces of the 'New' Turkish Foreign Policy: Underlying Dynamics and a Critique", *Insight Turkey*, Vol.13, No.1, 2011, p.47-65; Mehmet Babacan, "Whither an Axis Shift: A Perspective from Turkey's Foreign Trade", *Insight Turkey*, Vol.13, No.1, 2011, p.129-157.

72 Tarık Oğuzlu, "Soft Power in Turkish Foreign Policy", *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, Vol.61, No.1, 2007, p.81-97; Malik Mufti, "The AK Party's Islamic Realist Political Vision: Theory and Practice", *Politics and Governance*, Vol.2, Issue 2, 2014, p.28-42; M. Hakan Yavuz, "Turkish Identity and Foreign Policy in Flux: The Rise of Neo-Ottomanism", *Critique*, No.12, 1998, p.19-41.

and vision, as well as a new role for Turkey's position in the world system subsequent to Turkey's fundamental socio-economic transformations and its integration into the world economy.

Ideological Depth, Islam and Foreign Policy

From the foundation of the Republic in 1923 until the 1950s, nationalism served as the official state ideology of the Turkish state. The period starting with the 1950s witnessed the rise of Islamic organisations, eventually resulting in the formation of a political party in the late 1960s.⁷³ Islam as anti-secular and anti-statist ideology was the outcome of the conflict between the first generation bourgeoisie and the rising second generation "new bourgeoisie"⁷⁴ trying to force entry into the existing power bloc consisting of army and hegemonic capital fraction.⁷⁵ The power struggles between large capital and small and medium scale capital had started with the rise of Islamist politics in the 1990s. The marriage of Islam and nationalism occurred after the 1980 coup under the name of Turkish-Islamic synthesis.⁷⁶ However, in this period Islam was geared to the needs of the existing authoritarian official ideology supporting the ruling class hegemony. With the JDP coming to power, the reverse was r to become true later and nationalism would be geared to the needs of Islam as the pillar of the new "ideological synthesis".⁷⁷ Integrating the small capital into the power bloc under the hegemony of big capital groups has implied a deepening hegemony of AKP over Turkish society. This process was accompanied with a deepening control of the state apparatus and involved tensions with the civil-military bureaucracy as well as intra-class conflicts as witnessed with the Gülen group at a later stage of this process.⁷⁸ However, JDP's nationalism was of a more liberal type easily accommodating itself to the needs of capitalism, signifying in this instance the marriage of Islam and capitalism.⁷⁹ With the consolidation of the hegemony of the JDP, "an ideological-discursive synthesis among nationalism, Islam and (pro-capitalist) liberalism has been finally established"⁸⁰

The use of a Muslim identity in foreign policy is also the outcome of the increasing hegemonic depth of the JDP creating congruence between its economic and popular ideology. The image of a moderate Islamic state fitted both to the hegemonic aspirations of the US and the accumulation strategies of the "neo-national bourgeoisie" in search of export markets in the Middle Eastern countries. Therefore, the use of a Muslim identity and Turkey being considered as a "model Muslim democracy" both internally and externally helped JDP consolidate its ties with other Muslim countries. Thus ideological depth and hegemonic depth have consolidated and mutually overdetermined each other, leading to attempts at increasing the hegemonic depth externally.

73 See Mehmet Yasar Geyikdağı, *Political Parties in Turkey: The Role of Islam*, NY, Praeger Publishers, 1984; Kayhan Delibas, *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey: Urban Poverty, Grass Roots Activism and Islamic Fundamentalism*, London, Tauris, 2016.

74 Hakan Yavuz, "Giriş: Türkiye'de İslami Hareketin Dönüşümünde Yeni Burjuvazinin Rolü", *AK Parti: Toplumsal Değişimin Yeni Aktörleri*, İstanbul, Kitap Yayınevi, 2010.

75 Kaya, "Turkey's Turn to the East", s.10.

76 For a review of the ideological uses of nationalism see, Güven Gürkan Öztan, "The Struggle for Hegemony Between Turkish Nationalisms in the Neoliberal Era", İsmet Akça et al. (eds.), *Turkey Reframed: Constituting Neoliberal Hegemony*, London, Pluto Press, 2014. See also Mustafa Şen, "Transformation of Turkish Islamism and the Rise of the Justice and Development Party", *Turkish Studies*, Cilt 11, No.1, p.59-84 for an analysis of Turkish-Islamic synthesis.

77 See Saraçoğlu and Demirkol, "Nationalism and Foreign Policy Discourse in Turkey", p.301-319.

78 For the analysis of JDP's hegemonic conception and its evolution, see. Evren Hoşgör, "AKP'nin Hegemonya Sorunsalı: Uzlaşmasız Mutabakat", Neşecan Balkan et al. (der.), *Neoliberalizm, İslamcı Sermayenin Yükselişi ve AKP*, İstanbul, Yordam Kitap, 2014, p.291-332.

79 Yıldız Atasoy, *Islam's Marriage with Neo-Liberalism: State Transformation in Turkey*, 1st ed., London, Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.

80 Kaya, "Turkey's Turn to the East", s.11.

Contours of Strategic Depth

The concept of a “hegemonic project” as developed by Bob Jessop (1990) denotes the agential moment of structural change, in which agency transforms pre-existing structures, while simultaneously being enabled and constrained by those structures.⁸¹ Likewise, the hegemony of JDP was attuned to the task of restructuring the Turkish state in line with the interests of a new bourgeoisie class. However this transformation was enabled and constrained by the existing structures of neoliberal transformation to which JDP was committed. Conceived within these terms, the foreign policy strategy of the Strategic Depth Doctrine should be evaluated as an extension of the global neoliberal hegemonic project developed in Turkey by a specific class of bourgeoisie that challenged the traditional state structures and aspired to be a key regional actor in the Middle East and the territories formerly associated with the Ottoman Empire.

Strategic depth is generally analysed as a foreign policy strategy involving new *geopolitical* and *geoeconomic* visions. However, this paper analyses it as a “hegemonic project” which, in its structural aspect, is *related* to the global neoliberal transformation in Turkey.⁸² It is not therefore possible to consider Turkey’s strategic depth as separate from the aspired neoliberal depth of the capitalist world and the geopolitical dynamics associated with it.⁸³ Therefore, the emergence of Strategic Depth Doctrine should be linked to a process of hegemonic depth defined as the increasing embeddedness of the bourgeoisie class in Turkish society and its increasing links with the international and the transnational capital. In this sense, it would be more meaningful to discuss hegemonic depth by reflecting on a different and deeper level the hegemonic project of the leading (neoliberal, capitalist) hegemonic state in the world system. Conversely, the project is intimately tied to the local conditions of reproduction and the agency of the social and political forces. Specifically, it concerns the interests of the Turkish export oriented productive capital seeking to expand beyond the domestic market. Therefore it is the geopolitical aspect of a hegemonic project oriented to reproduce the internal and external rule of capital, despite being ridden with intra-class contradictions. On the other hand, in seeking to advance the interests of a *new class of bourgeoisie*, it does *not* reflect a new accumulation strategy but rather the changing class relations within an existing mode of accumulation and reflecting contradictions between different fractions of the bourgeoisie class.

As a foreign policy orientation based on the Ottoman imperial legacy, Strategic Depth is a form of a “non-colonial, non-formal empire”⁸⁴ which calls for an active engagement with Turkey’s neighbourhood in the Balkans, the Caucasus and the Middle East, envisioning the transformation of Turkey into a central state and a key regional power in the Middle East. Capitalism represents a continuous process of capital accumulation involving constant geographical expansion. As the boundaries of accumulation have no spatial limitations, neo-Ottomanism actually refers to a hegemonic space of accumulation much larger than the geographical area limited to the Middle East. Therefore, neo-Ottomanism or Strategic Depth can be conceptualised as a “spatial fix” in Harvey’s terminology as a way to resolve capitalism’s inner contradictions by “reproduc(ing) these contradictions on a bigger geographical scale”.⁸⁵

81 De Graaf and van Apeldoorn, “Varieties of US Post-Cold War Imperialism”, p.4.

82 Ziya Öniş, “Turgut Özal and his Economic Legacy: Turkish Neo-Liberalism in Critical Perspective”, *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol.40, No.4, 2004, p.113-134.

83 See Halil Karaveli, “Turkey at 90: Capitalist Development has Determined the Political Journey of the Republic” *The Turkey Analyst*, 06 November 2013 and “Turkey’s Journey from Secularism to Islamization: A Capitalist Story” *The Turkey Analyst*, 13 May 2016 for a similar view.

84 The concepts belong to Van Apeldoorn, “The Limits to Open Door Imperialism”, p.594-595.

85 David Harvey, *The New Imperialism*, Oxford and New York, NY, Oxford University Press, 2003.

Limits (of) to Hegemony/(ic) Depth

Today, there are signs that the limits of AKP's neoliberal populist hegemony and its over all hegemonic depth may well have been reached. Turkey was considered to be a model combining Islam and democracy, thus deepening the liberal conceptions of democracy in the Middle East⁸⁶ together with the expansion of neoliberal accumulation strategies in the region. However, the role envisaged for Turkey in the Middle East was always vulnerable, and more crucially, it was never totally accepted by the Middle Eastern countries that have their own geopolitical priorities. Therefore, one arena where the JDP has witnessed serious setbacks has been in its foreign policy project of "zero problems with neighbours" which was the main pillar of Davutoğlu's foreign policy vision. The accumulation of problems with Egypt and the conflict with Syria have weakened the JDP's hegemonic vision for the Middle East. The Turkish state-capital nexus has so far helped the Islamic capital⁸⁷ by providing access to new markets. The government will most probably continue to maintain this access, but JDP expansionism has been arrested in this instance also by the failure of the "zero problems with neighbours" policy. Therefore, currently, due to the Syrian war and Turkey's military intervention in the region to protect its borders, the nationalist discourse has once again superseded the Islamic discourse and the capital accumulation needs of the Islamic bourgeoisie. That "Turkish leadership has consistently demonstrated its willingness to put sectarian Realpolitik before the principles of democratization and selfdetermination"⁸⁸ has recently been confirmed by the constantly shifting alliances in the region. Finally, the crisis in the Euro area, the failure to join the EU after years' of effort to join the EU, the hypocritical attitude of the Western states towards the threat of terrorism in Turkey, the EU's pragmatic interest oriented policies towards the migration crisis have all together eroded the interest in EU membership and democratisation reforms, permitting and leading to a *statist authoritarian* political regime in Turkey.⁸⁹

The Gezi Park protests of June 2013 demonstrated that a policy of *hegemonic depth* as a socially constructed project of domination is never complete and that there is always a possibility of alternative non-hegemonic discourses and practices and the potential for new hegemonic projects. It may be that JDP's hegemonic depth might have reached a level, domestically as well as internationally, which can no longer be deepened. A recent taxonomy on the concept of hegemony (minimal, integral, decadent) offered by Adam Morton in *Revolution and Modern State in Mexico*⁹⁰ assists in supporting my discussion by tracing how a particular hegemonic project goes through cycles of consent, co-optation and coercion, thus suggesting that such mutations within the hegemonic project could affect both societal consent as well as the foreign policy strategies which in turn alter a state's position within the overall geopolitical landscape.

86 See Sami Zubaida, "Turkey as a model of democracy and Islam", *Open Democracy*, 30 May 2011; Anna Secor, "Turkey's Democracy: A Model for the Troubled Middle East?", *Eurasian Geography and Economics*, Vol.52, No.2, 2011, p.157-172; Kemal Kirişçi, "Turkey's 'Demonstrative Effect' and the Transformation of the Middle East", *Insight Turkey*, Vol.13, No.2, 2011, p.33-55.

87 Islamic capital should not be understood as a unity. As Hoşgör argues, in the case of JDP rule, "three main capital fractions can be identified with conflicting demands on the state: big internationalized capital groups having a partial control over the global market; newly growing middle- sized capital groups trying to internationalize and integrate with the global market; and capital groups, mostly composed of SMEs but not exclusively, still operating in the national market". Hoşgör, "Islamic Capital/ Anatolian Tigers: Past and Present", p.356.

88 Cihan Tuğal, "Democratic Janissaries? Turkey's Role in the Arab Spring", *New Left Review*, No.76, 2012, p.24.

89 See Bekmen, "Class and State in Post-1980 Turkey: The Rise of the Neoliberal Authoritarian State Form"; see also Ziya Öniş, "The Triumph of Conservative Globalism: The Political Economy of the AKP Era", *Turkish Studies*, Vol. 13, No. 2, 2012, s. 135-152.

90 Morton, *Revolution and State in Modern Mexico: The Political Economy of Uneven Development*, Lanham, MD, Rowman and Littlefield, 2011.

Conclusion

This article aimed to develop a historical materialist framework to analyse TFP based on the conceptual apparatus of class, state and hegemony. Based on this framework, it believes that a historical materialist analysis has a great potential in explaining TFP. The paper defines the relation between these three concepts in terms of different hegemonic projects which were previously conceived as parts of different foreign policy strategies. Although the focus of the paper and the case to which it refers is the foreign policy strategy of the JDP and its geopolitical conception of Strategic Depth, this framework can easily be applied to other periods of Turkish history, delineating the connections between the hegemonic projects of different classes and foreign policy strategies. In developing a historical materialist analysis of TFP, this paper has underlined the importance of hegemonic depth not only as a resolution of the dialectical interplay of structures and agents which remains a controversial issue, but also as the mediating link between classes and the state as well as the world structures of hegemony. This approach has the advantage of connecting the conditions of domestic hegemony at home with global political and economic structures as mediated by classes (or other social agencies). Therefore this argument provides not only a sociological analysis of foreign policy but also a sociological analysis of geopolitics (and geoeconomics). Incorporating a dimension that is both structural and agential, it also sheds light on the limits of hegemonic projects, their transformation and development of new ones.

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