

# Turkish-U.S. Relations: Perspectives From Ankara

Ralph H. Salmi & Gonca Bayraktar Durgun

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*This book is dedicated to Dilara Durgun in the sunrise of her years  
and to Alma June Salmi currently in the sunset of hers.  
They have both brought us great joy.*



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## Preface

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This book is a product of international collaboration and research between the faculty of Gazi University, Ankara, Turkey and California State University, San Bernardino, California, U.S.A. It is dedicated to a subject of growing interest and concern to both the people and governments of the Republic of Turkey and the United States. Given the troubled times in which we live, particularly as they relate to Middle Eastern affairs, this volume seeks to address the perceptions and views of a wide segment of Turkish society and how that public perceives the current and future status of Turkish-U.S. relations.

Turkish-U.S. relations date back almost 200 years. The status and importance of this relationship grew even more significant in the immediate post-WWII era when world communism was threatening Europe, Asia and the Middle East. The Soviet Bloc was perceived by both nations as a common enemy and close bonds—economic, political, cultural and military—were created and sustained until now. However, as good friends and allies frequently have differences of opinion on issues that impact their respective domestic and foreign policy interests, recent evidence in the form of public opinion polling data suggest that American prestige as a world power, as a reliable ally, is being threatened by an increasing confluence of negative international opinion. Preliminary analysis of the data suggests that this holds true in Turkey as well.

Despite Turkey's NATO membership and strong support of U.S. initiatives in Afghanistan, including the stationing of Turkish troops in that country, a discernable shift in Turkish political rhetoric and clear public opposition to American Middle East initiatives suggests that Turkey, too, is joining the international community in expressing its apprehension. The concern being echoed throughout the world is aimed, specifically, at the American administration and its foreign policy initiatives in the Middle East. This being said, we decided in this study to go beyond public opinion polls by narrowing our research pool and attempted to discern, across social sectors, if this widespread chorus of disapproval could be explained by a closer examination of Turkey's reported disapproval of U.S. policies.

As the title suggests, and as the contributing scholars agreed, the status of Turkish-U.S. relations should come from primarily Turkish sources as this book aims at explaining—or at minimum, contributing to our understanding of the nature, depth and breadth of this troubling trend—from a distinctly Turkish perspective. Thus, Turkish scholars authored nine of the twelve chapters. Recognizing that a rich body of literature on U.S.-Turkish relations does in fact exist, few works approach the topic from a multi-sectoral research design. That is, in our attempts to isolate and explain the nature of the existing problem, our contributors, experts in their respective fields in the social and administrative sciences, were tasked with conducting field research by interviewing subjects representing a wide cross-section of society. The focal point was, again, to solicit the views and opinions of the Turkish citizenry regarding the status of Turkish-U.S. relations. The multi-sectoral and cross-disciplinary research, conducted primarily in Ankara, covered the following sectors of Turkish society: labor, civil society, youth, intelligentsia, the Turkish national bureaucracy, mass media, business, university students, and the military. As more or less of an eclectic approach to the analysis of public opinion, we have not set out to abide by or remain chained to any single conceptual framework, theory or paradigm. Rather, we have endeavored to explore the depth and breadth of dissent or disapproval extant in Turkish society

and whether those concerns can be better understood by focusing on the primary or most influential sectors of a given society. Several questions arose: Is there any one or cluster of sectors that tend to be more attuned to regional or national affairs or disapproving than others? Are their views and opinions similar in content and form? What might the future hold?

This work was a collaborative effort that was discussed in January 2002 at the signing of a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) in Ankara between two university presidents. The MOA is a document that is dedicated to the principle of establishing and expanding international dialogue in higher education. With the full and strong support of Rector Riza Ayhan and President Albert Karnig, the immediate impact of their shared interest in the importance of international exchange was, among other things, two international conferences hosted by each university; the exchange of Turkish and American students; the hosting of Turkish professors in California and this, a joint research project which was initiated in 2004.

It was indeed gratifying to see that, after eighteen months of dialogue, long flights, and email exchanges, this work has finally come to fruition. Needless to say, it would not have come to print without the patience of our publisher Jeff Young at BrownWalker; Dr. Ed Zehner's editing of the first Turkish-to-English translation; and many in Turkey who worked long hours on the translations. These included my co-author and co-editor, Dr. Gonca Bayraktar Durgun; Mrs. Ann Marie Allen, my former student and now a student of the Turkish language at the Tomer Language Center in Ankara and, of course, Dr. Senol Durgun my friend and colleague. While university administrators are rarely mentioned, we think it also appropriate that a tip of the hat in terms of appreciation for their support of this dialogue must go to two deans, Dr. John Conley, Dean, College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, California State University, San Bernardino and Dr. Burhan Aykac, Dean, Faculty of Economic and Administrative Sciences, Gazi University, both of whom were and remain pivotal actors in establishing and sustaining international Turkish-American university cooperation in their respective universities colleges and faculties. Finally, and certainly not last, is our need to underscore the important and critical administrative support involved with this book project. In our case it was the always cheerful, budget minded, and indefatigable Mrs. Debbi Fox. The high quality of her work, administrative genius, useful suggestions, and not-so-casual reminders to this author/editor were and remain much appreciated. The corresponding preparation of the final page proofs by her student assistant, Melissa Smith, also a student of the Turkish language and culture, were essential in the final preparation of this manuscript. Our deep sense of appreciation goes to both of them.

As alluded to above, the majority of the chapters in this book were presented in their original Turkish and, as is the case with most translated works, many editorial hurdles are presented. Ensuring that meanings were not lost, ideas were not trampled upon, and our primary task of remaining loyal to the intention of the authors was a responsibility not taken lightly. This being said, if errors have occurred in the translations or editing, they are ours solely and should not unduly reflect on the authors.

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## INTRODUCTION

### SETTING THE ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

*Ralph H. Salmi and Gonca Bayraktar Durgun*

Bilateral relations between Turkey and the United States have come under considerable strain during the recent past. Turkey's geopolitical location has long been an important factor shaping U.S. foreign policy initiatives. This was particularly true immediately following the Second World War, following the breakup of the Soviet Union, and again most recently during the various conflicts in the Middle East, including Afghanistan, the two wars with Iraq, and now, lurking in the background, Iran. Cooperation between the two countries, which has long focused primarily on security and defense policies, was enhanced in 1991 with the adoption of a new understanding called "Improved Partnership," within a framework of clearly diversifying relations.

Turkish-American relations have been the topic of numerous studies since the end of the Second World War when relations were enhanced due in large part to the Soviet threat and the fear of the spread of communism. Conventional wisdom in the study of international relations often exaggerates state-centered approaches, focusing on the macro-level impact of their foreign policies. Thus, mainstream studies have focused on the geostrategic and geopolitical importance of Turkey to the West in general and to the United States in particular. This is particularly true for areas of shared interests affected by the changing balance(s) of power within the international system. Turkey has been a U.S. ally and a member of NATO since the end of the Cold War. Its slow but determined transformation into a Western style democracy since the 1950s has drawn attention not only to its geostrategic and geopolitical position within the region, but also to its major internal crises.

At the international level, major subjects of concern have included Turkey's relationships with the United States, the European Union, the Balkans, Greece, the Middle East, Russia, and Central Asia. On the national level, major issues have included Turkey's economic and political instability, the role of the military in its politics, the Kurdish issue, and the rise of Islamist politics. Since the collapse of the Soviet bloc, and especially in the aftermath of 9/11, Turkey's contribution to global and regional peace and security, and its contributions to regional cooperation initiatives as a "rising regional power," have received much scholarly and journalistic attention.<sup>1</sup> However, most of these studies have focused principally on interstate relations at the macro level, discussing, portraying, or repeating clichés about the roles, responsibilities, capabilities, and handicaps of Turkey in the global arena. In these studies, Turkey has been characterized as a secular Muslim country, a rising regional power, and a security ally and client of the West in general and the United States in particular. Therefore, in the context of the changing balances within the international system, the central arguments issues have been preoccupied with the foreign policies of global and regional powers, and the policy-making processes and networks of the policy makers. The aim of this book is, by contrast, to contribute a societal perspective by making use of empirical studies of the attitudes of Turkish people during a

current international crisis, in this instance, the war in Iraq. We approach this task, of course, within the context of Turkish- American relations.

Turkey and the United States have had a history of shared interests since the late 1940s. Having taken a neutral stance during the Second World War, Turkey attempted to establish closer links with the Western World following the defeat of the Axis powers. Alarmed by Stalin's claims to Northeastern Turkey and the Turkish Straits, a clear threat to Turkey's national security and territorial integrity, Turkey expressed in clear and unambiguous terms an interest in a longstanding alignment with the Western, non-communist world. It decided to do so by relying on the United States and not Europe. In the then highly polarized world, alignment with the U.S. enabled Turkey to access the provisions set out in the Truman Doctrine and Marshall Plan. As a form of *quid pro quo*, Turkey participated in the Korean War and allowed the use of its land for military and intelligence bases targeted at the Soviet Union. In return, the U.S. supported Turkey's membership in NATO in 1952. Despite the effects of the Cyprus issue since the early 1970s, though it has been of diminishing importance in recent decades, both countries have continued to cooperate in their areas of mutual interest.

The end of the Cold War brought new ruptures in the international system. Turkey recognized that these ruptures undermined the balance of the previously bipolar world. To make matters more difficult, Turkey was being confronted with new world disorder at a time when serious domestic economic crises were compounding its long-lasting political instability and national security problems. Dramatic geopolitical challenges within Turkey's normal realm of influence, together with the ongoing processes by which international relations were being restructured, made it necessary for Turkey to redefine its foreign policy and re-evaluate its international relations in order to maintain its geopolitical importance.<sup>2</sup> Due to its geographic proximity to the troubled states of the region, and due to its ethno-linguistic similarities and cultural and religious affinities with certain of its neighbors, in addition to its significant ties with Eastern and Western Europe, Turkey found herself playing an especially important role in the Balkans, the Middle East, the Black Sea and Caspian Sea littoral states, the Caucasus, and the newly independent states of Central Asia. As events unfolded, Turkey found that its traditional international positions were no longer applicable and needed to be addressed, if not changed, to meet the exigencies of the new world order. Turkish foreign policy guidelines, which since the early 1920s had been inward-looking and oriented to maintaining the status quo, were in need of dramatic change. The new situation, with the withering away of the threat of communism and the collapse of the Eastern block, was requiring Turkey to shift its focus to international and regional matters, moving away from the prevailing pattern of insecurity and isolation.

That having been said, it should be noted that Turkey has become particularly vulnerable to and in many respects a victim of events and policies in the region. The changing relations with the West, instability in the Balkans, conflicts in the Middle East, and Russian and Iranian regional policies have all impinged on Turkey's direction and foreign policy ambitions. Previously, Turkish foreign policy towards the Middle East had been an extension of its pro-Western policy. Given the bipolarized world, it had chosen to keep a distance from the region's affairs in order not to jeopardize its larger aim of being a fully accepted part of the free world. Accordingly, Turkey sought to demonstrate its role as a cooperative partner of and for the West in regional affairs.<sup>3</sup> An additional reason for Turkey's hands-off approach to the Middle East was Turkish displeasure with the Middle Eastern countries' support for the Greek Cypriots. Turkey's support for the American-led coalition in the Gulf War was therefore a turning point away from conventional Turkish foreign policy and its hands-off approach to the Middle East.<sup>4</sup> Yet that action had serious economic and security consequences.

During the Gulf War, Turkey's strategic location and its importance as a Western ally underscored the importance of the U.S.-Turkish relationship. However, Turkey suffered greatly as a result of the pivotal role it played in the conflict. During the conflict, Turkey allowed U.S. aircraft to use NATO air bases in Turkey to attack neighboring Iraq. Turkey also supported U.S. initiatives in the United Nations and implemented U.N. Security Council resolutions and economic sanctions. Following the war, Turkey allowed U.S., British, and French aircraft based at Incirlik in southeast Turkey to enforce a no-fly zone over northern Iraq to protect the Kurds in the north. This initiative, known as Operation Provide Comfort, continued up to the 2003 U.S.-led invasion of Iraq. In addition, Turkey continued to follow the U.S. lead in supporting Israel. This support had been expressed in numerous ways. In addition to being among the first countries to recognize the state of Israel, Turkey had developed political and military ties with Israel to enhance the latter's security and to compete with pan-Arabism.

As it pursued these measures, Turkey's own costs escalated. The closure of oil pipelines from Iraq to Turkey after the Gulf War created high economic losses. Additional costs resulted from Turkey's loss of a major export market (Iraq) and the reluctance of foreign investors and tourists to deal with the frontline war situation. The tourism industry in Turkey suffered huge losses. As a consequence, the Turkish currency, the lira, lost 69% of its value. GDP per capita dropped from about \$2,900 to \$2,100.<sup>5</sup> As a result of Turkey's ongoing economic problems, and owing to its need to repay loans that were coming due in 2002, Turkey negotiated a new three-year standby agreement with the IMF for \$16.2 billion loan in aid from 2002 to 2004 (\$12 billion in new funds and \$4.2 billion in carry-over loans). These loans were contingent on Turkey instituting more reforms. Thus, Turkey became the IMF's largest debtor. Since at least 1999, Turkey's unprecedented financial crisis has been met by a coalition of three political parties of mismatched ideological preferences. Philosophical differences notwithstanding, the coalition has produced an impressive legislative record of economic and political reforms despite having to deal with Turkey's deepest recession in over fifty years. For example, in 2001 Turkey's gross domestic product (GDP) fell by 7.4%, while inflation rose 68.5%.

Owing to its secular and comparatively democratic system of government, and to its status as an ally of the West, for whom it functioned as a bridge to its multi-faceted, forward-based defense system in the Muslim World, Turkey's global and regional importance was highlighted once again immediately following the events of 9/11. Turkey's position vis-a-vis the threat of global terror and religious fundamentalism was and remains clear and unequivocal. Turkey's importance, its capabilities, and its willingness to participate in maintaining global and international peace and security led to a new and enhanced relationship with the U.S. Examples of Turkey's participation in the war against terror are as follows:

- Turkey voted in NATO to invoke Article 5 of the defense treaty (which states that an attack on one is an attack on all) and joined the coalition to fight Al-Qa'ida and the Taliban regime;
- Within 24 hours, Turkey provided U.S. forces access to its air space;
- Turkey provided intelligence based on its long relationship with the Uzbek-Tajik-Hazera Afghan Northern Alliance;
- Turkey sent a general to U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM);
- Turkey sent an anti-terrorism liaison team to the European Command (EURCOM);

- A 90-member Turkish Special Forces group was sent to Afghanistan to train Northern Alliance forces;
- Turkish ships in the Mediterranean and Adriatic Seas shadowed, interdicted, and boarded suspect vessels;
- All U.S. humanitarian flights destined to drop meals-ready-to-eat (MREs) in Afghanistan flew from air bases in Turkey;
- Following the defeat of the Taliban, Turkey sent 267 troops to join the 5,000-man International Security and Assistance Force (ISAF) peacekeeping operation under British command;
- Turkey allowed U.S. flights to transit its territory while transporting Al-Qa'ida and Taliban detainees to the U.S. naval base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba; and
- Turkey has undertaken to train a 600-man National Guard battalion of Afghans and provide them with uniforms and equipment; it has also trained 20 new Afghan diplomats.<sup>6</sup>

Turkey's support of U.S. anti-terrorism efforts notwithstanding, the events leading to the American-led war to remove the Ba'athist regime in Iraq, and the course of the war itself, revealed that the relations between Turkey and the U.S. had entered a new phase, as a clear set of differences was becoming increasingly evident.

The "conceptual map"<sup>7</sup> of U.S. foreign policy for the Middle East, including the means available and necessary to pursue its international ends, proved to be in conflict with Turkey's long-term national security interests. The two countries differed on the future unity of Iraq. In addition, Turkey's desire to develop economic and security relations with Syria and Iran is not countenanced by the U.S. The perceived unilateralism of the Bush administration in the Middle East and Iraq further widened the gulf between two countries. The enlargement of NATO, the new alliances in Central Asia, and the U.S. presence in Iraq brought Turkey back to the days immediately following the collapse of the Soviet Union: those of a sense of isolation and insecurity rooted in Turkey's concerns about its strategic insignificance in world affairs.

Furthermore, the Turkish Parliament's refusal to allow use of Turkish territory by the U.S. Fourth Infantry Division in March 2003 was perceived as a deadly blow to relations between the two strategic allies. Washington's initial offer of \$6 billion in aid in return for Turkey's service in the future war was withdrawn from the table. Furthermore, the pre-war arrangements failed to accommodate Turkey's desire to deploy Turkish troops across the border to ensure a positive outcome relative to ensure a say in the future of the oil-rich cities of Kirkuk and Mosul. Meanwhile, the government was criticized domestically for jeopardizing Turkey's future interests by cooperating with the U.S., albeit unwillingly, and thereby leaving northern Iraq to the Kurds. Meanwhile, the lack of confidence in the government of the newly elected (and so-called pro-Islamist) Justice and Development Party and the lack of cooperation between the government and the military contributed to the confusion and disarray. Meanwhile, opinion polls in Turkey suggested that 90% of the population was against the war in Iraq.

Despite these issues, Turkey belatedly opened its airspace to coalition forces and allowed ground transit of certain goods. Tensions continued, however. For example, after the war had started, there arose the Suleimaniya Incident of July 2003, in which Turkish soldiers were arrested by the American military. This incident was perceived in Turkey as blackmailing and a form of national humiliation. Nevertheless, despite all the unfavorable events, and despite the corresponding doubts over Turkey's strategic value in the eyes of the West, the fact remained that

Turkey was pressured to remain in the alliance, as its assets were important to American interests. To the U.S., Turkey was a key country in the war against terrorism, drug trafficking, and religious fundamentalism, all of which are crucial concerns in America's global and regional security policies.

With this in mind, the two governments worked through their difficulties in an effort to restore and safeguard the future of the Turkish-American strategic partnership. The important questions addressed in this study are how the Iraqi war affected Turkish and American relations and how it was perceived, explained, and valued by those who are critical of Turkish foreign policy and by those who are outside the conventional policymaking processes.

## **Chapter Outlines**

The following chapters are organized in a manner meant to provide the reader with the views, perceptions, and understandings of Turkish scholars as they relate to Turkish-American relations. It is a task that, quite frankly, would be difficult for a single author—unless, of course, the author was an expert in all fields and sectors of Turkish foreign affairs. None of us professes such expertise. Rather, our contributing scholars, all experts in their respective fields, have studied and reported on the views and perspectives of the Turkish people during the regional crisis provoked by the war in Iraq. In preparing this study, they have sought out the views of ordinary people from all strata of Turkish society. Each chapter aims to provide a snapshot of the historical and cultural backgrounds of the selected sectors of Turkish society. Seeking a wide range of viewpoints, the contributors have analyzed the views of the members of civil society organizations, journalists, businessmen, trade unionists, bureaucrats, university students and faculty, military staff, academicians, the general public, and the youth. These peoples' views and understanding of the past and present status of Turkish-American relations, and their demands for the future in the context of international power relations, were the focal point of our inquiry.

Chapter Two focuses on a single segment of Turkish society, university students, and their perceptions of Turkish-American relations. Less than a "snapshot" by statistical standards, the authors argue, nevertheless, that the views and opinions of university students can and should be considered as a possible benchmark of what the future might hold in terms of predicting what the next generation of Turkish leaders might consider as critical elements in the history of Turkish-U.S. relations. The authors argue that it is during these formative years that students' ideological perspectives become refined as they seek out answers to the pressing problems that are regularly reported in the media thus important that we solicit their views in this state of their intellectual development. Not inconsistent with broader and much more sophisticated studies of public opinion in the Arab and Muslim world which suggest a growing trend of anti-American sentiment which is directly related to U.S. foreign policy initiatives in the region, the authors' conclude that a similar opinion pattern exists in at least one sample of a major Turkish university. The authors' conclusions are drawn from data gleaned from a questionnaire administered to 306 upper division students at Gazi University (Ankara) in the summer of 2003. The data suggests some troubling trends in the ongoing politicization of Turkish university students. The authors attempt to discern whether or not a direct correlation exists between U.S. foreign policy activities in the region and the increasingly negative opinions of Turkish university students.

Chapter Three utilizes the term civil society to refer to groups such as human rights advocates, development cooperative initiatives, women's networks, environmental movements, consumer advocates, local community groups, supporters of peace movements, and think tanks and relief organizations. The term "civil society associations" does not express homogeneous communities,

and the field data makes it clear that there are conflicting views among them on the past, present, and future of Turkish-American relations in the context of the war in Iraq. This diversity of opinion is clear even though 90% of the Turkish population was against the war. The chapter highlights reactions to the recent shift in American foreign policy, which some argue aims to reshape the world by using economic, military, and cultural power to further benefit and enhance American interests. The policy shift provides a base for comparing official American policy with the perceptions of the field study's respondents, shedding light thereby on the views of the respondents regarding the potential for consistency and coherence in the fight against terrorism and the war in Iraq.

Chapter Four discusses the business sector's preferences and understandings on Turkish-American relations. The authors focus on the historical dimensions, while noting the important divergences and convergences between official policies, on the one hand, and the preferences and expectations of entrepreneurs in international business affairs, on the other. The chapter highlights the fact that entrepreneurship in Turkey is historically and culturally state-centered. Being "imitators of innovators," the private entrepreneurs share in creating policy-making networks that include the political elite and state officials and that have crucial connections to political institutions. The chapter shows that Turkish entrepreneurs place considerable weight on relations with the West, i.e., the European Union and the U.S., for they recognize that any improvement in Turkish-American relations would be beneficial to their long-term economic and political interests.

Chapter Five contributes to the discussion by taking into account the views of media professionals and workers. Looking at the historical and cultural backgrounds of media in Turkey, the chapter draws attention to its statist and authoritarian tendencies. In the opinion of the authors, the mainstream media took on a mission as the 'intellectuals of the official ideology,' viewing the members of the public as the community of ignorant masses who need to be enlightened and transformed. The authors argue that media outlets and organizations often comply with official policies in this process of transforming the masses. The chapter goes on to show that even though mainstream media is culturally and historically very Western oriented, the war in Iraq generally created a negative attitude towards the U.S. The authors maintain that in the war's aftermath the media has portrayed the United States as an "imperialist state" that is attempting to control the resources of the Middle East; rather than as a benign presence with humanitarian and democratic aspirations. The chapter underscores the view that although the media consider the U.S. to be the sole superpower, this is actually a danger sign for the U.S., as it means that widespread anti-American sentiment will continue to develop.

Chapter Six suggests that relations with the United States have had a beneficial effect on the Turkish labor unionist movement, particularly in the early stages of the Turkish government's democratization process. As a result, labor unions in Turkey have focused not on class struggle, but on the securing of economic benefits for the workers. The chapter outlines how bilateral U.S.-Turkish relations at the economic and societal levels were determined mainly by the balance of power in world politics. It argues that since the state is the largest employer in Turkey, and since workers involved in the public sector have more advantageous working conditions than those of the private sector, Turkish unionists have been forced to be content with wage unionism. Dependency on the state also affects the vision and policy preferences of the unions in international relations. Finally, the chapter emphasizes that despite the Turkish unions' close relations and cooperation with European countries, the Turkish unionist movement can be anti-Western in general and anti-Americanist in particular when American or Western policies are in conflict with national benefits programs.

Chapter Seven explores the course of Turkish-American relations from the point of view of public officials. This is accomplished by demonstrating that Turkish heritage and culture has inculcated in the bureaucracy certain immunities due to its historical development and its role in the modernization of Turkey. The dominant role of the bureaucracy, they argue, provides important sources of power and influence that are otherwise absent in modern democratic countries. The chapter presents a case for seeing the imbalances and instabilities in the political system as partly due to the unrestrained power of the bureaucracy. The authors argue that, in some respects, the course of Turkish-American relations, and the volatility noted in official discourse, are directly related to the changing balances in world politics. The authors note that the bureaucrats' recognition of America's superpower status does not mean that they approve of recent Middle East policies and programs. This, they suggest, becomes very obvious whenever the possibility of a future independent Kurdish state is broached. Describing the strategic partnership between Turkey and the United States from the viewpoint of the bureaucrats, the chapter draws attention to Turkey's regional position as understood by the bureaucrats themselves. Significant to the chapter's analysis is the idea that many bureaucrats fear that the United States is dictating a repeat of Turkey's strategic isolation in the region. Yet though their position reveals anti-American sentiments, they believe for the sake of Turkey's future that relations with the United States should be preserved for mutual benefit.

Chapter Eight complements the discussion of the previous chapter by describing the historical development of Turkish-U.S. military cooperation. The events that have shaped relations between the two NATO allies are discussed by drawing on the views and opinions of Turkish military personnel. The chapter highlights the increasing concern of Turkish soldiers about what might be in store for Turkey militarily in the context of U.S. Middle East policies. The study focuses on the position of the military in the immediate pre-war and engagement periods as evidence of setbacks or impediments to bi-lateral military relations. The authors demonstrate that some soldiers shared the reservations of the Turkish public about the war, thinking that it had erosive effects on bi-lateral relations as well as a negative impact on the perceived value of the strategic partnership. Yet, interestingly, soldiers appear convinced of the necessity for the U.S. to use unilateral force. The military also acknowledged the historical, cultural, and regional identity and importance of Turkey, along with the importance of its contributions to peace and security in the region.

Chapter Nine sheds light on the academy as an important segment of Turkish society. The authors set out to demonstrate that academicians have, to some extent, been important influences on domestic and foreign policy preferences in Turkey. Whether through their publications or through their seconded positions as advisors to governmental offices, the academicians have made significant contributions to official policy and discourse in Turkey's bilateral relations with the U.S. The authors argue that the academicians have evaluated the role of Turkey in the reconstruction of Iraq as a crucial policy choice and have noted that, contrary to widespread belief, the problems between Turkey and the U.S. have not decreased Turkey's strategic importance in the region. Moreover, Turkey and the United States enjoy a strong common ground in the struggle against terrorism, considering the most significant problems on the global scale to be terrorism in general and "radical Islam" in particular.

Chapter Ten assesses Turkish-American relations from the perspective of the general public. The authors place their analysis of public opinion in the context of the Turkish struggle for modernization. Beginning with the latter years of the Ottoman Empire, they show that this perspective provides important insight into some of the dilemmas associated with Turkish modernization policies. For example, what issues arise in a country that is so geographically, ideologically, culturally, and socially "at odds with" or "in between" the East and the West? The

chapter emphasizes that although Turkey officially yearns to be associated with the Western World and at times dismisses its eastern heritage, ordinary people aspire to a place in the region that is far from being met by official policies.

Chapter Eleven places Turkish youth at the center of attention. The authors point out that the youth are usually neglected on matters of world affairs and are both legally and intellectually treated as apprentice citizens whose participation in social and political life is thought to be incomplete. Yet, the authors point out that a degree of self-assertion was demonstrated by Turkish youth when they felt free to express their feelings, views, and preferences as anti-war protesters in the immediate pre-war period. The authors suggest that the students' actions re-emphasized the fact that youth are an important and very active force in local and global social movements, one that is highly involved in world affairs. The chapter underscores the important position of the youth and draws attention to the convergences and divergences with the contents of the previous chapters as couched in the framework of U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East. It examines what the new foreign policy of the United States might mean to Turkish youth when placed in a framework of future Turkish-U.S. relations.

## **Research Methods**

This study sought data through qualitative interviewing techniques and a quantitative survey questionnaire. The task was to reveal relationships among the people's perceptions of actual events while attempting to present a multi-sectoral mosaic of their world.<sup>8</sup> Employing a qualitative inquiry served two purposes: (1) to provide an opportunity for people to express their views, understandings, and perceptions on issues of global importance that may or may not impact their lives on a daily basis, yet without marginalizing their experience, and (2) to find and accommodate ways to understand and depict "rationality" in the "foreign, obscure, banal, confused, moral or immoral" appearances of human conduct.<sup>9</sup> In this approach, rationality means, we suggest, a sense of reasonableness that members of a society assign to their own actions. Rationality in this sense differs from the classical rules of logic and evidence that are assumed by the dominant paradigm, considering instead the reasoning people actually use. The research is therefore interested in the logic of the respondents and the kinds of evidence that they consider relevant in expressing and rationalizing their actions. This approach does not discount the fact that, in the social sciences, the logic of inquiry is at bottom a political construct. Research and analysis such as this cannot be divorced from concerns regarding the functions of hegemonic domination in knowledge production and dissemination.<sup>10</sup> The authors are aware that the categorization of concepts and the application of methods are influenced by researchers' professional values and practices. Knowledge is not simply a reflection of an inert world "out there" that is constituted by relationships among variables independent of reference to specific individuals. Rather, it is an active construction by scientists and theorists who necessarily make certain assumptions about the worlds they study and thus are not strictly value-free.<sup>11</sup> The awareness that the study of actual events is done with reference to "a part/society" in which empirical data is produced, yet which is in relation with "the whole," emphasizes the importance of the social context for understanding the social world and underlines the fact that in different societies or historical eras the same events and behaviors can have different meanings or values.

Reference to the social context, then, is crucial if qualitative analysis is to place its interpretation of the perceptions, views, and understandings of respondents in their wider environment of social relations. Empirical research provides access to the meanings people attach to their experiences and their social worlds, while treating these points of view, not as full

explanations, but as having the politically and culturally honored properties of a social reality. The use of qualitative interviewing was especially preferred, as it could focus on the past, present, and future in a way that draws on the beliefs, attitudes, and convictions of the interviewees. Yet the interviews were also purposive, being limited to a particular set of topics and taking place in a particular social setting.<sup>12</sup>

## **Sample Design**

The design of the sample was heavily influenced by the goals of the research, taking into account the nature of the subject matter and considering the trade-offs between the advantages of a larger sample and the advantages of studying a smaller one more intensively. The structure of the interviews and the impracticality of using a probability sampling determined the researchers' decisions about sampling and the number of interviews to be conducted. Specifically, the aim was to generate a broad understanding of social actions rather than describing precisely the characteristics of a particular precisely chosen population. Therefore, the representativeness of the sample was less important than would have been the case in some other kinds of research, though it remained a crucial aim of the project to include people from different segments of the given society.

Consequently, a purposive sampling was used, with the intention of including people from nine different groups: members of civil society organizations, journalists, businessmen, trade unionists, bureaucrats, military staff, academicians, the general public, and youth. As the researchers did not generate a pre-set list from which to draw the sample, apart from identifying several sub-groups within the purposively chosen populations, snowball sampling was employed, using the network of respondents to generate access to still more interviewees.

The research was conducted in two phases. Initially, a survey questionnaire was employed, both to see what kind of reactions would be given to the multiple-choice, close-ended questions it contained, and to decide who should be included in the qualitative interviewing. The survey questionnaire was administered to a total of 481 respondents (151 females and 330 males) in the two metropolitan cities of Ankara and Istanbul. Of these, 55 respondents were chosen for the qualitative interviewing. The surveys and qualitative interviews were carried out in August and September 2003.

The interviews themselves employed a moderately structured face-to-face interviewing technique that used open-ended questions determined in advance but was conducted in a natural conversational style. This approach allowed the interview to be adjusted as it proceeded, thereby providing the flexibility needed to explore adequately any issues raised by the respondent. This type of interview is a valuable strategy for revealing people's knowledge, perspectives, and beliefs about a given topic, and it is characterized by relative informality. It was chosen both for these reasons and because it was thought that the use of closed questions might force interviewees to state opinions on issues about which they might not actually have any opinion. In practice, due to the informal style, neither the interviews nor the specific wording of the questions followed a standard script, though the interviewees drew on a pre-arranged list of questions. The exception was the questions aimed at providing data on the socio-economic backgrounds of informants—such as their sex, age, education, and occupation—which were by and large addressed in the same manner to each respondent. As audio recording can be threatening for respondents, note taking was used to record the interview data.

Qualitative analysis has received criticism on the issues of reliability and validity, being generally criticized for failing the tests of prediction and control. It is often argued that there is a

low level of comparability of results, since qualitative analysis is done with small or incomplete samples and the interpretation of the data often differs from researcher to researcher. However, qualitative research attempts primarily to understand and seek explanations, and this kind of understanding does not require knowledge of how to predict or control a phenomenon. How an event occurs, how it functions in social contexts, and what it means to participants are all issues that can be addressed from an interpretative perspective. Such an approach has strong interpretative attributes when supported by other sources of knowledge.

An additional point needs to be raised about the issues of reliability and validity. Qualitative analysis is basically about the symbolic meanings of views, explanations, and messages.<sup>13</sup> However, this research project does not assume that messages have a single independent meaning that needs to be unwrapped. Aware that the social world does not exist independently of the knowledge that people have of that world, interpretative science considers that particular actions or events may have different meanings for each individual. The meaning of a social action depends on its relationship to other actions, the competencies and interests of its interpreters, and the conditions in which it takes place. This means that *how* we interpret the world forms *what* we interpret. An attempt to apply conventional statistical criteria for validity would be unrealistic, since in most cases the qualitative research project is a one-off study and variables cannot be realistically selected. Rather, the ultimate reliability test must be whether the data obtained provide a trustworthy basis for drawing inferences and for supporting findings or conclusions. The most important advantage of using multiple sources of evidence, as we do here, is the development of converging lines of inquiry that make the findings and conclusions more convincing and accurate. The use of multiple sources in this project essentially provides multiple measures of the arguments and conclusions proposed, and it is in this manner that the potential problem of statistical validity was addressed.

The differences between the classical conceptions of external validity, which ask the question of generalizability, and the basic aspects of the qualitative approach become very obvious when one considers the replicability of results. However, in qualitative research the goal is not to produce a standardized set of results that can be reproduced by another researcher in the same situation or studying the same issue. Indeed, in qualitative research the assumption is that the attributes or perspectives of the researcher influence the research.<sup>14</sup> Thus, the classical view of external validity is of little help to qualitative researchers interested in finding ways to enhance the likelihood that their work will be to some extent generalizable.

For qualitative researchers, the idea of sampling from a population of sites in order to generalize across the larger population is simply unworkable in most situations. Many critics of qualitative methods hold the view that it is highly unlikely that the researcher will be able to generalize from a single case to a target population of which that case is a member, since single members often poorly represent whole populations. Nonetheless, it is possible to use the findings of a study to understand other similar situations. The alternative approach is to emphasize analysis of the degree to which the situation studied matches other situations in which one is interested. In this approach, qualitative studies gain their potential for applicability to other situations by providing what is called “comparability” and “translatability.”<sup>15</sup> This provides a more realistic and workable way of thinking about the generalizability of research results than do more classical approaches.

In sum, generalizability in the sense of producing laws that apply universally is not a useful standard or goal for the present project. In fact, it is not a useful or obtainable goal for *any* kind of research in the social sciences. The rejection of generalizability in the sense of a search for broadly applicable laws is not a rejection of the idea that studies in one situation can be used as a

part of a comparative framework for analyzing other situations. Rather, the approach seeks to do so in a way that avoids stereotyping and reductionist-tendencies.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup>See for example G. Harris, *Troubled Alliance: Turkish-American Problems in Historical Perspective, 1945-71* (N.F.I.: Rowman & Littlefield, 1972); H. N. Howard, *Turkey, the Straits and U.S. Policy* (John Hopkins University Press, 1975); P. Y. Watanabe, *Ethnic Groups, Congress, and American Foreign Policy: The politics of the Turkish Arms Embargo* (N.F.I.: n.p., 1984); D. A. Rustow, *Turkey, America's Forgotten Ally* (N.F.I.: n.p., 1989); G. C. McGhee, *The US-Turkish-NATO Middle East Connection: How the Truman Doctrine and Turkey's NATO Entry Contained the Soviets* (N.F.I.: Macmillan, 1990); G. H. Harris, *Middle East in Turkish American Relations: Report of a Heritage Foundation Conference 1* (N.F.I: Heritage Foundation, 1985); G. E. Fuller and I. O. Lesser, *Turkey's New Geopolitics: From Balkans to Western China* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993); A. Mango, *Turkey: The Challenge of a New Role* (Westport: Praeger, 1994); V. Mastny et al, *Turkey Between East and West: New Challenges for a Rising Regional Power* (Boulder and Oxford: Westview Press, 1996); P. B. Henze, *Turkey and Atatürk's Legacy: Turkey's Political Evolution, Turkish-US Relations and Prospects for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (Research Center for Turkestan and Azerbaijan, 1998); H. J. Barkey and G. Fuller, *Turkey's Kurdish Question* ( New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 1998); H. Kramer, *A Changing Turkey: Challenges to Europe and the United States* (Brooking Institution Press, 2000); M. Abramowitz, *Turkey's Transformation and American Policy* (New York: The Century Foundation Press, 2001); A. Liel, *Turkey in the Middle East: Oil, Islam and Politics* (N.F.I.: n.p., 2001); S. Kinzer, *Crescent and Star* ( New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2001); B. M Rubin and K. Kirisci (eds.), *Turkey in World Politics: An Emerging Multiregional Power* (Boulder:Lynne Rienner, 2001); N. Uslu, *The Turkish-American Relationship Between 1947 and 2003: The History of a Distinctive Alliance* (Nova Science Publishers, Inc., 2003); P. Robins, *Suits and Uniforms* (Washington DC.: University of Washington Press, 2003); M. Abramowitz et al, *The United States and Turkey: Allies in Need* (N.F.I.: 2003); S. Larabee and I. O. Lesser, *Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty* (Santa Monica: RAND Publications, 2003); L. G. Martin and D. Keridis, *The Future of Turkish Foreign Policy* (Cambridge, MA: Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, 2004); M. Aydin et al, *Turkish-American Relations: 200 Years of Divergence and Convergence* (N.F.I.: n.p., 2004).

<sup>2</sup> Compare Mango, supra; Mastyny, supra; and Rubin and Kirisci, supra.

<sup>3</sup> K. Karpat et al, *Turkish Foreign Policy in Transition* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1975).

<sup>4</sup> W. Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy: 1774-2000* (London: Frank Cass, 2000).

<sup>5</sup> Turkish State Statistics Institute. N.F.I.

<sup>6</sup> "Turkey: Issues for U.S. Policy," Congressional Research Service, May 22, 2002. Database on-line. Available from the Congressional Research Service Website.

<sup>7</sup> See C. H. Kuphcan, *The End of American Era: U.S. Foreign Policy and the Geopolitics of the Twenty-first Century* (New York: Alfred A. Knoph, 2003), 3.

<sup>8</sup> Silverman. N.F.I. (1993), 91

<sup>9</sup> Lindlof. N.F.I. (1995), 56-7

<sup>10</sup> Stanfield II. N.F.I. (1993), 25-26.

<sup>11</sup> Agger. N.F.I. (1998), 3.

<sup>12</sup> Miller et al. N.F.I. (1992), 2.

<sup>13</sup> Krippendorf. N.F.I. (1980).

<sup>14</sup> Schofield. N.F.I. (1985), 210-2.

<sup>15</sup> Goetz and LeCompte. N.F.I. (1984), In Schofield. N.F.I. (1993), 207.

## **United States Foreign Policy in the Middle East: Turkish University Students Respond**

*Ralph H. Salmi and Galen Stocking*

In the buildup to the 2003 war in Iraq, the United States asked Turkey for permission to launch military assaults through its ports and from its soil. When the American government presented this request to the newly elected Turkish administration, it overlooked the eroding support for American policy among the electorate. So when the members of the Turkish Parliament, following the expressed will of their constituents, voted against allowing the United States military free reign to cross its borders, both the American public and its leaders were shocked. Such a jolt could have been avoided if more attention had been paid to the public opinion polls that were suggesting, overwhelmingly, that opposition to the U.S. initiative was in the 80-94% range.<sup>1</sup> If this had been done, the impact of the refusal might have been less traumatic.

How do we explain the sudden shifts in Turkish and Middle Eastern public opinion? How or why is it that the overall favorable ratings toward the U.S. have declined in the past two years? Some of the more recent studies of Arab public opinion have concluded that previously Arabs had shared generally favorable opinions about such things as “American services, and technology,” “American freedom and democracy,” “American people,” “American education,” and “American products,” yet were angry and frustrated with American policy, especially toward what was seen as the “unbalanced policy in the Israel-Palestine conflict.”<sup>2</sup> Overall, the polling data suggests that the factor determining how Arabs (and Muslims) view the United States is how they see Americans treating Arabs and Muslims.<sup>3</sup>

Clearly, Turks are not Arabs. They speak Turkish, which is a member of the Altaic family of languages (includes Azerbaijani, Tatar, Uighur, Uzbek, and Turkoman) and not of the Semitic family of languages (which includes Arabic and Hebrew). Yet Turks and Arabs share a common religious bond in that they are Muslims. Consequently, America’s foreign policy in the Muslim world, couched in terms of the “war on terrorism,” has had a profound impact on the views and opinions of Muslims generally and on national political cultures and policies specifically. In recognition of that fact, this study attempts to address the paucity of explanatory information on the sources of the increasingly anti-American foreign policy sentiment in Turkey. The present chapter focuses on the views of a single segment of Turkish society, university students, who were attending a single institution, Gazi University. Less than a “snap shot” by statistical standards, the research effort sought to establish whether Turkish university students were harboring views and opinions similar to those of the wider Arab/Muslim community.

## The Study

The field research was conducted over the summer of 2003 and involved surveys of summer school students who were taking general education classes at Gazi University, a prominent public four-year and doctorate-granting university located in the capital city of Ankara.<sup>4</sup> Many of the students polled were majoring in degree programs in public administration, politics, or economics—all of which are designed to facilitate obtaining positions in government or related employment. In other words, these students can be expected to have an interest in public policy, and they are likely to be contributing to, making, or enacting policy decisions in future Turkish governments. Though the opinions they now hold are subject to change, they may serve as a benchmark or predictor of sorts for Turkey's foreign policy in fifteen, twenty, and thirty years.

To be certain, the George Bush administration has recognized that an anti-American trend has developed not only in Turkey but across the Muslim world. Concerned about this dramatic shift in public opinion, the administration coordinated with the House Appropriations Committee to authorize an investigation by the Advisory Commission for Public Diplomacy (hereafter referred to as the "Advisory Commission"). The Commission's study, which was released on October 1, 2003, was titled *Changing Minds, Winning Peace: A New Strategic Direction for U.S. Public Diplomacy in the Arab and Muslim World*.<sup>5</sup> The goal of the report was to identify issues and offer prescriptions for combating the pervasive sense of antipathy toward U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East specifically and the Muslim world generally. The latter pages of the present chapter will evaluate that report's recommendations in light of the results of our study.

## Study Demographics

The survey was done in the form of a questionnaire that was presented to the students in a classroom environment. A total of 306 students and faculty returned the survey. Of these, just over half were male (164) and a third were female (98), while 43 (14%) declined to provide their sex. More than half the respondents (56%) were seniors. In fact, upperclassmen accounted for 70% of the returned surveys. Only seven freshmen and nine sophomores responded—slightly over 5%. Thirty-three faculty members provided input (11%). A similar number, 38 (12%), declined to state their academic standing/rank at the university. With respect to their economic standing, a slightly larger number of those polled (17%) refused to respond. However, of those that did answer, the majority (58%) described themselves as members of the "middle class." About 20% offered that they believed they were higher than middle class—either upper or lower upper class—and about 5% described themselves as lower middle or working class.

Thus, our data suggests that the respondents were members of the upper socio-economic strata of educated Turkish citizens, a view consistent with the observations of Gazi University faculty and administrators. The respondents were predominantly male, middle class, and close to completing their undergraduate education. These characteristics, except of course for sex, are those of an educated, financially stable group. While their individual "politics" were not determined nor solicited, it is highly unlikely that this group would have shared the views of politically violent extremist groups such as the al-Qa'ida or Kurdish radicals that are known to be operating in Turkey. We hasten to add, of course, that an American's view as to what is outside the mainstream (that is, an anti-American foreign policy position), might differ significantly from the Turkish view.

## Summary of Results

The first series of questions addressed the issue of Turkish-U.S. collaboration in the war against terrorism. Almost 50% of those surveyed believed that collaboration would be either “unlikely” or “very unlikely.” Only 32% believed that cooperation would be “likely” or “very likely.” Only 8% opted for “very likely,” while more than twice that number believed collaboration was very unlikely. Females thought it an unlikely scenario, as did underclassmen and seniors. Faculty responses were nearly evenly split. Those from the upper socioeconomic classes were split fairly evenly as well, with a slight tilt towards collaboration. By contrast, those identifying themselves as from a middle or lower class background responded that they did not believe that a partnership in the war on terrorism was likely.<sup>6</sup> Overall, roughly 20% of the respondents were “unsure” of the highly touted international collaborative efforts against terrorism.

Another question asked what collaboration would, in fact, entail. Thirty of those who responded to the first question left this one blank. However, of the 267 who provided a response, the majority believed that collaboration would be limited to a Turkish-U.S. program dedicated to sharing intelligence. A third (about 36%) thought that partnership would result in joint military operations outside Turkey, while only 7% believed it would lead to joint military operations inside Turkey itself. Faculty members and graduate students appeared to limit the option to shared intelligence, while the distribution of undergraduate student opinions reflected the general sentiment.

One of the analytical vulnerabilities of this study, one we fully respect and recognize, is that because it was conducted at a time of crisis, the generally heightened awareness and fear of terrorism, economic distress, and social instability undoubtedly influenced the responses. The subjectivity of personal politics and their concomitant prejudices often cloud, if not create, perceptions in ways that do not necessarily reflect reality. These natural and to a degree predictable obfuscations reflect day-to-day realities as Turks perceive them. Nevertheless, as was demonstrated by the Turkish parliament’s vote in 2003, views such as these have had an undeniable impact on Turkey’s response to U.S. foreign policy. A case in point is the belief, albeit by a small percentage of those polled, that collaboration between the U.S. and Turkish militaries will result in operations inside Turkey. Clearly, the idea of foreign troops conducting joint operations inside Turkey’s territory is an anathema to the highly nationalistic Turkish public, and such efforts would create profound difficulties for both governments. Such a scenario would inevitably weaken support for the ruling political party and would likely provoke even stronger anti-American sentiment.

As the American war on terrorism is predicated on identifying and destroying a long list of terrorist organizations, several of which currently operate in Turkey, analysis of the above polling data relates usefully to the question of joint military collaboration. One of the groups on both the U.S. Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) list and the European Union’s Terrorist Organizations List is the radical Kurdish group the People’s Workers Party (*Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan* or PKK), which in 2002 changed its name to the Kurdish Freedom and Democracy Party (KADEK). However, Turkey’s long battle with the PKK/KADEK abruptly ended in 1999 with the capture of the PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan.<sup>7</sup> Since then, Kurdish terror operations have shown a marked decline. Furthermore, of the fifteen terrorist groups recognized by the Turkish think tank *Terore dur Demek Icin*, only six are religiously based and al-Qa’ida related in terms of their goals and tactics.<sup>8</sup> Consequently, the Turks interviewed for this study may simply believe that there is no

need for American action on Turkish soil. Since Turkey would not be the most malleable of partners, further dialogue on the possibility of joint military actions inside Turkey would be politically problematic at best.

## **The War on Terrorism**

The next group of questions dealt with the U.S.-led war on terrorism. After the attacks of September 11, 2001, President George W. Bush vowed “to fight terror wherever it exists.”<sup>9</sup> Since then, the United States has removed the Taliban government from power in Afghanistan and Saddam Hussein’s Ba’ath Party in Iraq. Turkey took on a visible role in the Afghanistan reconstruction, committing 1,400 troops and leading the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) from June 22, 2002, to December 22, 2002.<sup>10</sup> As the Turkish public was becoming painfully sensitized to the anti-terrorism battle—a sensitivity that would be further heightened by the November 2003 bombings of the British Consulate, the London-based HSBC bank, and a synagogue by an al-Qa’ida-linked group—it was important to discern the level of support for the policies associated with the war on terrorism. For this reason, the first two questions of the next section focused on terrorism and Afghanistan, and the following two on Iraq.

In this section, we asked questions about the perceived effectiveness of the American effort against terrorism. A mere 14%, a relative small number of the respondents (41 out of 300), believed that the U.S. efforts had made a difference. Conversely, a clear majority believed that the U.S. efforts had been ineffective. The remaining respondents said they were unsure or that no difference had been made. This dynamic was reflected across most demographic categories, although faculty members were more willing to say they had been ineffective, and upperclassmen and graduate students were more confident in their responses.

What can we surmise from these responses? Is there a correlation between current events and the respondents’ positions on the effectiveness of the U.S. war on terrorism? The results of this narrow sampling suggests that the question of “effectiveness” must be juxtaposed against the notion of lasting “success” as relating to the attenuation and ultimate defeat of terrorism. Success of this kind has clearly been lacking. Despite the continued U.S. troop deployments, military operations, investigations, and incarcerations, and despite the elimination of literally hundreds of known terrorists, the attacks continue. Osama bin Ladin and Ayman Zawahiri, the leaders of al-Qa’ida, have not been found. Meanwhile, the rhetorical edge of the dissidents has not been dulled, despite their devastating losses. In fact, it appears that the more innocent Muslims are killed, maimed, and imprisoned, the greater the possibilities for the recruitment of young men and women to radical causes.

## **Afghanistan**

What of Afghanistan? How do the university students and faculty in this sampling view the Turkish presence in troubled Afghanistan? As Turkish military service is compulsory for all male citizens, it stands to reason that Turkish students would have an interest in this matter. Moreover, the Turkish military plays a pivotal role in domestic politics due to its all-important role of protecting Kemal Ataturk’s vision of a secular, modern Turkey. The ever-present military has overthrown three governments in the last four decades, in each instance justifying its actions by pointing to the non-secular, anti-Kemalist Islamic proclivities of certain government officials. The Turkish role in Afghanistan is consistent with this pattern. The American destruction of the Taliban, with the Turkish military’s moral support, sends the message to the Turkish public that

there is little tolerance for extremist Islamic governments. In a sense, therefore, the Turkish military is in Afghanistan to represent its support of modern secular virtue and its opposition to religious extremism. Given this context, the responses of the Gazi University students and faculty were surprisingly critical.

The students responded that they did not believe that anti-terrorism was the motive for the attack on Afghanistan. The numbers were striking, with roughly 82% of those polled (out of 303 responses) saying they believed that there were ulterior motives. Only 7% believed that anti-terrorism was the goal of the U.S. invasion. This group included just one faculty member, no graduate students, and only a few upperclassmen. As on the earlier questions, the results were fairly uniform throughout all demographic subgroups.

## **Iraq**

On the question of Iraq, a more telling body of opinions was offered. An even larger number of students (87%) believed that the war in Iraq was not driven by efforts to fight terrorism. A mere 11 of the 305 respondents, most of them middle class seniors, saw terrorism as the reason for the war. This was so even though the Turkish media was commonly reporting that the American justification for war was appropriate and that there was, among other things, a direct link between al-Qa'ida and Saddam Hussein. President Bush has since admitted that this link did not exist, although some in his administration continue to stress this position.<sup>11</sup> The results suggest that Turkish university students enjoy a degree of familiarity with the region's politics that lets them see past the official media rhetoric.

Why, then, the war? Question #6 was a free response item that solicited opinions on the reasons for the United States' going to war. The 303 responses could be grouped as follows:

- "War for control of oil" 37%
- "Political control of the Middle East" 12%
- "Help the American economy" 8%
- "Protect American interests" 6%
- "For Israel" 5%
- "World control" 4%
- Disparate responses 5%

The category of "disparate responses" overlapped considerably with the other ones, as they were a set of responses lacking contextual clarity. For example, the responses in this category used words such as "power," "influence," "imperialism," "hegemony," and "territory," while failing to specify the area over which this control was desired. Thus, there were a number of responses that could be interpreted as falling in the same category as "control of the Middle East" or "control of the world," but without specifying either, and for the sake of clarity and analytical discreteness we opted to place them in the "disparate responses" section. When these above responses were combined across categories they equaled 21% of the total. When grouping the terms into a general theme of the American goal of hegemony in the region, roughly 42% of those questioned would agree.<sup>12</sup> Other significant responses in the disparate responses category included opinions related to President Bush's personality, his campaign for reelection, and his efforts to establish a military base in the region. The respondents also mentioned the U.S.-Israeli alliance,