

GEO-CULTURE AS A TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY TOOL FOR INFLUENCE IN ALBANIA

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ABSTRACT

Culture is a priority in davutogluian thought. In his doctrine of "Strategic Depth," the architect of Turkish foreign policy, Ahmet Davutoglu, has included important concepts, such as cultural depth or cultural crossroad. All this is seen as an "offensive" for Turkish hegemony in the Balkans to "neutralize" other forces, mainly the West and Russia. Based on the definition that geo-culture describes how human beings think of their culture in order to explain the underlying assumptions and understandings on which human nature is built, the ruling Justice and Development Party, following Davutoglu's foreign policy, holds the position that there is space to project power in the territories designed for Turkish influence. Given that the main purpose of this paper is to elaborate the impact of Turkish geo-culture in Albania, the methodology used is based on qualitative approach - analysis of discourse - focused on the operationalization of the core concepts explaining Turkish geo-culture. In order to fulfill the purpose of the paper, the research questions are: What is meant by geo-culture, according to Davutoglu? How are the Turkish geo-cultural instruments materialized in the design of Turkish foreign policy? How are they applied in Albania? Davutoglu says that culture is an important element that links the constant parameters of power with potential parameters of power, and consists of psychological, sociological, political and economic components. In this framework, a specific human element (population) produces an identity and a sense of belonging, in a certain environment (geography) and in a certain time dimension (history). Soft power is exercised by Turkey through its state agencies, TIKA and Diyanet, cultural and religious foundations, education, television etc. The general goal of Turkish foreign policy is that Turkey shall be a powerful actor not only on regional stage.

Keywords: Geo-culture, cultural depth, cultural crossroad, influence, regional and global actor.