Introduction
As across the world, the end of the Cold War created new conditions that would shape the Turkish political agenda — and foreign policy in particular — in distinct ways. These conditions profoundly influenced the foreign policy vision adopted by the Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, AKP) after 2002. A significant characteristic of the AKP’s foreign policy has been the decisive reconsideration of Turkey’s relations with the Balkans, including Greece, which is the focus of this paper. Thus, we find it useful to consider how this policy shift has affected Turkey’s policy toward the Muslim Turks in Greece, the latter being considered a kin-minority.

Greek–Turkish relations have always been fraught, and thus any shift in Turkish foreign policy tends to trigger any number of different potential flashpoints between the two countries. Significantly, the shift in the AKP’s policy toward Muslim Turks in Greece is relatively recent, having begun in the last decade — a period in which Turkish domestic politics has become increasingly unstable and turbulent. Indeed, relations between the countries have deteriorated, especially after the July 2016 putsch attempt when several Gülenist army officers implicated in the failed coup fled to Greece seeking asylum. Against this backdrop, the fate of the Muslim minority in Greece (and, for that matter, the Orthodox minority in Turkey) — a “bone of contention” ever since the formation of the nation-states in the Balkan region in the nineteenth century when both minorities found themselves overwhelmed by Ottoman and Greek nation-building agendas (Özkırımlı and Sofos 2008) — has returned to the forefront.
With its guiding assumption that societies are (or at least ought to be) inclusionary—respecting and protecting religious and cultural differences and countering discrimination, among other things—international law has gradually sought to address the question of the status of the two minorities, although to limited effect. This tends to be the case, especially when minorities’ legal status stems from an international treaty concluded with the group’s kin-state (Tsitselikis 2012, 2). Politicization of minority protection—and, indeed, minorities per se—appears almost inevitably under such conditions. Minorities thus find themselves in a precarious position under the jurisdiction of the state of habitation, while at the same time they are often deployed as part of the foreign policy agenda of the kin-state. The Turkish-Muslim minority of Greece, also mirroring the situation faced by the Romioi–Greeks of Turkey, is a case in point. As one commentator has put it:

Political relations between Greece and Turkey seem to be an essential factor in these [minority] problems. […]. Each State is apparently in part responsible for the unsatisfactory status of the Muslims in Thrace, with Turkey considering them more as a political pawn and Greece not paying sufficient heed to the views of this community that has clearly been living marginally and has been the butt of long-standing intolerance (quoted in Tsitselikis 2012, 3).

The Muslim Minority of Greece in Historical Context
The Muslim community of Western Thrace was positioned in the geopolitical landscape primarily through the terms of the Treaty of Lausanne that ended the Greco–Turkish war of 1919–1922. Seen at the time — and to some extent even today — as a “successful” precedent for the resolution of cross-territorial minority issues (Hirschon 2003, xiv), the Treaty of Lausanne nevertheless set in motion a set of conditions that have plagued communities up to the very present. The equation of religion with national identity as laid out in the relevant documents proved far too simplistic a dichotomy given the complex local circumstances obtaining in post-1922 Greece and Turkey.

As a consequence, the Muslims of Greece acquired a distinct legal identity — the only national minority recognized by the Greek government. Greece’s Muslims thus became “minoritized”: outside the ideological construction of “Hellenism” that structures the Greek national identity, identified by a binding international treaty, but subject to a domestic legal framework that set them apart and left them to endure much marginalization (Christopoulos and Tsitselikis 2003). It is fair to argue that the Greece’s non-inclusive national identity structure and ‘the local actions of the Greek state’—including stationing Greek army units in Greek–Muslim villages and diffuse discrimination toward the Muslim population—‘sustained an identity of separation [among Greek Muslims], wary of its identification with the new Turkey’ (Featherstone et al. 2011, 36). At the same time, the Treaty itself shaped how much of the subsequent local, bilateral and international discourse on Western Thracian Muslims was constructed.
In bilateral terms, the principle of reciprocity enshrined in Lausanne placed the Muslims of Western Thrace, and the Orthodox Christians of Istanbul, within the strategic frame of Greek-Turkish relations — and made them hostages to their vagaries (Featherstone et al. 2011; Tsitselikis 2008). Throughout the twentieth century, Greek–Turkish relations, implicitly or explicitly, affected both populations. For example, during the 1920s—but especially following the Friendship Pact (Treaty of Ankara) between Greece and Turkey of October 1930, which marked a period of rapprochement between the two countries—the fate of the Muslim minority disappeared from the international agenda, and Ankara stepped back from promoting the rights of its kin in Western Thrace (Featherstone et al. 2011, 40; Tsitselikis 2012). This shows, according to Oran (2008, 36), that ‘reciprocity had an inherent weakness: It returned ill for ill as well as good for good’. Evidently, treatment of both minorities has tended to reflect the ups and downs of bilateral relations (Kamouzis 2008, 49-67).

The “heyday” of the minorities ended with the Cold War, and in particular due to the Cyprus Question. Both countries had no problem using the respective minorities as leverage during periods of strained relations, as the 6-7 September 1955 pogrom against the non-Muslim population of Istanbul shows. As Dayıoğlu and Aslım (2015, 42) argue, Greece also applied the principle of reciprocity in retaliation, such as when Turkish citizens residing in the Dodecanese Islands were deported during the dictatorship of the Colonels (1967–1974). The latter continued a general policy of repression and expropriated minority land, while minority villages came under military siege after each eruption of crisis in Cyprus (Fırat 2009, 716-748). Thus, it was minorities who paid the price each time Greek–Turkish relations came under strain. When Greece returned to democratic stability after the fall of the junta and the country reoriented to Europe, a new era opened between the two countries. Although longstanding grievances, like the Aegean issue, persisted, the end of the 1980s saw a clear trend of rapprochement and a willingness to advance relations. The rights of the Muslim minority in Western Thrace began to receive sustained international attention from the early 1980s since Greece’s membership in the European Community in 1981 meant it was bound by European standards. At the same time, the Muslim population had come out of isolation, with many migrating to the larger industrial cities of the Federal Republic of Germany as workers where they came into contact with a dynamic international environment.

In the 1990s, the sustained mobilization of the Muslim minority—as well as international attention on the issue and the Republic of Cyprus’s European Union (EU) accession process—saw the Greek government decide to ease its policy toward the Muslim minority. In line with the general thaw in relations through the 1990s mentioned above, Giorgos Papandreou and İsmail Cem—then Greek and Turkish foreign ministers, respectively—actively sought closer relations in the domains of low politics and Track-II diplomacy, a process that accelerated with the so-called earthquake diplomacy after August 1999. Successive earthquakes allowed political elites in both countries to claim support and legitimacy for their policy transformation (Dayıoğlu and Aslım 2015, 44).
**Turkish Foreign Policy and the Muslim Minority in Greece**

Turkey’s EU accession process, which began in 1999, launched a democratization process that saw the once marginal movement of political Islam assert itself in Turkish politics. A struggle over foreign policy-making between the Kemalists and Islamists followed (Göksel 2016, 50). In 2002, the AKP—a progressive splinter from the older Islamist Welfare Party that participated in a coalition government in 1995-1996—won a stunning electoral victory. The new party presented a more democratic, pro-western political agenda, respecting human rights and declared its intention to fulfill Turkey’s European vocation and solve some of the most heated national issues of the country, such as the Kurdish and the Cyprus Questions (Christofis 2019; Baser and Öztürk 2017). Yet after fifteen years in power, the party turned to full-scale “authoritarian neoliberalism” (see, e.g. Christofis 2020) expressed best through the vision of a ‘New Turkey’ that, ironically enough, mimics in large part the old-fashioned Kemalist recipe of social engineering (Christofis 2018; Polat 2016).

Turkey’s foreign policy drastically shifted under the AKP. Passing through various stages that roughly correspond to the party’s successive terms in office, Turkish foreign policy under the AKP has also been affected by global developments in the Middle East and elsewhere, including Europe (Christofis 2019; Turan 2015). What is more, the new foreign policy orientation ‘is a constitutive component of a new nationalist project, constructed and carried out by the AKP over the last decade, and intricately related to the party’s quest to build a new kind of nationalism and a new conception of the nation’ (Saraçoğlu and Demirkol 2015, 301). Foreign policy discourses are generally considered an extension of the state’s official ideology in a given period but cannot be dissociated from domestic developments. In the Turkish case, as Saraçoğlu and Demirkol (2015, 302) argue, the relationship between the AKP’s domestic, nationalist project and its so-called neo-Ottomanist foreign policy at the international level is threefold:

First of all, the AKP’s nationalist position has functioned as the major ideational framework and ideological justification for its new foreign policy orientation. Secondly, this new foreign policy orientation and the concomitant foreign policy discourse play a vital role in the formation and solidification of the AKP’s nationalist-hegemonic project at home. Thirdly, and as a logical consequence of these first two points, the “future” of neo-Ottomanism at the international level is not only contingent upon the course of inter-state relations and balances of power in global politics but is also highly reliant on the success or failure of the nationalist project at the domestic level.

The AKP has continued the Turkish tradition of a strong commitment to the transatlantic community (i.e., NATO and the EU) and the conciliatory approach of governments in the 1990s to the Muslim minority in Greece. Concerning Greek–Turkish relations, the EU seems to have played a central factor, at least in the early years of AKP rule. A speech given by the Turkish Prime Minister at Oxford University in 2004 is instructive here: ‘If Turco-Greek rapprochement is possible today, it is because we have a common ground through which
mutual perceptions are most accurate. That common ground is the EU’ (Erdoğan 2004). A few days later, Erdoğan visited Greece—the first Turkish prime minister to do since 1952—as a sign of ‘the upgrading and the liberalization of the status of both minorities under modern political and legal standards in light of Turkey’s candidacy for membership to the European Union’ (Tsitselikis 2012, 174). Western Thrace was, understandably, a key stop in his visit. One of the main aspects of Turkish policy in the post-Lausanne years was to reinforce a uniquely Turkish national identity within the minority. Indeed, the visit of Erdoğan can be seen as a show of concern by Turkey toward the Turkish–Muslim minority. However, given the sensitivities, he limited himself, sending at the same time a clear message of support to the minority: ‘No one told you to abandon your Turkish identity, but do not forget that you are Greek citizens and citizens of the European Union. A strong Greece will provide you with greater benefits’ (Chousein 2005, 178; Kathimerini 2004).

The issue of the Mufti of Western Thrace —the religious leader of the Turkish–Muslim minority of Greece —came up during Erdoğan’s visit to Greece.1 The status of the mufti has been hostage to Greek–Turkish political antagonism over control of minority institutions for decades. The question of the mufti’s status is not just a religious and political issue; solving the problem requires a fundamental shift in the conception of the minorities—from millet-like remnants of the Ottoman past to integrated parts of a broader society governed by the same fundamental values (Tsitselikis 2008).

During his visit, Erdoğan refused to meet with the muftis appointed by the Greek state, choosing instead to meet the elected muftis, Ibrahim Serif and Mehmet Emin Ağa. So as not to create friction with the Greek government, Erdoğan sent Mehmet Aydın, the Minister for Religious Affairs, to meet with the appointed muftis at a dinner organized in honor of the Turkish president. In so doing, Erdoğan deftly navigated the thorny issue of the elected and appointed muftis that would otherwise have overshadowed the visit (Chousein 2005, 140). To date, Greek courts have opted to safeguard the muftis’ jurisdiction as mandatory for Muslim litigants in breach of the Greek Constitution and the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). A case pending before the Court of Strasbourg seems to have overturned this situation. Under international pressure, the Greek government amended the law (Act 4511/2018) in such a way that the muftis’ jurisdiction is now optional. However, the question of whether Sharia law (certain legal norms on family and inheritance disputes), even applied optionally, can be legally tolerated, remains unanswered (Özgüneş and Tsitselikis 2019).

Things, however, started to change after the AKP was re-elected for the second time in 2010. Turkey’s EU accession process was halted indefinitely, while the internal reform process—especially in the fields of civil-military relations, national security and economic

1 The mufti issue attracted public attention only in the 1980s, when the prelates of the minority claimed the right to elect their own religious leaders against the practice of state appointment. The Greek government refused that right, also pointing at the judicial duties, which the mufti office combined with its strictly religious duties and allegedly rendered a popular election impossible.
liberalization—also fed into shifts in Turkey’s foreign policy. In particular, a new “geographical imagination” emerged (Christofis 2018; Tziarras and Moudouros 2016; Aras and Polat 2007) that casts Turkey as a regional hegemonic power and challenger to the current global distribution of power and the global system of governance (Turan 2015, 139).

The “geographical imagination” of the AKP derives in large part from the book *Strategic Depth (Stratejik Derinlik)*, written by Ahmet Davutoğlu, an advisor to Erdoğan (2003–2009), then Foreign Minister (2009-2014), and, finally, Prime Minister and leader of the AKP (2014–2016). Although the book was published a year before the AKP came to power, the ideas it propagated were a significant reference point in the construction of the AKP foreign policy discourse, including in the Balkans (and Greece in particular). *Strategic Depth* provided AKP officials, including Erdoğan himself, with a ready set of ideas and metaphors that could be deployed in everyday domestic political language as well. Davutoğlu’s books and statements, in other words, have functioned as one of the chief ideological reservoirs that AKP officials have drawn on to bolster their nationalist discourse in domestic political struggles (Saraçoğlu and Demirkol 2015, 303).

In the AKP discourse on its nationalist project, geography plays a central role. This is not surprising, given ‘the persuasiveness of nationalism as a structure of feeling that transforms space into homeplace and interpolates individual and collective subjects as embodiments of national character (viewed as shared bio-genetic and psychic substance) [that] hinges on tropes of kinship, gender and sexuality’ (Alonso 1994, 386). As Saraçoğlu and Demirkol stress, the notion of homeland itself—as the integral geographical component of any nation-building process—is also a subject of ideological and political struggles and susceptible to change depending on the course of these struggles, and as such geography constitutes an integral element of the AKP’s concept of ‘nation’ (2015, 310).

Thus, as Davutoğlu argued in his book, ‘the remaining Muslim populations from the Ottoman era constitute the foundation of Turkey’s policy in the Balkans’. Moreover, he noted: ‘While these communities were previously regarded as burdens for our [i.e., Turkish] foreign policy, the erroneous policy of the evacuation of the Balkans through migration [to Turkey] has been exposed in a clear way. Today the Ottoman legacy in the Balkans secures Turkey important possibilities’ (Davutoğlu 2001, 122-123). The possibilities that Davutoğlu refers to here include the opportunity to exploit the Ottoman legacy in the Balkans and the Middle East economically and politically. Turkish trade and investment growth in these regions during the 2000s bore this out, with Turkey expanding its sphere of influence, not only in the Balkans, but also in the Middle East, the Caucasus, and Central Asia. Ambitiously, the new Turkish foreign policy also reached out to areas traditionally neglected until recently, such as Africa and South America (Moutsis 2016, 169).

In order to mobilize the Muslim population, in Turkey but also abroad, the use of Islamic values and extensive references to religion reverberate in ‘echoes of empire’ (Onar 2015, 149). At the same time, explicit Islamic codes, such as Erdoğan’s use of fatiha, the first chapter of the Koran, in one of his speeches in 2014, signifying the beginning of a new era in Turkish history
Turkey’s Justice and Development Government vis-à-vis The Muslim Minority in Greece – a kind of official founding signifier of a nation reborn – are all instrumentalized as components of the people living inside the national borders of the country. This forms the backbone of the AKP’s political discourse concerning its domestic nationalist project (Christofis 2018; Saraçoğlu and Demirkol 2015). The “Islamic world” thus becomes the “historic mission” of the nation, that is, acting as the kin-state and even, the leader, of former Ottoman territories as, according to Davutoğlu (2004), Turkey should seek its place as a central country on the global chessboard.

The artificiality of the nation-state structure and the national borders created by European colonialism described in Strategic Depth (2001, 65-73) allow the AKP to appropriate and legitimize its policies regarding Muslim kin populations. It was this artificiality, imposition, and even betrayal and conspiracy by domestic and foreign powers (Christofis et al. 2019; Danforth 2014), that constituted the main obstacle to developing “intimate” relations with the rest of the Muslim populations that share the same religious values and some cultural traits as well as a common Ottoman past. In that sense, the AKP attempts to ‘make territorial borders de facto meaningless’, allowing the Turkish ruling party to increase the political effect of Turkey itself in the region by occasionally stressing the ‘boundless tolerance culture of this country’ (Erdoğan 2007), or the ‘cohabitation between the Christians and Muslims’ (Erdoğan 2004).

Reframing a discourse of the nation and national identity that invokes those beyond the border can provide a unique source of legitimacy for new political actors, which the AKP was in the early 2000s. This coincides with Brubaker’s (1996) contention that new actors can present themselves as “nationalizing elites” or saviors of the nation ready to finally “right the wrongs” of the past. Gagnon’s (2004) study of Serbia and Croatia and Waterbury’s (2010) work on Hungary have shown that nationalist invocations of this type can be a powerful tool in demobilizing opposition and stoking fear during turbulent periods of political transition. Elites thus use alleged threats to the trans-border nation to focus attention outward and make citizens feel that their security and well-being is intimately connected to the protection of the nation as a whole (Gagnon 2004).

By 2007, the AKP was facing one of its first intense crises with the Turkish military planning to overthrow the ruling party and stop Abdullah Gül’s candidacy for the presidency. The AKP’s policy regarding the Muslims in Greece shifted significantly against this background. Ali Babacan—Turkey’s Minister for Foreign Affairs at the time—was quite revealing in that respect. In a visit to Thrace in early December 2007, he advised the members of the minority to ‘defend their Turkish identity’ (Tsitselikis 2012, 174). Visiting the offices of the banned Turkish Youth Association of Komotini, he delivered a speech to minority members, recom-

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2 Nevertheless, AKP officials and intellectuals organically linked to this party have so far never proposed such a radical project as collapsing these borders and ensuring the full political unification of these societies. Rather, they presented the presupposed contradiction between so-called geo-cultural integrity/historico-cultural affinities and legal international borders as an advantage for Turkey in its involvement in neighboring regions (Saraçoğlu and Demirkol 2015: 311).
mending his audience to adopt the term Turk to describe themselves and advising they pursue legal means channels in defense of their rights (Grigoriadis 2009, 168). Babacan’s statement and recommendations worked, transferring the AKP’s kin-state ideology, as a rationale for its regional influence as the bond between a kin-state and its co-ethnics becomes stronger when the minority is closer to the mother-state (Bloed and van Dijk 1999, 25-27). The AKP tried to present the kin-state ideology as a unifying and inclusive phenomenon by reaching out beyond the country’s borders to engage with co-ethnics living abroad, thus maintaining historic “national” ties, and fostering connections and contacts (Liebich 2017).³

These gestures caused a nationalist backlash in the Greek media and a strongly worded statement from the Greek Foreign Ministry spokesman Georgios Koumoutsakos:

> Fully respecting international treaties and the Treaty of Lausanne in particular, Greece implements a policy of full equality before the law and equal rights for the Greek Muslim citizens in Thrace. Greek Muslims have no need of advocates. This policy is being deepened constantly with new measures. In fact, it is an example and model for emulation for a country that wants to make progress on its EU accession course. This is the reality of the situation in Thrace, and everyone in Turkey should understand this. (as quoted in Grigoriadis 2009, 168)

The new measures Koumoutsakos referred to became apparent after a few years, when Papandreou sent a letter to Erdoğan on 25 January 2010 announcing a suite of measures to ease conditions for the Muslim–Turkish minority. Greece put minority issues under the control of the Ministry of Interior to show that minorities were not perceived as foreigners but as citizens. Without expecting any reciprocity from Turkey, Greece united some schools and published textbooks in Turkish for the minorities. In the aftermath of the Arab uprisings, and with the heat transferred to the Middle East, Ahmet Davutoğlu as Minister for Foreign Affairs paid a visit to Thrace in March 2011. Although he repeated Babacan’s statement, he did so in a more elegant way, calling on the minority ‘to conserve their religion, language and identity [and] to participate in the political and economical life of Greece’ as well as ‘to open their horizons in Greece and Europe’ (Tsitselikis 2012, 174).

The increasingly authoritarian character of the AKP rule under Recep Tayyip Erdoğan took a sharper turn after the Gezi protests of 2013 and the rapidly escalating friction with its erstwhile ally Fethullah Gülen. The end of the longstanding AKP–Gülen Concordat (Watmough 2019) had significant foreign policy implications, given that Gülenists were until then key actors in the Balkan region through the Turkish consulates and the minority schools they established and ran. The AKP thus sought new channels to exercise responsibility for the

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³ Liebich warns however, on the ‘boomerang effect’ of the kin-state policies, as kin-state activism may also be dangerous and conflictual, when a kin-state’s trans-border projects anger neighboring governments, leading to the securitization of kin minorities and the destabilizing of inter-ethnic and regional relations.
Muslim population in the region. The June 2015 elections, and particularly the attempted coup of 15 July 2016, signified new conditions and frictions in Greek–Turkish relations. In particular, the eight military officers who sought asylum in Greece because of their involvement in the coup attempt started a bargaining process between the two countries over whether Greece should extradite them to Turkey. The refusal by Greece to deport the military personnel angered the Turkish government. This contributed to other crises, such as the Kardak issue and the revision of the Treaty of Lausanne (Christofis et al. 2019), through the circulation of a series of imprecise—even crudely drawn—maps of Turkey with new and expanded borders through pro-government media, encompassing in these new borders kin-minorities as well (Danforth 2016).

What is noticeable concerning Greece and Western Thrace is the escalation of the AKP’s rhetoric. For example, on 15 October 2016 during a speech delivered at the university bearing his name, President Erdoğan announced his intention to reconquer the territories that Turkey had lost following defeat in World War I. Such a move would fully implement the National Pact (Misak-ı Milli) of the last Ottoman Parliament, adopted on 12 February 1920, which specifically mentions Western Thrace and the Dodecanese archipelago (VoltaireNet 2018). On several occasions in late 2017, Erdoğan expressed similar sentiments, stating in one speech that ‘the borders of our heart are extended until Vienna’. Some days later, he added that ‘the Ottoman Empire had an area of more than 2,000,000 sq. km while nowadays Turkey has only 783,000 sq. km,’ creating cracks in the stability of the wider region (Hellenic News 2018).

In December 2017, Erdoğan willingly accepted the Greek invitation to visit the country—a gesture that was warmly viewed by the Turkish media, which made extensive references to the positive climate that was being created between the two countries. Erdoğan met with his counterpart, Prokopis Pavlopoulos, and the Greek Prime Minister, Alexis Tsipras, to discuss “updating” the Treaty of Lausanne, among other things. Erdoğan chastised the Greeks for failing to look after Ottoman sites and to provide proper places of worship for Greek Muslims. Afterwards, Erdoğan visited Thrace, where he gave a statement that recalled nothing of his pronouncements of thirteen years before. In this 2017 speech to the Muslim population, he referred to the audience as Turks, adding that ‘We (Turks) have four members in the Hellenic Parliament who have to do many things’ and greeted them in the symbolic Muslim way with four fingers and a closed thumb (rabia) (Hellenic News 2018).

What is of further importance was Erdoğan’s request that the Athens government not demand that ethnic Turks assimilate. In particular, he stated to an audience of Greek Turks in Komotini that ‘We [Turks] never wanted [to assimilate] a different ethnic element. This would be a great injustice’. Finally, the Turkish president referred to the Muslim minority as the ‘descendants of Ottomans who controlled Greece from the fifteenth until the nineteenth century [Turkish] War of Independence now numbering in tens of thousands, [who] should be able to elect their own chief Islamic cleric’. This was a comment already made during his meeting with Tsipras in Athens, where he criticized Athens’s appointment of a mufti for the Turks in Western Thrace, which he said violated the Lausanne Treaty (Kurdistan24 2017).
Conclusion

Historically, and in many cases to the present, the central players in the AKP’s policies toward the Balkans have been Turkey’s Presidency of Religious Affairs (Diyanet), the Turkish Development Agency (TİKA), and Islamic grassroots organizations, such as the Gülen movement. Apart from the latter’s role in the Muslim minority affairs, which shows some activity, both the Diyanet and TİKA seem not to have any significant activity in Greece. For example, Öktem mentions ‘the Gülen colleges are successful primary and secondary schools that operate in all countries of the region with the exception of Greece and Bulgaria’ (2012: 33, n. 17), while, in contrast, TİKA limits its role to the Western Balkans (Öktem 2012, 37-38). Finally, Kirişci (2012) has provided important examples showing how Turkey’s foreign policy has been steadily transnationalizing in recent years through the increasing role of non-state elements—including municipalities, business communities, non-governmental organizations, and even soap operas (see, e.g., Constantinou and Tziarras 2018)—as well as individuals. Turkish foreign policy as it pertains to the Muslim minority in Greece is no exception here.

Although more research is needed to provide concrete findings, it could be suggested that Turkey would not be willing to sacrifice its economic relations with the Muslims in Greece, and with Greece itself, for a tighter control over the kin minority. The three large projects in the works—a border bridge, ferry connections and a high-speed train connection—as well as the statement by Tevfik Bilgen, the chairman of the Foreign Economic Relations Board of the Turkey–Greece Business Council, that trade relations between the two countries, are on the same path seem to support this argument.

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