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# CASPIAN RESOURCES: AZERBAIJAN'S ADMINISTRATION AND FOREIGN POLICY

**Muharrem EKSI\***

m.eksi@globalstrateji.org

## **Abstract**

In this essay, the effect of Caspian hydrocarbon resources on Azerbaijan's governing structures and elites, and its foreign policy were analyzed from the perspective of geo-economics. The strategic resources of Azerbaijan affected the governing structure of itself in a negative way to a lesser or greater degree. Specifically, instead of a great-extend development, they are being used for strengthening the political seats of the governors. From the foreign policy perspective, the Caspian resources contributed Azerbaijan's strategic position and enabled her to be a significant geo-strategic player in the Caspian politics. Consequently, Azerbaijan moved into a dilemma with regard to the Caspian resources as termed resource rich states. The only way out from this situation is a well-balanced political and economic development. In order to achieve this, it is essential to settle the harmony of interests of Caspian's geo-economics. Finally, economic factors and geo-economics of Azerbaijani Caspian resources are dominant in determining Azerbaijan's ruling elite administration and foreign policy.

**Key Words:** The Caspian, Azerbaijan, Baku, Energy Diplomacy and Politics.

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\* PhD Candidate, Department of International Relations, Ankara University,  
Central Asia & Caucasia Specialist, Global Strategy Institute.

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## HAZAR KAYNAKLARI: AZERBAYCAN YONETİMİ VE DIŞ POLİTİKASI

### ÖZET

Bu makalede, Hazar hidrokarbon kaynaklarının Azerbaycan yönetimi ve Dış politikasına etkileri jeo-ekonomik perspektiften analiz edilmiştir. Bu çalışma, kuramsal çerçeve ve jeo-ekonomik perspektif, Hazar kaynaklarının devlet, liderlik yapıları ve Hazar kaynaklarının uluslararası boyutu ve Dış politikasına etkileri alt başlıklarından oluşmaktadır. Bu çalışmanın amacı, Hazar kaynaklarının Azerbaycan devletine etkilerini jeo-ekonomik model bağlamında analiz etmektir. Bu anlamda Azerbaycan'ın bu stratejik kaynaklarının Azerbaycan yönetimini genel itibarıyla olumsuz yönde etkilediği ve ülkede otoriter yönetimin sağlanmasına neden olduğu söylenebilir. Dış politika açısından ise Hazar kaynaklarının Dış politikanın gündemini oluşturduğu ve uluslararası arenada Azerbaycan'ın stratejik önemini artırdığını söylemek mümkündür. Bununla birlikte, Azerbaycan Hazar kaynakları dolayısıyla bir ikileme karşı karşıya bulunmaktadır. Şöyle ki, bu kaynaklar bir yandan Azerbaycan'a finansal getiriler sağlarken, öte yandan Azerbaycan'ı petrol zengini ülkelerin akıbetiyle karşı karşıya bırakmaktadır. Bundan dolayı, Azerbaycan'ın dengeli siyasi ve sosyo-ekonomik gelişme stratejisi izlemesi ve çıkar uyumu prensibini uygulaması gerektiği tezi ileri sürülebilir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Hazar, Azerbaycan, Bakü, Enerji Politikası ve Diplomasisi.

### Introduction

This paper attempts to offer a viable framework for understanding and appreciating the effects of the Caspian energy sources upon Azerbaijan. I addressed that which crucial factors play the most important role in shaping Azerbaijani leadership and foreign policy. More specifically, what are the real driving forces of the hydrocarbon reserves of the Caspian for Azerbaijan? The development of the hydrocarbon reserves of Caspian basin for Azerbaijan are the economic interests and a unique source for achieving geo-economic objectives, as will be discussed in this work. In other words, I discussed how geo-economic preferences offer a harmony of interests instead of conflicting interests. These are the main questions this paper aims to address. Generally, I considered that geo-economic theory formulation that the Baku administration has sought to maximize her respective returns resulting from the development of the Caspian energy resources. Finally, my hypothesis in this paper is that geo-economic and economic consequences are dominant rather than geopolitical ones in determining the Baku administration leadership and foreign policy with the interactions of the Caspian hydrocarbon resources to some extent. In this argument, I acknowledge that Azerbaijan must find an efficient method of moving its resources into the global markets to gain vital income for the development of country.



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In spite of the fact that many researches have been held upon the Caspian Energy, there is hardly any work upon the effects of the Caspian strategic resources on Azerbaijani governing system and foreign policy neither in English nor in Turkish that I reached till now. In general, this issue is worked as a sub-plot in essays or mentioned slightly in a few sentences. For that reason, the benefit of this research can be a way for academicians to pay attention to this issue more than filling the emptiness in this subject. Our work initially begins with the analysis and a perspective, which uses geo-economics as a basic element. Then, the effects of the hydrocarbon resources on the structure of governance and leadership institution of Azerbaijan are scrutinized. Finally, the position of Caspian resources in international dimension and Azerbaijani foreign policy is analyzed. As a conclusion, it is aimed to present an examination having a geo-economic center with this meticulously prepared work.

### **Theoretical Outline and Geo-Economic Perspective**

*Politics is a kind of condensed economics. LENIN*

*Trade is the most important tool of politics. Alfred MAHAN*

The main reason to reveal geo-economic approach is while evaluating the Caspian hydrocarbon resources is to signify the importance of the dominant effects of economic factors and to highlight the interests and the roles in which multinational energy companies play. These corporations have begun to take place in international affairs in the late nineteenth century and the Caspian resources are not only an interest actor but also political actors. Accordingly, it would be said that the 'New Great Game' moved from geopolitical platform into geo-economic platform. In other words, economic factors overpower the political factors in the Caspian energy diplomacy. For that reason, it can be said that the 'New Great Game' is being played on the basis of geo-economic considerations<sup>1</sup>. Because, the geo-strategic and geopolitical perspective that Mackinder puts forward in his great game thesis have lost its validity or at least it is possible to say that geo-economic interests became dominant in the Caspian game. In fact that, while Mackinder, Spykman and Brzezinski were revealing their ideas upon the geopolitical importance of the Caspian region, they claimed that ruler of this area would be the ruler of the whole world. In other words, they highlighted the political interests and considerations.

However, it is possible to emphasize that economic factors and interests became more important or more dominant than political factors and interests in the Caspian politics. In this respect, it is probable to underline that geo-economics and economic factors are ruling the Caspian energy game. Likewise, global energy con-

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<sup>1</sup> Edward N. Luttwak, "From Geopolitics to Geo-Economics: Logic of Conflict, Grammar of Commerce", Gearoid O Tuathail, Simon Dalby and Paul Routledge (ed), The Geopolitics Reader, Routledge, London and New York, 1991, p. 128.

<sup>2</sup> But BP PLC and ExxonMobil Corp. have tried unsuccessfully for years to persuade the US government to consider supporting a shorter and less expensive pipeline from Iran for the case of the BTC pipeline issue.



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glomerates (such as BP, ExxonMobil, Lukoil, Statoil, Total, ENI, TPAO) have become dominant actors in the Caspian energy diplomacy to some degree<sup>2</sup>. Namely, it would be said that this position has resulted in the change of the basis of the Caspian politics into geo-economics. On the other hand, Azerbaijani governors seem to be adopting trade-interests as granted for the country. For they approach to the Caspian resources as abrupt-money transferring sources for their national income, their main ideas are to get economic income from the Caspian hydrocarbon resources. In this concept, it would be said that the Caspian energy sources compassing the geo-economic interests of the 'New Great Game'<sup>3</sup>. Yet, more than a sole power, a logic embodying both regional and global actors should be ongoing or are ongoing. Namely, a process in which a multi-lateral and multi-dimensional relation is seen in the process of Caspian energy pipeline routing addressing world markets. In this process every actors' own interests are opposing the others'. In this view, either the interests will clash in line with the game theory (a zero-sum game theory) or a measured and evenly shared interests' harmony<sup>4</sup> will be under consideration. Essentially, my explanation and theory depends upon liberal theory that is mutual benefits to be gained through interdependence and reciprocity. In this interest-consonance theory, equipoise is the basis in the framework of this examination.

In this background, to test the validity of this theory the Azerbaijani Caspian hydrocarbon resources<sup>5</sup> and the Azerbaijani governor approach will be the case of study. Namely, while Azerbaijan is in need of the collaborations of regional and global actors in transferring these sources to the Western markets. Because Azerbaijan is a land-locked country, therefore she needs energy transportation corridor to transform its sources in order to get income. In this way, the Caspian energy resources, in fact, keep in mind an even income share and this is requiring a well-balanced interest harmony. Concisely, the thesis in which geo-economic motivation and interests are overwhelming and replacing geopolitics can be put forward<sup>6</sup>. In this milieu, the rivalry is every now and then demoted from geopolitical basis to geo-economic basis. Therefore, it is possible to utter that the countries in realist theory are moving in accordance with geo-economic interest<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> It would be said that the Great Game had generally based upon a zero-sum game theory, but the Caspian resources and pipeline rivalry has to mutually rely upon the harmony of interest, which is the foresight of this examination.

<sup>4</sup> In addition, my conceptualization of the thesis has supported by a coalition of actors (states and corporations) in international energy development strategy. See in detail: Peter F. Cowherly, *The Problems of Plenty: Energy Policy and International Politics*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1985.

<sup>5</sup> Azerbaijan hydrocarbon reserves in 2006-2007 is 7.000 million barrels (bbl). And Production (crude and non conventional oil, natural gas liquids) is 454 in 2005 and 653 thousand bbl/day in 2006. Exports 226 in 2004 and 331 thousand bbl/day in 2005. See in detail, ENI, *World and Gas Review 2007*, [http://www.eni.it/eni/images\\_static/pdf/WOEG\\_2007/OG\\_unico\\_def.pdf](http://www.eni.it/eni/images_static/pdf/WOEG_2007/OG_unico_def.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> Edward Luttwak, Review Article, "The geo-economics of the new Great Game", *Contemporary Politics*, Vol. 19, No.1, 2003, p. 1.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 126.

<sup>8</sup> Kenneth Waltz, "The Emerging Structure of International Politics", *International Security*, Vol. 18, No.2, Winter 1993, p. 46-7.



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On the other hand, it would be said that Kenneth Waltz's argument<sup>9</sup> of the nuclear peace balance of the multilateral international systems, became the geo-economic interest harmony with the new global capitalist system. My argument, in fact, is to reveal the theory that is today's international system is functioning on basis of geo-economics with the influence of geopolitics, geo-strategic and geo-economic interactions to some extent<sup>10</sup>. It could be said that, by the interpretation of economic interests with geo-economic perspective has become more and more dominant in determining Azerbaijan ruling elite administration and foreign policy. In this international system conceptualization, "geo-economic interest harmony" symbolizes the result. In other words, it would be said that in globalization era or in new global capitalism, with the reduction of states' political area, states substituted geopolitics with geo-economics as a counter-attack to this area of narrowing. In addition, it is possible to underline that they have begun to determine new strategies on this basis. Naturally, the new position is that Post-Soviet states have supporting the geo-economic approach in liberal theory rather than realist theory. In other words, in the global capitalist system of Wallerstein, commercial logic has been directing the politics<sup>10</sup>. Consequently, it would be said that geo-economic interests have become the aim of geopolitics. In this new international system, the geo-economic dynamics are energy resources. While energy resources are signifying the geo-economic and economic interests, meantime, the control of these strategic resources have become the goal of geopolitics. In this context, energy dynamics have being one of the most significant factors shaping 21st century.

Further, energy diplomacy and politics have begun to function as a political weapon in international affairs. The Caspian resources have become the core of geo-economic rivalry by the enhance of the energy's geo-strategic effect. Furthermore, not only states but also multinational companies as an indirect state arm have taken place in the actors of this rivalry. For that reason, it is essential to assert that these global actors have shaping the strategic structure of the Caspian basin. In this context, it is possible to highlight that the Caspian energy reserves of Eurasia have become a part of this multi-dimensional geo-economics, geopolitics, and security game<sup>11</sup>. In this copulation, Azerbaijan has being a strategic center of Eurasia has very apparently. This position has made Azerbaijan a focus of international rivalry. Notwithstanding, it would be said that the geo-strategies of international actors towards the Caspian energy resources have undergoing changes. While Russia has planning to enhance her own hegemony and influence upon the Caspian basin and Azerbaijan, Turkey's approach has becoming stronger with the BTC pipeline. The U.S. has appreciating the Caspian region in the context of multilateral geo-economics and security concerns.

Consequently, in general, the Caspian hydrocarbon resources are vital for Western markets and states by means of geo-economic and geo-strategic interests<sup>12</sup>. At the same time, the Caspian energy reserves are in need of bulk Western

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<sup>9</sup> Edward N. Luttwak, op. cit. p. 130.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 125

<sup>11</sup> Hasene Karasac, "Actors of the new 'Great Game', Caspian oil politics", Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans, Vol. 4, No.1, 2002, p. 25.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 26.



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investment. Accordingly, it could be said that this situation has made Azerbaijan tied to the West. In this position, Azerbaijan's application of harmony of interests has carrying utmost importance for both regional and global stability and also for her own development. In this point, it would be seen that economic factors are at utmost importance in Azerbaijan's domestic and foreign affairs. Briefly, geo-economics stresses the importance of the harmony of interests. Consequently, this study will carry on with mutual relations between foreign policy, the Caspian energy reserves and the political structure of Azerbaijan by taking geo-economics as basis.

### **The Effects of the Caspian Energy Resources upon Azerbaijan's Structure of State and Leadership**

*Petroleum Corporations like dictators*<sup>13</sup> .

*Democracy is not an apple, which can be brought from a bazaar and put in your house*<sup>14</sup> . H. Aliyev

At first glance, Azerbaijan's state system and structure from the perspective of history, it is possible to say that many factors are continuing to carry their influences, yet a new state structure is on the way of replacing it with the collapse of Soviet regime, like other leaders in Central Asian and the Caucasus<sup>15</sup> . In this point of view, Azerbaijani leaders have defended the idea that they are trying to settle democratic, secular and free market economy systems in Azerbaijan. Hitherto, in this new state building, it would be said that they have changed the state mechanism into an authoritarian regime to strengthen the unification of state and ethnic structure. In this context, it could be propounded that in Azerbaijan state system, both authoritarian and a 'constitutional patronage' state<sup>16</sup> has existing. However, a direct proportional relationship is seen among the Caspian hydrocarbon resources and Azerbaijani leaders. Consequently, the argument which having the idea that the structure of hydrocarbon industry is very similar to the Azerbaijan state-governing structure are signifying this context. That is to say, Azerbaijan has embraced the dissolution of the Soviet regime and has strived for the development of her oil reserves in the Caspian basin, as it would largely contribute to her economy, strengthening her independence as well as strengthening leadership position. From this aspect, these energy reserves are affecting Azerbaijan both in positive and negative ways<sup>17</sup> . It is possible to say that Azerbaijan was highly interested in developing her mineral resources in the Caspian basin to stabilize her leadership position. In other words, Azerbaijan

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<sup>13</sup> Martha Bill Olcott, "Pipelines and Pipe Dreams: Energy development and Caspian Society", Journal of International Affairs, Vol. 53, No. 1, Fall 1999, p. 306.

<sup>14</sup> David Ivanovich, "Oil industry hopes Azeri leader's U.S. visit a success", The Houston Chronicle (Houston, TX), August 2, 1997, p.1.

<sup>15</sup> David Isao Hoffman, Oil and State-Building in Post-Soviet Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan, Unpublished PhD Dissertation, University Of California, Berkeley, 2000, p.123-5.

<sup>16</sup> To use patronage state term I mean that collecting state revenue in the pocket of leader and circulating it. That is to say, it is likely a patron-costumer relationship. See Hoffman, loc. cit. p. 125.

<sup>17</sup> It is defined as a 'resource curse'.



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governors' elite consider that the Caspian energy resources are an insurance for strengthening and empowering their own places<sup>18</sup>. Nevertheless, at the same time, government has appreciated these reserves as the sole instrument to strengthen and secure country's freedom<sup>19</sup>. Moreover, for Azerbaijan has a mono-handed governing system<sup>20</sup>, the state-monopoly upon the income of these resources are shaping a paradox. Namely, instead of developing the state, the income of these sources are floating into the pockets of elites and this situation makes Azerbaijan a rant economy system.<sup>21</sup>

In this respect, instead of Norway, Azerbaijan took Nigeria, Ecuador and the Middle Eastern countries as models for itself and this has made her having a great paradigm in which history is re-occurring in spite of the time<sup>22</sup>. The most important reason for being so is most probably the governing system and the reason for this position is to strengthen the authoritarian position of governors<sup>23</sup>. To clarify this paradigm, these are to be said: The position of Azerbaijani sole administration system has brought a patronage structure<sup>24</sup> within itself and this situation has resulted in the failure of the development of economy and general income<sup>25</sup>. This situation has drastically resulted in the sole and limitless use of these reserves for strengthening the position of leaders<sup>26</sup>. Namely, the incomes of hydrocarbon sources<sup>27</sup> have carrying the traits of being the fuel and crowbar of this administration. That is to say that this structural system could have brought political stability in short term, yet in long term it will be a source for political instability<sup>28</sup>. Meantime, this paradigm has

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<sup>18</sup> Bulent Gökyay, "Caspian Uncertainties: Regional Rivalries and Pipelines", *Journal of International Affairs, Perceptions*, March-May 1998, Vol. III, No.1, p. 7.

<sup>19</sup> Willy Olsen, "The role of oil in the development of Azerbaijan", Shirin Akiner (ed.), *The Caspian: Politics, energy and security*, Routledge, 2004, p. 126. Also See. V. Babak, D. Vaisman, A. Wasserman (ed.), *Political Organization in Central Asia and Azerbaijan: Sources and Documents*, The Cummings Center, FrankCass, London, Portland, Oregon, 2004, p. 90.

<sup>20</sup> It means that there is a state monopoly upon the revenue of SOCAR and SOFAR institutions. See Hoffman, op. cit., p.184.

<sup>21</sup> I defined this term that to use the incomes of the Caspian resources under the control of governor elite in Azerbaijan.

<sup>22</sup> See Sedat Laçiner, "Türk Dünyası Araplaşırken", *Turkish Weekly*, Nisan 2006, <http://www.turkishweekly.net/turkce/yazarlar.php?type=3&id=112>

<sup>23</sup> Gennady Chufirin (ed.), *The Security of the Caspian Sea Region*: Sipri, Oxford University Press, 2001, p. 174.

<sup>24</sup> Andreas Andrianopoulos, "The Economics and Politics of Caspian Oil", *Journal of Southeast European & Black Sea Studies*, p. 122.

<sup>25</sup> Daniel Heradstveit, "Democratic Development in Azerbaijan and the role of the the Western oil industry", *Central Asian Survey* (2001), 20(3), p. 267.

<sup>26</sup> Gennady Chufirin (ed.), op. cit., p. 139; And See Daniel Heradstveit, op. cit., p. 261

<sup>27</sup> Oil exports (in million nominal US Dollars): 4,931 as 93% in 2006 in Azerbaijan. See for detail, <http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/Azerbaijan/Background.html>.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 373.



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made the legitimating of leadership weakness<sup>29</sup>. That is to say that the government does not need the taxes from the nation thanks to the incomes of the Caspian resources, which has undermined the sole relation between the government and the nation<sup>30</sup>. However, it mentioned that Azerbaijan elites have appreciated the Caspian energy reserves as preservation and strengthening Azerbaijani freedom<sup>31</sup>. Yet, as it could be understood from this aspect, it could be put forward that the Caspian energy resources have not used for the overall development, they have used for the service of elites and this situation has corrupted and degenerated the system of Azerbaijan<sup>32</sup>. It has been researched and stated that naturally energy rich countries democratic developments are either slow or non-existent signifying the problem's source in Azerbaijan. For that reason, the paradox of abundance of natural sources has caused the characteristic of annuitant state in Azerbaijan. Finally, it would be said that the only way-out from this dilemma<sup>34</sup> is the use of the Caspian energy resources for Azerbaijani well-balanced socio-economic development strategy. Recognizing that growth in the oil sector and an ensuing oil boom in Azerbaijan could lead to Dutch Disease<sup>35</sup> and, more generally, to the "natural resource curse". For that reason, Azerbaijan have to place high importance on the objective of economic diversification to create sustained growth in the non-oil sectors. Obviously, energy sector dominates the whole country and it brings the political economy. Moreover, this paradigm is connected with economic transformation and political democratization<sup>36</sup>. In that point, Azerbaijan's increasing dependence on oil signs of Dutch Disease similar to which Russia has all the classical symptoms of Dutch disease. Because the most difficult challenge Azerbaijan faces, which is well understood by

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<sup>29</sup> Daniel Heradstveit, op. cit., p.267. And See David Isao Hoffman, op. cit., p. 200, 237-8.

<sup>30</sup> Alec Rasizade, "Azerbaijan After a Decade of Independence: Less Oil, More Graft and Poverty", *Central Asian Survey* (2002), 21(4), 349-370. p. 354.

<sup>31</sup> Angeliki Spatharou, "The political role of oil in Azerbaijan, 1989-1994, *Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans*, Vol. 4, No.1, 2002, p. 32. And See Shirin Akiner (ed.), *The Caspian: Politics, Energy and Security*, Routledge Curzon, Taylor & Francis Group, London and New York, 2004, p. 69.

<sup>32</sup> David Isao Hoffman, op. cit., p. 193.

<sup>33</sup> Lars H. Gulbrandsen ve Arild Moe, "Oil Company CSR collaboration in 'New' petro-states", *The Fridtjof Nansen Institute*, Norway, JCC, 20 Winter 2005, p. 54.

<sup>34</sup> Oksan Bayulgen, "External Capital and Political Structures: The Case of Azerbaijan", <http://condor.depaul.edu/~rrotenbe/aeer/v17n2/Bayulgen.pdf>

<sup>35</sup> The Dutch disease phenomenon Specifically refers to the loss of competitiveness of a nation's economy that occurs when a natural-resource-inspired boom raises the value of the domestic currency which making less competitive, increasing imports, and decreasing exports. Arguably, studies show that, natural resource rich countries that experience natural-resource-driven booms often have deterioration in macroeconomic performance and uneven development of industry. And the potential negative effects of Dutch disease: macroeconomic adjustment problems stemming from large foreign exchange inflows; unbalanced growth, leading to crowding out of the non-petroleum traded goods sector; waste of petroleum wealth through unproductive public expenditures; and in some cases accumulation of external debt as the resource boom increases the capacity to borrow.

<sup>36</sup> It means that well-balanced development strategy could be practical in the course of economic transformation and political democratization process.



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this argument is to avoid the path followed by Azerbaijan's excessive dependence on the oil sector. It means that economy is at risk of Dutch disease. Therefore, the management of oil revenues is very critical to sustain diversified economy. To tackle this challenge many producing countries are setting up oil funds like SOFAZ<sup>37</sup> in Azerbaijan. But the question is that under what circumstances these oil revenues become a solution instead of a problem. Probably it could be formulated that when oil revenues became the investment for the non-oil sector by switching of oil income, it will implement the well-balanced strategy<sup>38</sup>. Besides, this developmental strategic change of the using the Caspian incomes will result in the political reformation and converting into the more democratic system in a transitional way. As a result, it is possible to express that economic development coupled with a growth in democratic institutions mutually, which is the only true path to lasting peace and prosperity<sup>39</sup>.

### **Geo-economic Context**

The intention in using the word "geo-economic context" is the functionality of the strategy of balanced socio-economy and politics. That is to say, if Azerbaijani administration uses a context of geo-economics in using the hydrocarbon resources of Caspian basin, it would be said that this strategy can bring the development of state and in long term local stability. The point is that Baku government does need the income acquired from the hydrocarbon resources of Caspian by means of economy. Yet, for the administration does not use these incomes for development of the country, the situation is fruitless. To achieve a beneficial use of these incomes like Norway, Azerbaijani elite should abolish the monopoly upon the incomes of Caspian sources, distinguish the administration of the Caspian resources and central government from each other, and give the Caspian resources an autonomous position.

Otherwise, it is possible to say that the sole-powered structure of Azerbaijani leadership does effect the economy and make the economy of country bounded to the sole oil and gas energy sector and this situation gives way to an infertile position<sup>40</sup>. Namely, it could be technically proved that 80% Azerbaijan's export and 74% of foreign investment are shaped the oil and gas industry<sup>41</sup>. The only way out from this dependency can be depicted with the argument that political pluralism brings economic pluralism<sup>42</sup>. Namely, it could be sequenced that the advanced

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<sup>37</sup> The State Oil Fund of Azerbaijan Republic (SOFAZ) are operating oil revenues to develop the country, See in detail, <http://www.oilfund.az/>

<sup>38</sup> To compare the development strategy see in detail, Country Strategy For Azerbaijan: 2007-2010, Draft, Document of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, pp.1-55. <http://www.ebrd.com/about/strategy/country/azer/draft.pdf>

<sup>39</sup> Hooshang Amirahmadi (ed.), *The Caspian Region at a Crossroad: Challenges of a new frontier of Energy and Development*, Macmillan Press, 2000, p. 171-2.

<sup>40</sup> Resul Gouliev, *Oil and Politics: New Relationship Among the Oil Producing states: Azerbaijan, Russia, Kazakhstan, and the West*, Liberty Publishing House, New York, 1997, p.88.; Also See Gennady Chuftrin (ed.), a.g.e. p. 371.



this paradigm is the change of the control mechanism of the Caspian resources by a foundation having capitalist geo-economic perspective apart from leader's family members<sup>43</sup>. On the other side, it would be said that Azerbaijan is infected with the illness of 'petro-dollar'. That is to say that the richness of natural mineral sources effects in a opposite way and more than bringing wealth to the country, this paradox obstacles or even halts the development of both democracy and free market economy. It would be observed that the political system of state based upon authoritative patronage followed the strategy of gaining income from energy sources in a short period of time and this strategy makes Azerbaijan bounded to the foreign capital<sup>44</sup>. In other words, for Azerbaijan is bounded to the Western capital and technology to gain income from the hydrocarbon sources of Caspian; its being dependent becomes apparent. For the reason that along with lost investment in Azerbaijani economy means that Azerbaijan might face the danger of losing the political support of the West, which has been promoting her oil reserves to secure this support that the Baku administration needs to pertain the interest harmony. Simply put, the Baku administration has sought to ensure its sovereignty over the portion of the Caspian resources. Thus, Azerbaijan has attached great expectations to the development of her respective oil industries, and has made this development the cornerstone of her national economic policy. Because roughly 75 % Azerbaijani export are made up by her export of energy resources of Caspian<sup>45</sup>. Nonetheless, even the administration should follow a realpolitics in short term, in long term this paradigm will undermine the political independency of the state. Further, it could be said that the capitalist aimed corporations located in Baku strengthen the structure of the leadership in the state with their strategies. For this situation, it is possible to underline that there is a synchronization of mutual interests in behalf of the elites. Thus, the theory that Western multinational firms' support for dictatorship of Azerbaijan are contradictory with the mentality of capitalism. Specifically, it might be considered that the West do compulsorily prefer this geo-economic interests harmonization for its own benefits not for its own will.

As a matter of the fact that, the Caspian incomes have not converted into state's de-

<sup>41</sup> KOSGEB, Azerbaijan: İmalat Sanayii ve Dış Ticaret Profili, Haziran, 2001, p. 7, <http://216.239.59.104/search?q=cache:sK0duwBJgJEJ:www.kobinet.org.tr/hizmetler/bilgibankasi/ekonomi/BKE/ulkeraporlari/Azərbaycan.pdf+azərbaycan+yabancı%C4%B1+sermayeye+ba%C4%9F%C4%B1ml%C4%B1l%C4%B1%C4%9F%C4%B1&hl=tr&ct=clnk&cd=5&gl=tr>

<sup>42</sup> Willy Olsen, "The role of oil in the development of Azerbaijan", Shirin Akiner (ed.), *The Caspian...*, p. 172.

<sup>43</sup> Hoffman, op. cit., p.187.

<sup>44</sup> Hooshang Amirahmadi (ed.), op. cit., p. 105. And See Oksan Bayulgen, "Facing the dilemma of global capitalism: the case of Azerbaijan", *Central Asian Survey* (June/September, 2003), 22 (2/3), p.210-1.

<sup>45</sup> DEİK, Azerbaijan Ülke Bülten, Aralık 2006, s. 6,14, <http://216.239.59.104/search?q=cache:PN7zs59Co-gJ:www.deik.org.tr/bultenler/200612817323azerbaycan-aralik2006.pdf+azerbaycan+yabancı%C4%B1+sermayeye+ba%C4%9F%C4%B1ml%C4%B1l%C4%B1l%C4%9F%C4%B1&hl=tr&ct=clnk&cd=2&gl=tr>



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velopment<sup>46</sup>. More specifically, the State Oil Fund of Azerbaijan Republic (SO FAR) has not appreciated as it has predicted. The main reason of this paradigm has the demotion of the geo-economic perspective into the domestic policy of strengthening the position of leadership. Consequently, Azerbaijan has faced a problem of sole-sector taking roots from the governing paradox. Subsequently, it could be put forward that the administration system of Azerbaijan is one of the most remarkable obstacles against the development and a factor for degeneration<sup>47</sup>. The elite has taking the advantage from the hydrocarbon resources of Caspian and warranting their seats should alter their mentality and follow an approach a perspective of equilibrium geo-economic development<sup>48</sup>. Explicitly, it would be thought that equilibrium strategy of political and economic development as the only alternative based upon the accordance of interests. In general, it is possible to address that the Caspian region is being a rivalry arena led Azerbaijan to have a balanced politics in foreign policy and in fact, this makes the whole region follow a principle of symmetry of mutual interests.

### **International Dimension of the Caspian Hydrocarbon Resources and Influences upon the Foreign Policy of Azerbaijan**

The Caspian energy sources have a geo-strategic importance in diplomacy of energy and international politics. Energy resources and diplomacy have shaping the agenda of international politics. In view of that, global actors have thoroughly acknowledged the Caspian sources as significant geo-strategic energy resources and they do keep Azerbaijan's political and economic harmonization under control to make energy secure<sup>49</sup>. Furthermore, the Caspian energy has exclusively play an important role in Eurasian politics. The main reason for this circumstance is that Caspian oil and gas reserves are global power sources and millstone of power politics. Energy resources act as a geo-strategic weapon in international politics. In this context, the basis of Caspian power policy is the strategic energy resources. In spite of the fact that Caspian energy sources are balancing the world energy sources and balancing the power of the OPEC, in fact, Caspian region does not have an effect equal with the Gulf and the Middle East. Nevertheless, Azerbaijani hydrocarbon resources of the Caspian basin are sizable enough to justify the intense interest of the global energy industry and market. More specifically, it is probable to point out that the importance of the Caspian energy sources are taking roots from its balancing

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<sup>46</sup> Timuçin Kodaman, *Azerbaycan Petrollerinin Uluslararası Politikadaki önemi ve Türkiye*, Unpublished PhD Dissertation, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Ankara University, Ankara, 2002, p.140

<sup>47</sup> Alec Rasizade, *op. cit.*, p.356.

<sup>48</sup> David Isao Hoffman, *op. cit.*, p. 238.

<sup>49</sup> Urban Rusnak, *Hazar Bölgesinde Petrol ve Doğalgaz Jeopolitiği*, Unpublished PhD Disseertation, Ankara Üniversitesi, 1998, p. 21.



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power and being an alternative of the world's energy masterpiece. In other words, the hydrocarbon reserves of the Caspian basin have a potential of significantly contributing to diversifying the sources of global energy supplies and reducing the market's dependence on the Middle East and OPEC<sup>50</sup>.

In contrast, Azerbaijani foreign policy<sup>51</sup> can be identified as the balance of Russia and the West in particular the U.S. In this context, the Azerbaijani administration has deemed this equilibrium policy as the main code Aliyev regime. Generally, the main aim for countries in foreign policy is to develop the state's economy and this makes countries to use energy sources as a tool to achieve it. Under these circumstances, Azerbaijani foreign policy forms a strong unification with energy diplomacy and even it is possible to express that Baku is following a geo-economic based foreign policy to some extent. In addition to this, Azerbaijan's status in geopolitics changed thanks to the geo-economic importance of the Caspian reserves in spite of its being a landlocked country. That is to say that Azerbaijan has a strategic importance in international politics with regard to its energy resources, and transit area. This unique situation has made Azerbaijan to get in touch with the multi-lateral global actors and forming its foreign policy's agenda<sup>52</sup>. Baku's foreign policy has based upon the Caspian pipeline routing rivalry<sup>53</sup> with regard to Caspian energy resources. Therefore, Azerbaijan has become a central actor in the Caspian energy diplomacy league. This composition enables Azerbaijan to have a privilege with regard to its being central state carrying these significant sources to the entire world. Yet, these circumstances have resulted in the security problems pertaining to the rivalry of mutual interests' paradox. More to the point, the pipeline routing predicament by converting into regional or even global rivalry, geo-economic and geopolitical interests are debating or crossing. For instance, Although Baku's policy has endeavoring a hasty income from the oil and gas reserves accessed all the world by passing in Iran, this policy was not welcomed by the U.S. and this point indicate that even two ally states contradicted because of geopolitical concerns. Accordingly, when BTC pipeline<sup>54</sup> is the theme, the U.S. Turkey and Azerbaijan are apparently in a very great conformity. In consequence, it seems to me that geo-economic and geo-strategic priorities both cross and unite.

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<sup>50</sup> Saud M. Al-Sati, *Oil and the Geopolitics of Central Asia: A "New Great Game"?*, Unpublished PhD Dissertation, University of Southern California, 1998, p. 100-3.

<sup>51</sup> See in detail: Nazrin Mehdiyeva, "Azerbaijan and its foreign policy dilemma", *Asian Affairs*, Vol.34, No.3, November 2003, pp.271-285.

<sup>52</sup> Hooshang Amirahmadi (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 163.

<sup>53</sup> Gareth M. Winrow, *Turkey and the Caucasus: Domestic interests and security concerns*, Royal Institute of International Affairs, 2000, p. 40; And See Mehmet Ögütçü, "Hazar Enerji Kaynakları: Jeopolitik dengeler, Yatırım gereksinimi ve hukuki uyumsuzluklar", Mustafa Aydın (ed.), *Küresel Politikada Orta Asya: Avrasya Üçlemesi I*, Nobel yay. 2005, p. 67.

<sup>54</sup> See in detail: Jason M. Davis, *US oil policy in the Caspian: the story of the BTC pipeline from 1998 to June 2001*, Unpublished M.A. Thesis, Duquesne University, 2002.



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More to the point, when I have a glimpse at the version of foreign policy, different geopolitical interests have resulted in unification of states. It is illustrated that in foreign policy generally the three important actors for Caspian energy diplomacy such as Azerbaijan, Iran, and Russia have composed of trivets of the Caspian energy politics. Hitherto, it should not be passed that Turkey and the U.S. are available in this context as supporters of Baku. Under these circumstances, if it considered Russia and Iran as a block, and the U.S. and Turkey should take their counterweight. Hence, it could be crystallized that Baku's foreign policy is as 'in the center' by diagnosing her follow of equilibrium policy of realpolitics. Yet, it is very obvious that Azerbaijan is close to the U.S. and Turkey even they are allies. Simply put, it is possible to say that Aliyev government concluded the suitable lesson from the Elcibey's experience in which he had deduced Russia out of the policy and lost his place<sup>55</sup>. The Aliyev administration has followed equilibrium diplomacy in foreign policy with regard to the previous experiences<sup>56</sup>. On the other side, the Caspian oil and gas reserves have been an economic and political tool for Baku to integrate with the Western and even with the entire world after the dissolution of USSR<sup>57</sup>. In a nutshell, Baku used its Caspian energy resources as a tool to gain international interests<sup>58</sup>. Even it could be affirmed that Azerbaijan has utilized these sources as a weapon in solving the Nagorna- Karabagh problem<sup>59</sup>. Differently, that Baku's geo-economic strategy is swift need of converting the Caspian resources into capital makes Azerbaijan in need for foreign assist. Accordingly, it is possible to stress that processing, marketing hydrocarbon resource requires a great funded technology, and this need makes Azerbaijan dependent to the West in some measure. In other words, it would be underline that this dilemma changed Baku's dependency from Russia to the West<sup>60</sup>. Yet, now, Azerbaijan has bounded to foreign capital and the West, and state's independence is now under the initiative of the West<sup>61</sup>. Right in this part that economic factors have ruled the Baku administration and the Caspian diplomacy became apparent to a greater degree. In view of that, contracts have signed with

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<sup>55</sup> Spatharou Angeliki, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

<sup>56</sup> Audrey L. Altstadt, "Post-communist Leadership: Individuals or Institutions?-", Azerbaijan and Aliyev: A long history and an uncertain future", *Problems of Post-Communism*, Vol.50, No.5, Sep./Oct. 2003, p. 10;

<sup>57</sup> Lutz Klevevan, *Yeni Büyük Oyun: OrtaAsya'da Kan ve Petrol*, Interp. Hür Güldü, Everest yay. 2004, p. 24.

<sup>58</sup> Houman Sadri, "elements of Azerbaijan Foreign Policy", *Journal of Third World Studies*, Vol. XX, No.1, 2003, p. 182.

<sup>59</sup> Jonathan Hemming, "The implications of the revival of the oil industry in Azerbaijan", *CMEIS Occasional Paper*, No.58, June 1998, p. 51. And See Mustafa Aydın, *New Geopolitics of Central Asia and the Caucasus: Causes of instability and Predicament*, SAM Papers, No. 2/2000, p. 26.

<sup>60</sup> Şenay Esen, *Çokuluslu Petrol Şirketleri ve Kafkaslar*, Unpublished M.A. Thesis, Ankara Üniversitesi, Ankara, 2002, p. 81, 95.

<sup>61</sup> Oksan Bayulgen, "External Capital and Political Structures: The Case of Azerbaijan", <http://condor.depaul.edu/~rrotenbe/aer/v17n2/Bayulgen.pdf>

<sup>62</sup> See in detail: Pınar İpek, *Multinational Corporations' Investment in the Oil and Gas Sectors of Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan: Divergent Corporate Behavior in the Age of Globalization*, Unpublished PhD Dissertation, University of Pittsburgh, 2003.



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multinational corporations has indicated Baku's dilemma by referring to the insurance of the West for Azerbaijan<sup>62</sup>.

Consequently, it is probable to maintain that the balance of interests have followed in the pipeline politics should be followed in Caspian energy diplomacy for the Baku administration. Therefore, the Caspian strategic energy sources not only contain geopolitical and geo-economic rivalry but also transnational energy corporations. For that reason, Baku should follow delicate equilibrium strategy and the pursue of well-balanced development as a whole in geo-economics will be suitable.

### **Conclusion**

With the collapse of Soviet Union, new geopolitics and geo-economics appeared thanks to the opening of the oil-rich Caspian basin that presents major opportunities for both the future development of the world energy and Caspian littoral states in particular Azerbaijan and so the Caspian region became dynamic. Thus, this new international environment has created a new balance and it has probably based upon the hydrocarbon resources of Caspian from the view of geo-economic perspective more than geopolitics to some extent. In addition to this, equilibrium parameters are states and multinational energy corporations from the point of geopolitics and geo-economics. In that point, Azerbaijan has bounded to the geo-economic and geo-strategic model thanks to the Caspian energy sources. Specifically, the geo-economic interests do influence the Baku administration in terms of domestic and foreign affairs. Concisely, it is possible that these strategic energy sources have identifying the future of Azerbaijan.

The other point is that the zero-sum game theory possibly is the sources of instability in the Caspian energy diplomacy. Instead of this, the acknowledgment of the geo-economic interests' harmony will probably result in the regional and even global stability. In this context, it is likely to argue that geo-economics and geopolitics do function in interaction with each other and upon the interests dominance the geo-economics substitutes the geopolitics. From the point of foreign policy, the Caspian energy resources have shaping both energy diplomacy and foreign policy. Even, the Baku's foreign policy has compulsorily followed the balance policy. Thus, Azerbaijani foreign policy and even security have become dependent upon the Caspian energy resources and rivalry, which makes Azerbaijan bounded to the Caspian energy rivalry. In a word, the Caspian reserves in certain aspects represents a unique case where Azerbaijan to be established over this hydrocarbon resources of Caspian. In addition, an argument of Azerbaijani patronage regime is dependent to the income of the Caspian resources can be put forward. In the Baku administration context, the Caspian energy incomes have provided stability in the short term, but it could bring insecurity in the long term. For that reason, a formulation, which is having utterly different elements from Aliyev and his family, should be shaped to control



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and use the incomes of the Caspian energy resources. By doing this, the Caspian incomes may be converted into the development of country. Finally, it would be said that the Caspian sources have given Azerbaijan an end like other oil-rich countries and the Caspian resources geo-economics more than geopolitics have identifying elements for the Baku administration and its foreign policymaking. Notably, it is possible to offer that rather resource-based economic development such as the Middle East as a possible strategy Azerbaijan may choose the well-balanced socio-economic development and interest synchronization.

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