

Turkey & Its Neighbors: Foreign Relations in Transition

By Ronald H. Linden et al

London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2012, 257 pages, ISBN: 9781588267719.

The tale of the two decades in Turkish foreign policy following the end of the Cold War has yet to be written. A trajectory of Turkish foreign policy from the collapse of the Soviet Union until September 11 - an era in which security-driven foreign policies formulated primarily by senior military officials and other state bureaucrats were predominant, was well-captured by Philip Robins' *Suits and Uniforms* (2003). The subsequent decade from September 11 to the Arab Spring, characterized by the erosion of security-oriented foreign policy and soft power, has been awaiting a proper in-depth scholarly treatment. Moreover, a complete and comparative account of the two decades is another topic that would command greater interest. Any comprehensive volume about the second decade or a comparison of both decades, however, has yet to be produced in the Turkish speaking academic world, let alone in English. At a time when signs of what will define the third decade following the Arab Spring are emerging, it is indisputable that a clear picture of the previous decade is becoming evident to students of Turkish foreign policy.

Turkey and its Neighbors is an attempt to reflect on the second decade of Turkish

foreign policy after the Cold War and on the sharp contrast between the 1990s and the first decade of the 21st century. The product of seven scholars supported by the German Marshall Fund and the Zeit Foundation, the volume focuses on Turkey's neighbors along the Black Sea, and in the Balkans, the Caucasus, and the Middle East, and asks why tumultuous changes have occurred in Turkish foreign relations during the first decade of this century. Instead of looking at specific causes, such as the Muslim roots of the ruling party, the roles dictated by external powers, and Turkey's own determination, the authors "envision Turkey's relations with its neighbors as a function of a particular mix of international and domestic environments and agents" (p. 8). For the authors, developments in Turkish foreign policy have significantly taken place in response to the US, the EU and other organizations at the international level, two Iraqi wars in 1991 and 2003 respectively, the changing nature of the 'Kurdish question' at the regional level, the rise of the 'Anatolian Tigers', the growth of civil society, and the changing role of the military at the domestic level (see pp. 150-54 in particular).

The volume is composed of separate articles written by different scholars: “Reclaiming Turkey’s Imperial Past”, by Joshua W. Walker, analyzes how and to what extent the Ottoman legacy shaped recent Turkish foreign policy. “From Confrontation to Engagement”, co-authored by Nathalie Tocci and Joshua W. Walker, tackles Turkey’s changing policy in the Middle East from the 1990s to the 2000s. Ronald H. Linden, in his chapter entitled “Battles, Barrels, and Belonging”, examines the historical trajectory of Turkey’s relations with the Black Sea littoral states after the Cold War. “Energy and Turkey’s Neighborhood”, by Ahmet O. Evin, analyzes the policy alternatives, problems, and contradictions relating to Turkey on the issue of energy. “Coming and Going”, by Juliette Tolay, discusses Turkish migration policies in their own historical trajectories with a particular emphasis on the latest developments. Kemal Kirişçi, in “Democracy Diffusion”, scrutinizes Turkey’s potential as a purveyor of democratization in its region. “Turkey as an Economic Neighbor”, by Thomas Straubhaar, presents a picture of Turkey’s economic relations. Nathalie Tocci, in “Turkey as a Transatlantic Neighbor”, evaluates the effect of Turkey’s regional policies in recent years on its transatlantic relations. In the concluding chapter, all the scholars summarize their findings and present some insights for the future.

Although the volume is written by different authors, it has some common ground which binds the various chapters together. The main research question for the volume is whether Turkey’s increasing engagement with its neighbors can be interpreted as an increasing disengagement from the West. This question cuts across all the articles in the volume, partly because it was written at a time when the debate on Turkey’s strategic direction took on a strident tone. The volume adopts “a different reading of the implications of Turkey’s foreign policy” (p. 209) and concludes that choosing “national interest”, “prudent realism” (p. 111), and “pragmatic considerations” (p. 150) over an East-over-West argument (p. 83) explains the recent activism seen in Turkish foreign policy. Accordingly, while the chapter by Walker discusses the discursive bond between neo-Ottoman inclinations in recent Turkish foreign policy and its ‘shifting away’ from the West, the second chapter contends that Turkey’s actions in the region are not “driven by its Muslim nature, but rather by international norms” (p. 55).

The volume also discusses how Turkey’s pursuit of foreign policy activism in its region affects its transatlantic relations. For the authors, Turkish foreign policy activities can complement those of the US and the EU policies by pursuing a more independent and pragmatic approach (p.

209). They even conclude that “divergent Turkish foreign policies could represent an asset” for the US and the EU (210). While Kirişçi draws attention to the synergy between Turkey’s potential as a purveyor of democratization and the promotion of Western democracy in the region, Juliette Tolay sees Turkey’s migration policy as concomitant with the continuous Europeanization in Turkish norms and policies (p. 137). Not only are Turkey’s policies “complementary to the wishes” of the European Union (p. 82), the Turkish economy is also “strongly anchored in Europe” (p. 190).

The volume suffers from the lack of a cogent criticism, however. Although authors define Turkey as “a country whose

identity is unresolved” and refer to an “ongoing struggle” over this definition (p. 226), they offer no room for a discussion on how and to what extent this “new” foreign policy has affected this struggle. They also eschew going into detail on the problems of Turkish foreign policy in the first decade of the 21st century. Nor do they touch upon the troubled implications of the American influence upon Turkey’s neighbors, especially in Iraq. In the end, however, the volume provides an informative trajectory of Turkey’s neighborhood policy in the second decade after the Cold War.

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Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Kafkasya (The Caucasus After the Cold War)

By Kamer Kasım

Ankara: USAK Yayınları, 2011, 304 pages, ISBN: 9786054030217.

This book examines politics in the Caucasus in the post-Cold War era from the viewpoint of international relations. The book covers several issues, among them the foreign policies of Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia after their independence, along with the collapse of the Soviet Union, the “frozen conflicts” in the Caucasus, the Caucasian

foreign policies of regional powers such as Turkey, Russia and Iran, and the U.S. policy towards the Caucasus as a non-regional power. Energy security makes powerful state structures and inter-state cooperation essential. In the book, the securitization of the energy lines is also discussed and some regulations regarding this issue have been called for.

The Caucasus has long been an arena of competition and conflict over energy resources. There is an ever-present possibility of the frozen conflicts turning into open combat. Ethnic conflicts have prevented Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia, which sought alliances to guarantee their safety, from developing healthy relationships with each other and with their neighbours. Therefore, in the first chapter of the book the approaches of Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia toward the regional issues, in the context of their relations with the regional powers, are discussed. The Nagorno-Karabakh issue can be considered to be the most important and potentially the most dangerous issue in the Caucasus. Approximately 20% of Azerbaijani soil is still occupied and almost one million Azerbaijanis have been displaced, causing the problem of internally displaced persons (the IDPs). According to Kamer Kasım, the author, in view of the possibility of Azerbaijan using military force to take its lands back, Armenia acts within an insecurity paradigm and becomes more dependent on Russia. Armenia is the only country in the region that Russia deploys troops in without facing any objection. In a similar vein, Georgia, lacking energy resources but located at the crossroads with its coastline by the Black Sea, is also a part of the regional rivalries with effects extending to the August 2008 war and beyond.

In the second chapter the policies of regional powers - Turkey, Russia and Iran - toward the Caucasus are examined. The centre of attention in this chapter is the climate which ended the bipolar international system and allowed regional powers to come to the fore. The author underlines the fact that Russia, as the successor of the Soviet Union, has played a directive role in the "Near Abroad" policy in the Caucasus. In order to protect its military presence in the region and to maintain its influence, Russia intervenes in the internal affairs of the Caucasian republics. According to the author, Russia's interventions have not only made the resolution of the frozen conflicts more difficult, but also have deepened these problems even further. Russia has directly or indirectly supported the separatist parties in the Karabakh, Abkhazia and South Ossetia conflicts, while forcing Azerbaijan and Armenia to become members of the Commonwealth of Independent States - a manoeuvre that caused reactions by regional powers such as Turkey.

Having ethnic, linguistic and cultural ties with Azerbaijan, Turkey has given diplomatic support to the Karabakh conflict, and in 1993 closed the land border with Armenia. Meanwhile, the U.S. and the EU support normalization of relations and the opening of the border between Turkey and Armenia, which would allow Armenia a door to the West and ease the country away

from Russian influence. According to Kamer Kasım, the thought of integrating Armenia into the Euro-Atlantic system, which gained momentum especially after the Russia-Georgia War in August 2008, can push Azerbaijan into Russia's axis. The relations between Turkey and Armenia cannot be distinguished from those between Turkey and Azerbaijan. For Turkey, Azerbaijan is a more significant country than Armenia, particularly in the field of energy. Therefore, opening the land border without solving the Nagorno-Karabakh issue would strengthen Armenia's hand, and would be contradictory to Turkey's energy policies and its influential position in the Caucasus. The author also makes the claim that, despite its convenient geographical location, Iran is constrained by several embargoes in carrying its energy resources and by its isolation by the U.S.; which compel Iran to follow a pragmatic Caucasus policy in line with Russia's "Near Abroad" policy.

The third chapter is allocated to the discussion of U.S. policy towards the Caucasus. The U.S., the champion super power in the post-Cold War environment, has been active in regions where it previously could not form any dominant policy to protect its interests. According to Kamer Kasım, because of the lobby system in the domestic politics, the U.S. cannot follow a foreign policy congruent with its interests. Although Azerbaijan is the most significant country in terms of energy issues, the U.S. under

the influence of the American-Armenian lobby does not provide Azerbaijan with sufficient political support to resolve the Karabakh conflict nor provide financial support to the country. This situation, as a result, damages the U.S.'s East-West energy corridor strategy. Yet, since 9/11, the U.S. has developed a security-enhanced policy towards the Caucasus. In this framework, there was an improvement in the East-West energy corridor and its relations with Azerbaijan. The U.S., which pioneered the making of more systematic security policies, supported the integration of Georgia and Ukraine into the Membership Action Plan (MAP) of NATO. However, due to disagreements among the NATO members, these countries did not become a part of the MAP. According to the author, this situation had encouraged Russia's intervention in Georgia in 2008.

In the fourth chapter, the Russian-Georgian war, which represents a turning point in Caucasian politics and in the relations between the West and Moscow in the post-Cold War era, is examined. The outcome of the 2008 war has produced long term risks, despite appearing to be beneficial in the short term. While not having enough support from the West caused disappointment in Georgia, Russia has come to understand that Western countries, especially the U.S., will not deploy their military despite their support for Georgia. According to the author, the secessions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia would help Georgia's

integration with the West. Russia's use of military power demonstrated that it is operative in the region, which has made countries such as Azerbaijan re-evaluate their relations with Russia. However, it should be noted that there are Abkhazia and South Ossetia-like structures within the Russian Federation that could make the same demands for autonomy and beyond. Furthermore, after what happened in August 2008, Russia could not find support from the West in regards to issues such as Chechnya.

The Caucasus After the Cold War is written from a perspective that presumes the Caucasus to be a region where many regional and non-regional powers are at play. The competition among the regional powers and the clash of interests

are also presented. The problems in the Caucasus have been tackled with analyses at the levels of the system, the state and the individual. The author concludes that the problems in the Caucasus cannot be resolved easily, even if the various parties came to a mutual agreement - either of their own accord or forcefully, but that they would only change in form and continue to disrupt regional stability. This book fills a literary gap by presenting critical issues to decision-makers, as well as academics and experts, who all have an interest in the Caucasus.

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Türk Basınında Dış Habercilik (Foreign News Reporting in the Turkish Media)

By M. Mücahit Küçükylmaz and Hakan Çopur
Ankara: SETA Yayınları, 2010, 168 pages, ISBN 9786054023073.

How can one interpret Turkish foreign policy accurately in an environment where multiplicities of actors have different political stances that shape their understanding of foreign policy? It is very difficult to cover objectively the controversial issues of the Turkish foreign policy agenda, such as the allegation of

the axis shift in Turkish foreign policy, Turkish-Iranian bilateral relations, and the commentaries following the Israeli assault on the Gaza-bound Turkish aid ship flotilla. In Turkey, domestic politics has always been prioritized over foreign policy issues, which applies to the media coverage as well. Even the actual foreign

events that Turkey is involved in directly and which receive worldwide coverage are forgotten upon the appearance of a domestic issue in the political agenda. Therefore, as Turkey increasingly emerges as an influential actor on the global stage, it is of great importance to examine meticulously the character of foreign news coverage in the Turkish media.

The research entitled “Foreign News Reporting in the Turkish Media” published by the SETA and conducted by Mücahit Küçükylmaz and Hakan Çopur is a prominent example of research in this area. Covering three important metropolitan cities- Istanbul, Ankara and Washington D.C. - the research gives outstanding information about the coverage of foreign affairs in the Turkish media. One of the striking research conclusions is that there is a grave problem of expert correspondence in the Turkish media. The research found that the Turkish media covers foreign relations news from their studios in Turkey, rather than by examining incidents in the places where they occur. There is also a considerable importing of stories produced by international news agencies. The Turkish media thus seems to have lagged behind in terms of quality, and also has failed to follow and understand the essence of proactive Turkish foreign policy. These are some of the many conclusions reached by the authors based on almost 60 different interviews with journalists covering foreign relations news.

Obviously people evaluate Turkish foreign policy according to their own political inclinations. Recently, some analysts drew a picture of Turkey as a country that faces the East, not the West, whereas others assert that Turkey has a multilateral foreign policy. Overall, there seems to be broad agreement that Turkish foreign policy has gained considerable momentum in recent years, that Turkey no longer wants to be an outpost of the West, and that it is becoming a proactive country which seeks to assert its influence in new regions. The debates taking place in the Turkish media on these issues show variations. As this research suggests, as long as Turkish politics is polarized ideologically, the Turkish media will continue to reflect that polarization. The polarization in the Turkish media influences the quality of foreign news coverage so much so that members of the media, whose profession is supposed to cover news impartially, perform their duties in line with their ideologies.

The research also underscores the fact that there is a lack of linguistic skill among the professional journalists; most of whom do not know the languages of Turkey’s neighboring countries. Furthermore, Turkish journalists, according to research results, seem to have no in-depth knowledge of the regions with which Turkey has developed close relations in recent years. The research reveals that the coverage of news from the center of the incidents

and from first-hand sources is seen less frequently than its dependency on the Anglo-Saxon international agencies. As a result, one encounters the problem that journalists who have never been to the Middle East or who do not know Arabic or Persian 'report' about events in Baghdad, Damascus or Palestine in the same way the West covers them.

The conclusions of the research also reveal that, although some journalists do try to correct their shortcomings at an individual level and at an institutional level, there is an urgent need for structural transformation within the sector to address the deficiency of

objective reporting as well as of reporting from places where the incidents occur.

The book *Foreign News Reporting in the Turkish Media*, by Mücahit Küçükylmaz and Hakan Çopur, provides a well informed debate on such issues as: the press ethics, the need for quality press members, the problem of specialization, and the role of the public and the social partners in foreign news coverage. It seems that, compared to developments in many other countries, the situation in the Turkish media remains far from promising.

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İran Nükleer Krizi (The Iranian Nuclear Crisis)

By Arzu Celalifer Ekinçi

Ankara: USAK Yayınları, 2009, 490 pages, ISBN: 9786054030088.

Iran's nuclear program has become an increasingly alarming issue in world politics, especially in the U.S. political agenda. Considering Iran's rich oil and gas reserves, its insistence on promoting nuclear energy has been met with great suspicion, and it is believed that its real ambition is to develop nuclear weapons. Although Tehran claims that all of its activities are peaceful and based on

the goal of increasing its technological capacity, this explanation does not satisfy the Western world. In this regard, the world's leading powers - the U.S. and the EU, have been making considerable efforts to suspend Iran's nuclear program. Thus, on the one hand Tehran's insistence on carrying out its nuclear program, and on the other hand the U.S. and the EU's insistence on preventing these activities,

has inevitably turned into a source of tension between these parties over the years.

The book entitled *The Iranian Nuclear Crisis*, in addition to its introduction and conclusions, consists of three well-designed chapters. Each chapter deals with different actors - Iran, the EU and the U.S. - involved in the crisis and attempts to highlight the differences in their approaches to the Iran nuclear crisis, with coverage of their respective policies and resolution efforts. After providing the background of the origins of the nuclear crisis, the subsequent chapters present a detailed analysis of the means and mechanisms with which the U.S. and the EU are involved in the crisis, and an assessment of the policies used. The author also develops policy formulations and options that may help contribute to the resolution of the conflict.

The first chapter introduces the origins of the Iranian nuclear program and the historical evolution of the nuclear crisis. The author provides a chronology of the nuclear crisis and provides the facts of its development based on official statements, documents, interviews and public opinion polls. Although Iran's nuclear energy adventure started with the assistance of the U.S. during the Shah regime, it gradually turned into a crisis between Iran and the Western world and has turned out to be a complicated issue. In the words of the author: "*while nuclear energy technology*

was seen as indispensable during the Shah's regime, it became a forbidden apple after the Iranian Islamic revolution." Since the Iranian Revolution in 1979, Washington has strongly opposed Tehran's efforts and tried to prevent its activities while claiming that Iran is aiming to develop nuclear weapons. Hence, the Western world started to scrutinize Iran cautiously as it adopted a series of decisions, economic sanctions, and resolution packages, and introduced diplomatic initiatives in order to prevent the crisis. According to the author, Arzu Celalifer Ekinici, all these attempts by the Western world have remained limited and unable to affect both U.S. and Iranian decisions on the nuclear matter, paving the path for a prolonged competition between the two parties. The author pinpoints that the root cause of this crisis is not based on the nuclear program itself but on the current regime in Iran.

In the second chapter, the author primarily examines the role of the EU in the crisis building process and questions the effectiveness of the policies and the strategies pursued by the EU. In order to understand the underlying causes for the EU's involvement in this process and its general behaviour during the crisis, Ekinici underlines the role of EU's foreign policy considerations and its priorities in regard to Iran. The EU's ambition to become a global actor and its aim to prove itself in international politics, has led it to take an active stance

by playing the role of the mediator in the Iranian nuclear crisis. As rightly stated by the author, *“The EU intentionally involved itself in the crisis resolution and took on the role of mediator in the nuclear crisis in order to strengthen its common foreign and security policy and reinforce its image as global actor.”* The mediation role of the EU includes strategies ranging from conditional engagement, critical dialogue, and comprehensive dialogue process to coercive diplomacy, all of which pinpoint to different stances in the management of the nuclear crisis, which is in contrast to the U.S. policy. The EU has managed to draw up a new road map by departing from the general U.S. policies of isolating Tehran, and has tried to integrate Iran into the system. Towards the end of the second chapter, the author attempts to answer to what extent the EU efforts have been effective, and reaches the conclusion that although the EU has managed to unify its numerous member states to act as a single unit in dealing with the crisis, its efforts have remained limited as a consequence of the lack of U.S. support in the process. Moreover, the author also puts forward the suggestion that *“the EU needs to revise its policies and determine a common approach rooted in transatlantic cooperation by convincing the U.S. and presenting concrete and accurate suggestions.”*

The third chapter primarily concentrates on the U.S.-Iranian relations in the aftermath of the Islamic

Revolution and examines how the U.S. has been dealing with the nuclear crisis. The author also makes a comparison between the U.S. and the EU approaches to Iran, pointing out similarities and differences. The facts presented by the author clearly demonstrate that, following the Islamic Revolution, the U.S. adopted containment and isolation policies toward Iran, as well as consistently tried to block Iran’s nuclear program. Since the 2000s, the Iranian nuclear program has become one of the priorities of U.S. foreign policy. The author ascertains that the Iranian nuclear crisis is not solely an international conflict but has turned into a game based on reciprocal hostility between the U.S. and Iran. Moreover, the author highlights the significance of the reality that a lack of direct dialogue between the two opposing sides has clearly led to a failure of the resolution efforts promoted by third parties. According to Ekinci, U.S. bilateral economic and political sanctions against Tehran have remained weak and ineffective, and those policies also brought undesirable consequences, as they led to the rise of anti-American sentiments among the public. Until now, neither U.S. policies nor EU mediation efforts alone have succeeded in overcoming the nuclear crisis. Moreover, Iran does not seem to be willing to end its nuclear program, nor will the U.S. give up its insistence on preventing Tehran’s activities. In her conclusion, the author presents possible options for

each side that could help bring an end to the ongoing crisis and analyzes these alternatives. In this respect, according to Ekinçi, the success of all those strategies is dependent on U.S. involvement in the process and the opening of direct negotiations between Washington and Tehran.

The Iranian Nuclear Crisis provides a comprehensive outlook on different dimensions of this issue through the lenses of the different actors involved in the crisis. Structurally and methodologically, the volume is well-conceived to deepen an understanding of the Iran nuclear crisis. Arzu Celalifer Ekinçi is quite successful in allowing the readers to compare the different perspectives and expectations of the parties involved in the crisis. The

author clearly addresses the problematic areas that need improvement and offers certain policy options and road maps that may contribute to the resolution of the conflict. The book, on the whole, is an inclusive and thorough study enriched with official reports and data, as well as expert Western and Iranian opinions. Furthermore, the publication of the book is well-timed as the Iranian nuclear crisis has aroused the attention of the world as well as Turkey. All in all, the book adequately illuminates the subject and constitutes a reliable and scholarly source with its detailed analyses.

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Küresel ve Bölgesel Perspektiften Türkiye'nin İltica Stratejisi (Turkey's Asylum Strategy from Global and Regional Perspectives)

By Yücel Acer, İbrahim Kaya and Mahir Gümüş

Ankara: USAK Yayınları, 2010, 324 pages, ISBN: 9786054030354.

Citizens of a country leaving for economic, political and social reasons or because of wars and domestic conflicts, and migrating to another country is a process that has been ongoing for a long time. People who have had to leave the country of their origin for such reasons

are called "asylum seekers" or "refugees" in the countries in which they seek refuge. The refugee issue, a result of people looking for a better and safer life, has become a permanent problem that concerns all countries. Today many people living as asylum seekers

or refugees are in need of protection. Countries try to provide protection to those people according to international treaties they acceded to or arrangements in their domestic law. However, discrepancies and omissions in the law often cause asylum seekers and refugees to remain deprived of basic human rights. Legislation relating to asylum is also very incomplete and fragmented in Turkey.

It is very difficult to find a reference book in Turkey that includes issues related to asylum and presents the current situation. The book *Turkey's Refugee Strategy from Global and Regional Perspectives* written by Yücel Acer, İbrahim Kaya and Mahir Gümüş in 2010 has the characteristics of a reference book on asylum and immigration by determining the current situation in Turkey through a field study.

The book consists of four chapters. The first chapter touches upon the basic concepts related to the subject and the issue of refugees across the world. The concepts of international migration, the origin of refugees, their destination countries, migrants, asylum, asylum seekers, refugees in general and human trafficking are among the basic concepts that are explained. The reasons behind international migration and asylum throughout the world are explained, and the demographics, socio-economic characteristics and regional distributions of refugees are highlighted.

In the second chapter, under the title “Asylum and Refugee Status in International Law,” the development of asylum and refugee legislation, the development of the definition of a refugee in international law, refugee law, the rights and freedoms of refugees in international law, and the difficulties encountered in practice are discussed. The reason why the authors included the regulations in international law in this chapter is that the basic definitions related to asylum are enshrined in international law. That is why international law is the first reference point for countries organizing their domestic laws regarding this issue.

In the third chapter, the state of asylum legislation in Turkey is addressed. In this context, under the title “Asylum Legislation in Turkey and Refugees”, the historical development of this subject in Turkey, the EU harmonization process, the general view, and the rights of asylum seekers in Turkey and its practices are discussed. As mentioned earlier, asylum or immigration legislation in Turkey is quite sparse because it is not regulated by a single law. Emphasizing this point, the book examines the arrangements made in Turkish legislation and the procedure for asylum. The duties of police departments, governorates, and the Ministry of Interior are also mentioned. The book also stresses the place of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in the asylum process and how to constitute an institutional structure

in harmony with the EU. Lastly, the chapter includes the EU National Action Plan harmonization process and the points that will be established and held under this plan.

Within the framework of the National Action Plan, a multiplicity of issues are mentioned, such as institutional restructuring, staff training, envisaged projects, solicited asylum law and policies, administrative and judicial appeals to asylum decisions, the principle of non-refoulement, subsidiary protection, integration training, public assistance, access to the job market, health, access to social, economic and cultural rights, deportation and return operations, increasing public awareness, sources of funding and removal of geographical restrictions.

Although Turkey acceded to both the 1951 Geneva Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and 1967 Protocol relating to the Legal Status of Refugees, it introduced a reservation clause in both contracts that it would accept, as refugees, only those coming from Europe. As a result of the reservation, Turkey does not accept non-Europeans as refugees, and offers them a transition to other countries while providing temporary protection. However, Turkey is expected to lift this geographical restriction in the EU accession process. Another point discussed in the book is how to implement the principle of equal burden-share with EU member countries

in order to protect Turkey from an influx of asylum seekers if the above reservation is removed.

The fourth chapter attempts to create a strategic road map for Turkey in relation to asylum. In this context, the primary focus consists of the concept behind the strategy, the strategic structure of Turkish regulations relating to asylum, and the purpose of a new asylum strategy.

The final chapter, “Principles to Dominate the New Immigration Strategy,” constitutes one of the more original portions of this work. A framework of the study is outlined and what needs to be done is explained, such as taking into account international law and the regulations of the EU asylum system, and giving prominence to the humanitarian dimension.

The book, examines its subject systematically, supported by field study and consolidated by the views of authorized people who work in the asylum processes. In its contribution to determine the current situation in Turkey, the book points out that Turkey needs to adopt new and necessary asylum legislations. Turkish legislation should be harmonized with the regulations of international law and the asylum acquis of the European Union (EU).

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Are Muslims Distinctive? A Look at the Evidence

By M. Steven Fish

New York: Oxford University Press, 2011, 385 pages, ISBN 9780199769216.

This is a rare book that successfully combines statistical methods with quantitative data from around the world in order to systematically test commonplace assumptions and prejudices against Muslims. As the book description in its back cover states: “*Are Muslims Distinctive?* represents the first major scientific effort to assess how Muslims and non-Muslims differ - and do not differ - in the contemporary world.” The result is a major achievement in the social sciences and is of utmost relevance to policy-makers on both sides of the Atlantic.

The book answers the following questions about Muslims in the world: compared to Christians and other non-Muslims, are Muslims more religious, more violent, more criminal, more corrupt, more unequal, more inclined to terrorism, more supportive of religious leaders influencing politics, less democratic, or less tolerant of controversial behaviour than Christians and other non-Muslims? Using a wealth of data including the *World Values Survey*, the book gives clear and sound answers to these questions. Contrary to what prevailing prejudices would suggest, the book shows that in many

respects Muslims are not significantly different from non-Muslims. In fact in some respects Muslim-majority societies appear to be performing better than non-Muslim societies. Only a few of the findings are somewhat supportive of Muslims stereotypes. The book is an eye-opener in dispelling popular myths about Muslims and Muslim-majority societies that many people, including the Turks, believe in.

Contrary to what many people believe, Muslims are actually not more religious than Christians. Based on the *World Values Survey*, 85% of Muslims and 84% of Christians consider themselves as “religious” individuals (p.25). Only 42.9% of Muslims report attending religious services once a week, which is slightly higher than the 36.9% of Christians who do so. Furthermore, when Steven Fish, the author, isolates the Christian Orthodox component, we see that 41.9% of Catholics and 43.9% of Protestants attend religious services once a week, seemingly implying that the Protestants are slightly more religious than Muslims at least according to this indicator (p.26).

Also contrary to the prevailing stereotypes, 65.7% of Muslims - about

two-thirds - agree with the statement that “religious leaders should not influence how people vote”, which is comparable to 71.0% of Christians who agree with the same statement (p.47). About two-thirds of both Muslims and Christians agree on keeping the influence of religious leaders outside of politics. Nonetheless, Muslims are about twice as likely (69%) as Christians (35%) to think that “politicians who do not believe in God are unfit for public office” (p.51), indicating an aversion to atheists in politics.

When it comes to what Fish describes as “popular tolerance of controversial behaviour” (p.89), Muslims appear to be half as likely to think that homosexuality is justifiable compared to Christians (Muslims score 1.63 and Christians score 3.66 in a tolerance scale of 1 to 10). Muslims are also less tolerant of abortion and divorce. Fish points out that the Qur’an and the Islamic sources are much more permissive of divorce than the Bible and other Christian sources, and the Bible is also arguably more intolerant of homosexuality. He concludes, therefore, that Muslims’ relative intolerance of these behaviours, compared to Christians’, is not a result of the differences in the religious texts of these two major religions, but rather a result of the various interpretations by their contemporary adherents. Moreover, “Muslims are less tolerant of dishonest behaviour than are non-

Muslims”, which includes “cheating on one’s taxes” and “claiming government benefits to which one is not entitled” (p.98-9). This finding undoubtedly provides a good example for the moral and political standing and attitudes of Muslim citizens.

Muslim societies are slightly more corrupt than Christian societies. The aggregate average of the Corruption Perception Index scores, where 1 represents the most corruption, for Muslim countries is 3.2 compared to 4.4 for Christian countries (p.112). Malaysia (5.1) and Tunisia (4.6) are significantly less corrupt than the Muslim average. Furthermore, the 19 Muslim countries with the largest populations are significantly more corrupt (2.9) than the 19 most populous Christian countries (4.6).

Muslim societies are at least three times better off than Christian societies in terms of the worst type of crime - intentional homicide. The average murder rate in Muslim societies is 2.6 out of 100,000, whereas it is 7.5 out of 100,000 in Christian societies (p.120). Moreover, Fish demonstrates that the 19 largest Christian countries have murder rates more than five times higher (11.0) than the 19 largest Muslim countries (2.1). Notably, Turkey has a murder rate (3.8) that is almost twice as high as the Muslim average. Nonetheless, the largest Christian countries have exceptionally high murder rates, including the top

four Christian countries, namely, the United States (5.6), Brazil (11.2), Russia (19.9) and Mexico (13.0). This is a very significant difference.

Why might Christian countries have much higher murder rates? A partial answer to this question is given in another chapter where Fish shows Christian countries to have higher levels of economic inequality than Muslim countries, and inequality is correlated with murder rates. The average Gini score, a measure of economic inequality, is 38.0 in Muslim countries, but is 41.1 in non-Muslim countries (p.217). The relative equality of Muslim societies is even more pronounced when one considers income per capita and life expectancy, which are correlated with lower inequality.

Why might Muslim countries have significantly lower levels of inequality than Christian countries? Fish emphasizes the role of Islamic *zakat* - mandatory annual almsgiving - and other forms of Islamic charity that are either mandatory or highly recommended. He compares these to the encouragement of charity in Christianity, but finds the latter unreasonably demanding, since Jesus told believers “to give up all one has for the poor”, which may be unrealistic. In contrast, Fish argues that specific injunctions, such as the religious duty of Muslims to give 2.5% of their accumulated wealth annually to the poor, perpetuates a habit of poverty

alleviation, which may explain lower inequality among Muslims (p.221).

In contrast, Muslim countries suffer from higher gender inequality than non-Muslims countries, apparent in the difference between male and female literacy, life expectancy, earned income, numbers of parliamentarians and cabinet members (pp.176-195). Muslim individuals are more likely to think that a university education and a job are more important for men rather than for women, especially if jobs are scarce, and that men make better political leaders than women (p.182). Although political and socio-economic underrepresentation of women is a global phenomenon, it seems to be particularly acute in Muslim countries.

Muslim countries on average appear to suffer less from large-scale political violence compared to non-Muslim societies, but the 19 largest Muslim countries, in contrast, suffer twice as much from large-scale political violence as the 19 largest Christian countries (p.137). An area where Muslim countries suffer disproportionately is high-casualty terrorist bombings. The six countries with the most occurrences of high-casualty terrorist bombings are, respectively, Pakistan, Russia, Sri Lanka, Israel, Afghanistan and India (p.154); furthermore, twice as many high-casualty terrorist attacks occur in Pakistan as in Russia (the second country in this list).

What most readers are likely to be curious about is the relative lack of democracy in Muslim-majority countries. This book reaffirms this finding but is careful to highlight the correlation between lack of democracy, oil/resource-wealth, and subordination of women. Voice and Accountability scores of Muslim countries are almost half that of Christian countries (p.232) and the only democratic Muslim countries are Indonesia and Mali, according to the Freedom House. Although Arab Muslim countries are less democratic than non-Arab Muslim countries (p.248), even the latter are significantly less democratic than the global average. Nonetheless, the support for democracy in public opinion polls among Muslims is quite high (2.83), and not much lower than the support for democracy among Christians (3.02), implying that the cause of authoritarianism in the Muslim countries is not the undemocratic opinions of the public (p.244).

Are Muslims distinctive? On some issues they are, on others they are not; on some issues Muslims are better off, on others they are worse off. Muslim countries are much safer than non-Muslim countries in terms of lower murder rates, but they are more dangerous when it comes to terrorist

attacks. Muslims are more intolerant of abortion, divorce, and homosexuality than Christians, but they are also slightly more intolerant of dishonest behaviour such as cheating on your taxes. Economic inequality is lower in Muslim societies than in Christian societies, but gender-based inequality is higher. Finally, very few Muslim countries are democratic, while most Christian countries are.

I would highly recommend this book to any student or scholar of Muslim societies, and it is most certainly of interest to Turkish scholars. Despite the intensive usage of advanced statistical methods, the book's findings are written and summarized in each chapter in a style accessible to policy makers, graduate students, and even advanced undergraduates. The book demonstrates that what many people both in the West and in Turkey think they know about Muslim societies is simply incorrect and contradicted by empirical evidence. I would call for a major publisher to translate this book into Turkish, so that it can be accessed not only by the English-speaking academics but also by the educated Turkish public.

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Amerikan Yeni Sağı ve Dış Politikası: Hegemonya Ekseninde bir Analiz (The American New Right and Its Foreign Policy: An Analysis Based on Hegemony)

By Ömer Kurtbağ

Ankara: USAK Yayınları, 2010, 467 pages, ISBN 6054030316.

It is essential to understand the inner dynamics of American politics and its society to conduct an effective analysis of the foreign policy of a country that is still the only super power despite the emerging yet remote challenges seen in Asia. Dr. Ömer Kurtbağ's book titled *Amerikan Yeni Sağı ve Dış Politikası: Hegemonya Ekseninde Bir Analiz (The American New Right and Its Foreign Policy: An Analysis Based on Hegemony)* is a rare book in this particular field. On the whole, Kurtbağ's work is a successful attempt at analyzing the remaking of American hegemony based on Neoliberalism, starting in the Reagan era and consolidating especially during the George W. Bush administration.

The book is underpinned by a strong theoretical basis consisting of international relations theories, with particular emphasis on the Gramscian theory of hegemony. Indeed, throughout the book, the author attempts to explain the conservatives' attempts to institute Pax Americana by means of the Gramscian understanding of consent. As

Kurtbağ illustrates in his work, from the Reagan to the Senior and then Junior Bush eras, the American right tried to legitimize its hegemony by presenting its own interests as global interests. with the exception of the Clinton era, in which internationalism and globalization emerged as trends in the the US foreign policy.

After summarizing the path leading to Reagan's victory, Kurtbağ gives a detailed explanation of the Reagan Doctrine and its pillars, namely, military build-up, peace through strength and ideological fight against communism during the Cold War. The New Right began to defend the idea that the US represents the good in the world, which still continues to dominate US foreign policy. Kurtbağ successfully explains, along with the ideological basis for the conservative thoughts, how the US spread neoliberal economic policies across the world.

Having explained how the Neoconservatives were born in the US, Kurtbağ elaborates on the discussions

in domestic politics after the Cold War of the new grand strategy of the US and how to maintain its hegemony, while analyzing clashing views, such as isolationism vs. internationalism and declinism vs. revivalism, with detailed examples. It is noteworthy that the American right defended isolationism, which was traditionally favoured by leftists during the ambiguous political climate following the end of the Cold War. Kurtbağ successfully reflects the ambiguity of the 1990s, both in the US and in Europe: the sudden end of the Soviet regime, the unknown new role of the NATO, the emergence of Germany and Japan, the collective European policy as new challenges for the US, and the ethnic wars such as that in Yugoslavia. The US had to question the proclaimed victory of neoliberalism, despite the uninterrupted attempts to expand it. It is worth mentioning that the *Defense Planning Guide* of 1992, prepared under the supervision of Paul Wolfowitz, which rejects isolationism, collective security and balance of power, was evidence of the Neoconservatives' (Neocons for short) search for ways to retain US hegemony after the Cold War.

After a brief analysis of the Clinton era foreign policy, Kurtbağ explains the increasing impact of the Neocons in US Foreign Policy, especially following September 11. For the Neocons, who aimed to restore American global hegemony by means of a pre-emptive

strike doctrine, unilateralism, and the export of 'democracy and freedom' to other nations, and at home by strict implementation of neoliberal and authoritarian measures, September 11 served as a perfect means to legitimize their agenda. In between the rightist father and son Bush, the Clinton era seems like a brief episode characterized by centrist elements in domestic politics, the idea of the Third Way, economic engagement, increasing internationalism, a preference for humanitarian intervention and nation-building, and a belief in globalization. However, Kurtbağ does not fail to mention that Clinton also acted as a benevolent hegemon for the overall well-being of the world as the main defender of neoliberal globalization.

Although George W. Bush came to office with the intent to expand Pax Americana as a grand strategy, he did not pursue a policy much different from Clinton's until September 11, which Beck defines as the Chernobyl of Globalization. As Kurtbağ summarizes, Neoconservatism instead of neoliberal internationalism now constitutes the ideological background for the reassertion of hegemony. Furthermore, Kurtbağ argues that the Bush administration continued Reagan's neoliberal agenda and wished to strengthen it by means of force and Neoconservative ideology. Throughout the book, Kurtbağ explains the ruptures and continuities between the Neocons

and the traditional conservatives. Almost no conservative is against the expansion of democracy or free market. However, they are uneasy about multilateralism and humanist cosmopolitanism.

Kurtbağ allocates a considerable part of the book to explain the philosophical background of the Neocons. It is necessary to know that they are primarily influenced by Leo Strauss, who divides regimes into good regimes and rogue regimes. In their opinion American democracy is without a doubt the least bad one, and if and when necessary American values can be imposed on the world by force. Gramscian version of hegemony and its reinstatement, as well as the idea of consent by power and force, are very central elements of the Neocon mentality. Given this aim, Kurtbağ states that as a result, terror for the neo-cons, along with unilateralism and pre-emptive strike, was a tactic rather than the enemy. To what extent the Neocons were able to regain hegemony is a valid question. Kurtbağ concludes that in a globalizing and increasingly interdependent world, the idea of hegemony by force would backfire and limit US foreign policy. Given the fiasco in Iraq and the

alienating impact of hostile rhetoric, the US partially gave up unilateralism on issues such as North Korea and Iran.

As Kurtbağ suggests, neoliberal globalization, which is perceived as a utopian project, seems to have failed, and increasingly people are demanding a more egalitarian system. Throughout his work, Kurtbağ presents criticisms of the harsh nature of Neoliberalism, which leaves the middle and the working classes unprotected. However, it is doubtful that a viable alternative to the system that the current hegemon has established is likely to appear in the foreseeable future.

With its detailed historical record, lengthy explanations of neoliberal economies (which could have been shorter), useful comparative charts and extensive bibliography, Ömer Kurtbağ's study can serve as a Turkish reference/guide book to contemporary American politics and how it shapes US foreign policy.

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