




Book Review - Kitap İncelemesi

**ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY
(1923–2023) HISTORICAL AND THEORETICAL REFLECTIONS**

EDITORS

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This book is part of a series that aims to deepen studies in foreign policy analysis. This series includes three main points:

1. **Examining Overlooked Countries:** Most studies focus on the US and European countries. In contrast, this series looks at countries from different regions around the world and their types of governments. It offers a broader analysis of foreign policy.
2. **Focusing on Special Topics:** The series explores how foreign policy is related to gender, race, climate change, and new technologies. It studies how gender and race affect foreign policy decisions and the impact of new technologies on foreign policy.
3. **Using Different Approaches:** The series uses different approaches beyond traditional theories, such as emotions, post-colonial theories, feminist theories, and international political economy. It analyzes foreign policy with these new and innovative ideas.

The 100th anniversary of the Republic of Turkey is a great chance to study Turkey's international impact and how it has developed. In 1923, Turkey concentrated on establishing a robust state and steering clear of foreign intervention.

Today, Turkey is very different. It tries to increase its influence not only in neighboring regions but also in Asia, Africa, the Far East, and Latin America. These changes help us understand Turkey's international identity and security issues. Those also show us how other countries see Turkey's international relations. This book deeply analyzes changes in Turkish foreign policy. Each chapter is written by expert Turkish women academics, which is a considerable achievement for both the academic community and Turkey.

The authors examine the following questions about Turkey's relations with specific regions and global actors: 1) What goals does Turkey have in its relations with the region or global actor? (2) What factors and major developments have shaped the relationship between Turkey and the regional or global actor? (3) What is the current situation between Turkey and the region or global actor? (4) What are some of the opportunities and challenges in Turkey's relations with the region or global actors? (5) How will this relationship evolve in the future?

The book starts with an introduction to Turkey's foreign policy through history and theory. Özkeçeci-Taner and Akgül Açıkmeşe look at how Turkey's foreign policy was shaped during three important periods: 1923-1980, the 1990s, from 2002 onward (AKP Era).

The Editors explore internal, regional, and global factors that influenced Turkey's foreign policy during these times. They, then discuss how three main theories of International Relations; namely, realism, liberalism and constructivism to explain changes and continuities in Turkey's foreign policy over the last 100 years.

Editors argue that Turkey is a unique country (*sui generis*) that has not followed a predictable path in its foreign policy. Because of this, it is difficult to understand Turkey's foreign policy changes with just one theoretical perspective.

In Chapter 2, Evren Çelik-Wiltse examines Turkey's relations with the US and NATO from a liberal institutional perspective. Çelik-Wiltse divides these relations into two main topics: alignment (When Turkey has aligned with the US and NATO) and divergence (When and why Turkey has moved away from the rules and norms of the US and NATO).

Çelik-Wiltse investigates the institutional and structural reasons behind Turkey's "going it alone" attitude and analyzes it from a liberal institutional perspective. In this section, which examines the relations between Turkey and the USA,

it is investigated when the interests and relations of the two countries become harmonious and when they diverge. A worsening, more tense relationship has been observed. When foreign policy teams, diplomats, military officials, and democratic processes are involved in decision-making, when supported by the UN Security Council, and when aligned with NATO, the resulting policies become more acceptable to both parties.

In Chapter 3, Meltem Müftüler-Baç focuses on Turkey's relations with the European Union (EU). Using Liberalism as the main theoretical framework and examining state-level factors, Müftüler-Baç argues that the EU's role as a norm-setting anchor has changed. This change has led to two main issues: the failure to prevent democratic backsliding, where the EU has not been successful in stopping democratic declines in some of its member states or in countries that are in the accession process, and the emergence of alternatives to full membership, where new options like differentiated integration have made full EU membership less attractive for candidate countries.

Müftüler-Baç concludes that these factors have caused Turkey to reformulate its foreign policy towards the EU. EU membership is not the only way to be part of the European order, but it still affects Turkey's foreign policy choices. The decline of democracy in Europe and the future of European integration indicates how Turkey's relationship with the EU is changing. This creates a new challenge in Turkey-EU relations that was not seen before.

In Chapter 4, Evren Balta and Habibe Özdal discuss Turkey-Russia relations. They argue that these relations have historically been shaped by two main factors: the strength of the Western alliance and anti-Western sentiments. They show that early strategic balancing has shifted to flexible alignment due to weaker NATO unity and increased anti-Americanism in Turkey.

In Chapter 5, Meliha Benli Altunışık examines Turkey's foreign policy in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region through the internal political ideas and goals of the AKP. She highlights two main factors: ideological factors, such as Islamism, which explain Turkey's high level of involvement in the MENA region, and material factors, such as staying in power, which help us understand the conflict between ideology and pragmatism in the AKP's foreign policy.

Altunışık uses the concept of "methodical pragmatism" to show how the AKP combines different ideological frameworks, such as solving problems of the Islamic world and nationalism, in their foreign policy.

In chapter 6, Oya Dursun-Özkanca examines Turkey's foreign policy towards the Western Balkans. She explains how international, regional, and domestic economic-political factors influence Turkey's approach. By visiting the Neoclassical Realism theory, she analyzes the relationships between Turkey and the Western Balkans. Dursun-Özkanca highlights that while some of Turkey's actions in the region test boundaries, its overall foreign policy has not significantly changed yet.

In Chapter 7, Bezen Balamir Coşkun analyzes Turkey's foreign policy in the Eastern Mediterranean, focusing on the Cyprus issue. She considers Turkey as a middle power and examines its relations in four different periods: the founding years of the Republic (1923–1946), the multi-party period (1946–1960), the era of military coups (1960–1985), and the post-Cold War period (after the 1990s). This analysis helps us understand how Turkey's foreign policy has evolved over different periods. Coşkun also discusses how the wars in Syria and Libya, as well as the ongoing competition for valuable gas reserves in the Eastern Mediterranean, have influenced Turkey's strategies in the region.

In chapter 8, Ayça Ergun analyzes Turkey's foreign policy in the South Caucasus using Constructivism theory. She argues that Turkey's foreign policy choices and initiatives are largely determined by historical context, perceptions, and identities (ethnic, religious, linguistic) in a geopolitical context. Ergun points out that the region is not homogeneous and focuses on Turkey's bilateral relations with three regional states: Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Georgia. The Karabakh wars and increased economic relations in the energy and transportation sectors present both opportunities and challenges for Turkey's relations in the region. Ergun concludes her chapter by discussing three main issues that will determine whether Turkey can continue to play an active role in shaping regional policy and participating in regional cooperation efforts: the peace talks between Azerbaijan and Armenia, the normalization process of bilateral relations between Armenia and Turkey, and the cautious cooperation between Russia and Turkey.

In chapter 9, Ayça Alemdaroğlu and Sultan Tepe analyze Turkey-China relations using critical theory and feminist theory. They explore how power hierarchies, sovereignty, and oppression play a role in the relationship between the two countries. The authors argue that Turkey and China benefit from and legitimize existing hierarchical conditions at both national and global levels. Their analysis goes beyond just describing economic, energy, and security agreements

Alemdaroğlu and Tepe show that despite the different ideologies and state interests, women and minority groups are the biggest victims of the Turkey-China partnership. They also suggest that this partnership supports business interests while promoting authoritarian tendencies, anti-democratic practices, and human rights abuses in both countries.

In Chapter 10, Aslı Ilgıt studies Turkey's relations with Africa and adds new information to this topic. Ilgıt looks at foreign policy's identity and cultural sides, focusing on ontological security and feelings. She examines these two related but less researched topics through Turkish identity and foreign policy since the 1990s. She looks at Turkey's humanitarian aid and African projects. This chapter focuses on the emotional sides of Turkey's new humanitarian policy and African policies within the scope of ontological security.

The book "One Hundred Years of Turkish Foreign Policy (1923-2023)" is a unique work with ten chapters, each written by female academics. One of the book's main features is that each author uses different methodologies to explore topics and themes that were previously less covered or considered less important. This variety enriches the book's content, giving readers a multi-dimensional view of Turkish foreign policy. The different perspectives and unique methods of female academics not only open new horizons for readers but also highlight the important role of women in the academic world. This book has secured an important place among studies on Turkish foreign policy and has inspired new research in this field.